



## North Uist Community Council Comhairle Coimhearsnachd Uibhist a Tuath

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### **NORTH UIST COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD IN HOSTA HALL ON MONDAY 27 MAY 2019 AT 7.30PM**

**Present:**

Sheena Stewart – Chair  
Flora MacDonald – Vice Chair  
Cllr Uisdean Robertson – Secretary  
Terry Wakeling  
Joan Ferguson  
Jessie Morrison  
Sarah MacDonald  
Cllr Iain M MacLeod  
Donald E Morrison

**Apologies:**

Cllr Roddy MacKay  
Effie Rodger  
John MacDonald – Treasurer  
Donald A MacLennan  
Ragnall Maclain  
Gavin McDevitt - Police

**Public:**

Iain S Morrison – Am Paipear  
Sandy MacLeod  
Stuart Wilson – Communications Project Lead, Calmac  
Andy Humphreys – Campaign Account Director, Stripe

**1.0 Adoption of Minute:**

Minute was approved with one amendment which related to the bylaw requested for Kilmuir cemetery.

**Proposed:** Sarah MacDonald

**Seconded:** Sheena Stewart

**2.0 Statement of Account:**

The accounts are currently being audited by Finance Department in Stornoway.

### **3.0**

#### **Calmac presentation:**

Stuart explained that he had been brought in by CalMac to work with a PR agency called Stripe Communications to audit how CalMac is communicating with all its key audiences. That includes the communities they are serving as well as their own staff. They have been travelling the network and will present a report to CalMac senior executives at the end of August. Contained within that will be an overall Communications Strategy incorporating an Internal Communications Strategy, External Communications Strategy and Social Media Strategy. Of particular interest is how they communicate in the midst of disruption to service and ensuring that they have as much information as possible available at the right time.

Members were asked whether they check Website, Twitter, text or any other method. It was ascertained that getting in touch with the local port was the preferred option for a lot of local people. Some found the information online to be good. There were complaints that the Service Status wasn't updated as timeous as it could. Reference was made to the lack of information from the Communities Board to the Community Council. However in a couple of weeks the Communities Board would be giving a presentation to the Ferries Stakeholder Group which was taking place in the Dark Island Hotel. There was a discussion on the value of drop-ins which seemed to be the favoured way of engaging with the public nowadays. One of the members suggested that something done on the ferry would give you a captive audience and also the right audience to be engaging with.

### **4.0**

#### **Matters Arising from the Minute:**

#### **4.1**

##### **Abandoned Cars:**

This remains a problem. However as there was no police presence we would discuss at our next meeting to see how best to deal with this issue.

#### **4.2**

##### **Loch Tormasaig:**

The Secretary had spoken to the Senior Environmental Health Officer, Colm Fraser about the issue. Colm had said he would discuss with SEPA and Scottish Salmon. The Secretary said he would discuss with the Estate Factor. There was a wide ranging discussion on medication given at fish farms, fish farm nets etc. Although there is quite a lot of press coverage on varying issues relating to disease it is not one that members have a huge knowledge of.

#### **4.3 Library:**

One of the members circulated a paper with the proposed opening hours of the library during the period that they were without a librarian. The job has however been advertised so hopefully things will improve in the not too distant future.

#### **4.4 Benches:**

As Raghnaid was not at the meeting we could not determine what progress was being made in siting benches. A local painting contractor has agreed to paint the benches.

#### **4.5 MOWI:**

The Council Solicitor has confirmed that a letter has been sent to North Uist Estate expressing an interest in CnES acquiring the area of slipway and breakwater at Cheesebay. No response back to date.

#### **4.6 Registered Social Landlord:**

Chief Executive of the Comhairle had given a presentation at the Uist Economic Task Force on his discussions with civil servants. It was decided that we should hold a Seminar in Uist in the autumn to discuss housing needs for the area. An invitation would be sent to the Minister, Kevin Stewart and all agencies that deal with housing matters.

#### **4.7 Spanish Bridge:**

Work is still ongoing to source a Consultant Engineer to update the 2014 survey.

#### **4.8 Sgoil Uibhist a Tuath:**

Secretary undertook to circulate correspondence with the Comhairle on this issue.

#### **4.9 Deer:**

The issue of deer along the west side keeps being raised as a significant problem. These problems are exacerbated by the ongoing problems of greylag geese, barnacle geese, crows, ravens and sea eagles. These items were to be discussed at a meeting between Cllr Donald Crichton, Malcolm Burr and the Chief Executive of SNH. Secretary will find out if a response has come back to the Comhairle on these issues. The shooting rights at Newton Estate were also to be checked.

#### **4.10 Defibrillators:**

It was agreed to ask Cllr Angus Morrison for two sets of replacement pads. Thanks were due to Cllr Iain M MacLeod and Joan MacDonald, Sollas for their help in renewing the necessary items on the existing defibrillators. It was stated that they need to be checked on a weekly basis. Roadside signs for defibrillator have been ordered. There was a discussion about the proposal to install a defibrillator in the phone box in Lochportain. However it was felt that this would be quite near the one proposed for the MOWI site. It was felt that a better location would be where the caravan had been sited at the very first housing in Lochportain. There should be a power supply there. In terms of a community group taking this forward it was felt that it was more appropriate for the grazings committee.

#### **4.11 Creagorry Co-op Parking:**

The Comhairle have written Co-op management to seek their agreement to get a Traffic Regulation Order in place.

#### **4.12 Flag competition:**

The closing date for entries is 7<sup>th</sup> June. Down Select Panels will meet to shortlist designs. It was agreed that a young person from Sgoil Lionacleit be asked to sit on the North Uist panel.

#### **4.13 Kallin Ice Plant:**

The tender documents for ice plant removal are going out tomorrow to framework agreement contractors with a week's response period. If successful there would be a two week planning period with removal commencement after that.

#### **4.14 Nursery Transport:**

Although the issue raised with the Community Council has been sorted it appears that there is still a problem for some parents in relation to transporting kids to the nursery. This particularly relates to the Lochmaddy area.

Secretary to check out what the regulations are in relation to this item.

#### **4.15 National Islands Plan:**

The meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> June at 2.15pm will go ahead but there will be an additional meeting in the evening in Benbecula. It is important that people attend these workshops to give a view. There is of course the realisation that the community is suffering consultation fatigue.

## 5.0

### **Police Report:**

25 calls in North Uist Beat this month.

Drugs - 1

Other agency calls (i.e. ambulance contact for assistance/information) – 14

Lost/Found animals – 2

Concern for person – 3

Neighbour Disputes – 2

Information only – 1

Assault – 1

Disturbance – 1

There had been two recorded crimes in the area:

1 Drugs offence – Enquiry ongoing

1 Assault – Person charged

With regard to the abandoned vehicles mentioned in the last minutes, Gavin has had a look at a number of these and done a bit of checking to clarify powers relating to these. The ability to remove vehicles unfortunately ends where the vehicles are not on the public road/causing obstruction. So vehicles parked and left in car parks or off road don't come into the ability of Police to remove. They can be removed by the local authority, following the issuing of a 7 day notice to allow the owner time to remove it themselves. The local authority's power doesn't end at the public road like Police does.

Where the Police are able to trace a registered keeper, they can report people for abandoning vehicles on the grounds of environmental protection, so would urge everyone to call in or contact them. But for the actual removing of them, people should get in touch with CnES Environmental Services and report matter to them.

## 6.0

### **Councillors Report:**

#### 6.1

**Spaceport:** Attached to the minute are the answers to the various questions raised at a previous Community Council meeting. The Comhairle do intend to have public engagement with the community in a few weeks time. Concerns were expressed that the money being spent purchasing Scolpaig should have been spent on roads, work at Trianaid etc. It was explained that this funding was through Prudential borrowing and was not coming from the Council's Capital Programme. There was of course the wish that should this not become a mini range and that firing from the site should not be excessive. However it is clear that there are very different views within the membership. The Secretary would request that the Consortium

would meet with the Community Council.

**6.2 Dental:** The Chief Executive has given the dental professionals in Uist till Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> to respond to him with any issues. Some have done so this far. Once the deadline is passed he will analyse the responses and discuss with Ron Culley and Health Board colleagues. Hopefully there will be a decision then or a failure to agree soon after that.

**6.3 Countryside Trust:** A presentation reference a Countryside Trust for Uist and Barra had been given at the Uist Economic Task Force. It was felt that local control would be best in order to keep up the maintenance on the Hebridean Way particularly.

**6.4 Lochmaddy Waiting Room:** Secretary had spoken to Director of Finance who said that the plans to move the two Comhairle employees had been scrubbed. However this needs to be checked out with the Harbourmaster.

## **7.0 Matters raised by members of the public:**

**7.1 Cyclists:** A member of the public was particularly concerned that cyclists were not observing rules of the road. These included not using passing places, cycling in groups of ten, cycling in tandem, cycling with earphones on. A member had seen a cyclist with a dog on the handlebars in front of her with sunglasses on. It was alleged that there was some kind of competitive league to try and see who could cycle quickest north to south. It was felt that additional signs aimed at cyclists to allow overtaking in passing places would be useful. It appears that there is a very effective eye catching poster on the "Lochportain". There was some discussion on what OHT were doing reference leafleting and particularly the use of leafleting and posters on the "Hebrides". Companies like Hebridean Shuttle etc. could be approached to ensure that relevant information is passed on to cyclists. The situation is particularly difficult for buses and also tractors that are towing trailers. Some members referred to how useful dash cameras in the car can be.

**7.2 Kilmuir Cemetery:** Secretary to check with Access officer and Solicitor to see what progress is being made with the bylaw.

**7.3 AGM:** A question was raised in relation to date of an AGM.

## **8.0 Community Planning Partners:**

Further to our discussion at the last Community Council meeting a further meeting had been held in Benbecula.

**9.0 Ward Funding:**

An application had been received from the Caladh Trust but members were keen to see the Mission and Vision statement before reaching a decision.

**10.0 Date of next meeting:** The next meeting will be on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June in Carinish Hall.