



# North Uist Community Council

## Comhairle Coimhearsnachd Uibhist a Tuath

**Secretary :** Uisdean Robertson  
Ferguslea, 16 Carinish, North Uist, HS6 5HL  
Telephone : 01876 580369  
e-mail :- u.robertson@cne-siar.gov.uk

### **NORTH UIST COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD IN CARINISH HALL ON MONDAY 14 MAY AT 7.30PM**

**Present:** Sheena Stewart - Chair  
Flora MacDonald – Vice Chair  
Cllr Uisdean Robertson – Secretary  
John MacDonald – Treasurer  
Donald A MacLennan  
Terry Wakeling  
Ken MacDonald  
Donald E Morrison  
Joan Ferguson  
Cllr Iain M MacLeod  
Cllr Roddy MacKay

**Apologies:** **Angus MacLennan**  
Jessie Morrison  
Effie Rodger

**Public:** Alison Cropper, CnES  
Eilidh MacNab  
Angus MacDonald  
Sarah MacDonald  
Kenneth Campbell  
PC Michelle Nelson  
Cllr Iain A MacNeil

#### **1.0 Adoption of Minute:**

**Proposed:** John MacDonald  
**Seconded:** Donald A MacLennan

#### **2.0 Statement of Account:**

The total funds as at 14 May sit at £8875.97 of which £6185.54 is uncommitted. Balance in the War Memorial account is £2060.48. The end of year account will be sent to the Finance Department

of CnES this week. Uisdean will check on progress of community benches.

**3.0 Matters Arising from the Minute:**

**3.1 HHP:**

Cllr MacKay has spoken to John MacIver and the fence in Lochmaddy has now been put on a priority list.

**3.2 White Lining:**

This work has still not been done. The Comhairle have been made aware of the situation and there is the possibility of an Enforcement Notice being served. The Chair indicated that a Uist Disability Access Panel was being formed.

**3.3 Communities Board:**

This has now been discussed with the Chair of the Communities Board and an advert for a co-opted member for Uist will be appearing in the press in the next few weeks.

**3.4 Play Parks:**

The finance for play parks is going to remain in house with the Comhairle. All play parks have now been checked but there is currently no timescale as to what work may be done and where.

**3.5 Vallay Island:**

Angus Macdonald of Vallay Island Farm attended the meeting. He wanted to explain the reasons for the location of the tanks which are now situated on Vallay and were subject to complaints as being an eyesore. The tanks are there to store grain. All the proposed new distilleries in the Western Isles have been in discussion with Angus and the grain will form part of a niche product which will be organic. Vallay itself is now actively farmed after 40 years of being uncultivated. It is now a haven for wildlife such as corncrakes. Over the period that Angus has farmed here thousands of tons of seaweed have been spread on the machair land here and this has improved its fertility significantly. Rumours that the tanks were being used to store salmon were untrue.

**3.6 Langass Wood:**

Sheena will discuss the issue that was raised with Andrew Ross, NUDC.

**3.7 Committee Road Cattle Grid:**

The cattle grid which is due to be placed on the Committee Road has still not arrived. When it does the work will be done in short order.

**3.8 Ahmore Corner:**

Indications were that this would be a minor road improvement for which there is no current funding and unlikely to happen in the near future. It was felt however that appropriate signage would help the situation.

**3.9 Scottish Water:**

The complaint received reference water pressure in Sollas has been raised with Scottish Water. However it appears that the problem remains. Secretary will discuss further with Scottish Water.

**4.0 Police Report:**

There had been a limited number of calls, one was in relation to a sudden death, two road traffic issues and one theft. The most concerning issue that had arisen was to do with wildlife crimes. This related to two red deer that had been shot by a high powered rifle. One of them in particular had been badly shot and was heavy with calf. This appears to have happened at night on the west side of Uist near the main road. This is a very concerning incident and the Police are keen that anybody with any information should come forward.

Speed checks are still being carried out and it is hoped these will deter those who continue to drive at excessive speeds.

The issue of derelict vehicles was raised and this has been raised at committee level of the Comhairle.

**5.0 Councillors Report:**

**5.1 Uist Economic Task Force:** The Uist Economic Taskforce Working Group met on Friday 11th May in Benbecula.

The meeting was addressed by Mr Áki Johansen, the Head of Representation of the Faroese Government in the United Kingdom. Mr Johansen stimulated a wide-ranging discussion that touched on key issues such as digital connectivity, transport strategy, population retention and economic development policy in the Faroe Islands.

The meeting also saw a presentation from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Hebridean Housing Partnership (HHP) updating on the Affordable Housing Supply Programme and the prospects for

new affordable housing activity in Uist.

It was particularly interested to hear about the Faroese approach to transport infrastructure and how they have managed to deliver 4G connectivity to every corner of their islands. Their approach to infrastructure, such as tunnels, and how they fund that infrastructure is something we should learn from here in Uist.

It is hoped we see future collaboration between Uist and Faroe and we will now be seeking to explore new links between our island communities.

It was also useful to get an overview of housing opportunities in Uist for the next period. Housing has been identified as one of the critical areas of focus for the Taskforce.

**5.2 Dentistry:** Still no decision.

**5.3 Spaceport:** There is ongoing dialogue on the potential of Spaceport in Uist. Councillors will speak to the Chief Executive for clarity on the potential purchase of the land in question.

**5.4 Islands Deal:** There is no further progress to report on the Islands Deal. It would be the members intention to report to the Community Council as and when new information becomes available.

**5.5 Deer:** The Deer Management Group met on the 25<sup>th</sup> May in Benbecula. Linzi Sievwright has taken over as Secretary and Peter Coldwell, CnES will be the new Chair.

**5.6 HIAL:** The issue of Air Traffic Control centralisation is ongoing and Secretary is due to meet with Air Traffic Control staff in Benbecula in a couple of weeks time.

**5.7 Loganair:** A meeting with Jonathan Hinkles, Loganair is being organised but no date agreed yet.

**5.8 Council Budget:** Budget Board due to meet before our next meeting of the Community Council so we will hopefully have an update at the next meeting.

**6.0 Matters Raised by Members of the Public:**

**6.1 Claddach Vallay:**

Angus MacDonald gave a brief background on a well known landmark called Ultach an Ard. Angus has said that he is happy to construct a car park in the area and have the stone placed here. The car park could provide provision for 15 cars and is on the track down to the shore. Alison Cropper said she would look

into the cost of planning permission.

**6.2 Taxi Provision:**

There is currently no provision in terms of taxi operators in North Uist. This causes a problem for those who wish to go for a meal and have a drink. It also affects the younger generation who may wish to go out at the weekend. The lack of this provision means our young people having to walk home in the dark on narrow roads. This is a purely commercial decision for operators and the Secretary has spoken to operators who currently provide bus and taxi services. There is a willingness by an operator in Benbecula to provide a minibus service particularly at the weekends but also at other times given notice.

**6.3 Ahmore:**

A concern was expressed about green plastic in the area where the salt used to be stored. There was also mention made of the culvert at Ahmore which is sinking.

**6.4 Kilmuir Cemetery:**

The sign reference bird watchers has disappeared. The Community Council were keen to see it being replaced.

**6.5 Comann na Mara:**

The Community Council were keen to invite the Chairperson of Comann na Mara to a meeting of the Community Council to discuss issues which were to do with the way the organisation was being run. It was felt that it was not going in the direction of travel as was originally intended.

**6.6 Phantom Litterer:**

The problem of bags of waste being dumped beside the road and particularly between Clachan and Carinish continues. These bags tend to have kitchen waste. This has been brought to the attention of Environmental Health and the Police. However it has not been possible to identify the culprit.

**6.7 Lochmaddy:**

It was felt that the road near Donald Campbell's house needed some work done to it. The surface of the road in this area is very bad. Secretary will speak to Technical Services.

**6.8 Tractor Rally:**

The rally will be held on 16<sup>th</sup> June and all monies raised will go to

the Cuimhne Project.

**7.0 Correspondence Received:**

A request had come in from Future Planning at Calmac in relation to the winter timetable. As previously we are asked to indicate that we would like a later boat on a Friday afternoon.

**8.0 Date of next meeting:** The next meeting will be on Monday 11 June in Lochmaddy Hall at 7.30pm.

**P.S.** Sarah MacDonald as a young person present was asked if she would be happy to be co-opted on to the Community Council and she indicated that she would.