

## South Harris Community Council – Minutes of Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018

1. **Apologies** – Caroline Chaffer, Lisa MacDonald, Hamish Taylor, Councillor Finnegan, John R MacLean, Kathryn Campbell, Kenny MacLeod,
2. **Present** – Alan Ross, Stephen MacKinnon, Neil MacLean, Councillor Cunningham, Councillor Mitchell, Billy Macfarlane, Marion Morrison
3. Former Rodel Hotel – Alan Ross, Hamish Taylor and Caroline Chaffer met with Anderson Bakewell and Charles MacDonald regarding Rodel Hotel in Tarbert. Mr Bakewell said that the proposed development would be a purely commercial enterprise and once fully up in running he hopes it will generate more local employment than the hotel previously did. There will be six rooms but they will not be let separately, instead one person will have to let all six rooms. There will be a permanent house manager with three self-contained flats for staff. The old bar area will be available to rent for community events/weddings etc but people would have to bring in their own chef for events. Alan highlighted difficulty that Leverburgh Hall has in attracting enough events. Finally there are currently no plans for a public restaurant but they are open to suggestions.
4. HHP – Some time ago Alan contacted HHP to look at sites in South Harris; they replied that they were waiting for council to arrange date. Alan will forward email to Councillor Mitchell to chase up. Councillor Mitchell said that the council had issues with the two sites previously identified at Kintulavaig and Leverburgh Pier. The issue of the paint on Dunmore Crescent houses is moving forward with work due to start soon.
5. Roads – Question sent in by John MacLean about the road verges collapsing on the Strond -Borrisdale road. Councillor Cunningham has asked that it be emailed to him to chase up. Both Councillors highlighted the lack of budget that affects all road related issues. The only hope for development on the spinal route is the Islands Deal. How road priority categories are allocated was discussed. The Councillors pointed out how they have been told they are not allowed to interfere and they are decided by qualified engineers. The reasons given for why priorities cannot be changed is financial implications and the fact that a lot of the road from Luskentyre to Leverburgh is near the sea where the salt air is meant to help. PC Bertin pointed out that the council will not send out gritters even when the emergency services request them to do so. It was pointed out that none of the issues raised from the bus run that was done around South Harris to highlight issues.

Tourism Tax – Councillor Mitchell has written a paper about how he thinks a Tourism Tax should work. It would be called a Community Infrastructure Levy on Tourists (CILT) to avoid negative association of a new tax. Each tourist would be charged £1 a day with possible revenue of £1.7 million for the Western Isles. Alan Ross will write a letter on behalf of SHCC to support this. Alan made the point that a specific percentage should be guaranteed for Harris. Councillor Mitchell said that he is sure that Harris will get a fair share and the three councilors would fight for this. He said that the first step should be getting agreement on this CILT and then the next step would be to focus on implementation/administration.

6. Cattle Grids – Kenny MacLeod sent in an example and Alan Ross has an example as well of the council seemingly being keen to do away with cattle grids possibly for financial reasons.
7. Scottish Hebrides Documentary – Hamish Taylor will deal with this.
8. BT Poles – Nothing has happened. Councillor Finnegan is going to make a formal complaint.
9. Gunnera – SNH and North Harris Trust want information to identify where gunnera is. Alan will email around for each member to pinpoint gunnera issues in their own areas.
10. Cal Mac Consultation – Hamish Taylor described the meeting that took place regarding this as a waste of time and nothing of note came of it. Councillor Mitchell described the options of the Hebrides ferry being moved from Uig to allow work on the pier to take place: 1. Last two weeks of April and all of May or 2. October/November. Unfortunately decision will be made by Inverness Council. Rural Economy and Connectivity Consultation Survey to be filled in by September.
11. Challenge Fund – Applications have to be in by August and it is around £2,000 per application. Two possible ideas brought forward: Finsbay Common Grazings are looking for funds to upgrade the Velvet Road around Cnoc Na Ba. The other possible idea is the South Harris Sports club for equipment and kits etc. Neil MacLean will speak to Willie MacRae regarding Leverburgh football team and Stephen MacKinnon will speak to Rebecca Passmore regarding Athletics club.
12. AOCB – Marion Morrison will speak to Leigh Tregurtha about stimming around Leverburgh. It was agreed in the meeting that £250 should be allocated for this purpose.

Next Meeting Date –