

South Harris Community Council – Minutes of Meeting 8th April 2019

1. Apologies – Neil MacLean, Lisa MacDonald, Kathryn Campbell, Councillor Cunningham, Councillor Finnegan, Caroline Chaffer, Kenny MacLeod,
2. Present – Alan Ross, Stephen MacKinnon, Marion Morrison, Hamish Taylor, John MacLean, Councillor Mitchell
3. Minutes of 11th February CC meeting, Rodel CC meeting, and Rodel Public meeting were proposed by Alan Ross and seconded by Hamish Taylor.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Geese – There has been culling going on around Leverburgh but there is no way anyone with a gun would be allowed near the pitch as it next to school to cull geese there. Stephen has been in discussions the caretaker at the school about getting the bird scarers back up and hopes this will be done soon. Delay has been due to ground not being deep enough for poles, it is hoped that this will be resolved by putting poles in buckets with concrete.

4.2 HHP – Councillor Finnegan is our link to HHP now. Alan gave Grant Fulton, new Development Officer for Harris, details of his meetings with Catriona Rowlands of HHP and Ian Watson of CNES. Grant will pursue this with Councillor Finnegan.

4.3 Visitor Levy – Councillor Mitchell reported on reservations that members of North Harris Community Council hold about introducing a visitor levy. These mainly involve how it would be organised as there are many entry points to the islands, would new software be needed by Cal Mac, how would money be split throughout islands, and would the responsibility be put on guest houses etc. who have no experience. Councillor Mitchell raised this issue during session and the reactions by other Councillors, mainly from Stornoway, were very negative. Alan pointed out that money is going to have to come from somewhere to address infrastructure issues. It was agreed that this issue should again be raised at the Harris Forum and whether those in attendance can come up with alternative ideas. **Alan will ask Phil Bertin to put on agenda.**

4.4 New Street Lighting – Marion spoke with James MacArthur at CNES who said he had never had any complaints before now and confirmed that these types of LED bulbs are to be rolled out further. **Alan will speak to Councillor Cunningham to ask if he has seen LED lights in Gravir, Lewis which are reported to be better than the ones we have and what progress had been made in discussions with Tech Services.**

4.5 BT Poles – Councillor Finnegan has emailed BT again but has had no response. He is going to find out who the head is, and will lodge a formal complaint with them. Hamish will send a picture of cables hanging off poles at Finsbay to Councillor Finnegan, and also reported bits of steel sticking out the ground in Manish which may be a safety risk.

4.6 Northton Sea Wall – Alan is continuing to deal with this.

5. Additional Matters

5.1 Beach Safety – Concern about safety after recent death of woman after falling off rocks at Nisabost beach into sea. Alan raised the question of whether we should be putting signs up to warn people of the dangers around the beaches. There was general agreement that signs should be put up warning of quick sand but also concern that putting signs up generally could be excessive as you would possibly have to put them up everywhere along the West Coast of Harris. The point was also made that personal responsibility and common sense should play a part. The question of whether the West Harris Trust has a responsibility or should get involved was raised. It was agreed that this should be included on the next Harris Forum agenda. **Alan will ask Phil Bertin to include on agenda.**

5.2 Community Development Officer – Alan held a very positive meeting with the newly appointed Development Officer for Harris Grant Fulton who is based locally in South Harris in an office within Seallam! Visitor Centre. He spoke to him about the various items on the Harris Forum priority list which relate to South Harris. A summary is outlined below:

1. Pontoon Projects – Grant has already had discussions with the Moorings Association and will deal with them directly moving forward.

2. Paisley Sisters – Grant will provide any help necessary as we move forward.

3. Lobster Hatchery – Grant will bring significant expertise to this project as he has been the head of fisheries in the Isle of Man and Republic of Ireland in his previous roles. He is very enthusiastic about the potential of this project. Alan will ask Neil to speak to Grant regarding taking this forward.

4. Leverburgh Hub – Grant will be involved in this as it progresses. By the time the next two fundraising events are held it is hoped that £11,000 will have been raised.

Hamish gave an update regarding the future John Morrison Poet project. The croft owned by Dr Latham in the Bays is where John Morrison died. Hamish spoke to Dr Latham about our plans for a trail and the possibility of a sign being put up near his croft and reported that he was quite happy for this to happen.

6. AOCB

6.1 – Merchant Navy Day – Alan has received correspondence regarding this on the 3rd of November and asked whether this is something we should be involved in. It would involve a flag being hoisted and would be attended by signatories, veterans, and sea cadets. It was agreed that this should be included on agenda at next Harris Forum meeting. **Alan will contact Phil Bertin to arrange this.**

6.2 Rodel Hotel – George MacDonald, manager of Rodel Hotel Development, was in contact with Alan about wanting to block road going past hotel as a temporary measure for scaffolding. **Alan will meet with him and use the opportunity to mention ongoing community projects which would benefit from assistance from Mr Bakewell, owner of Rodel Hotel site.**

6.3 Minutes – It was mentioned that copies of minutes should be getting sent to Bell-Ann at CNES. **Alan will forward contact details to Stephen.**

6.4 Leverburgh Care Home – Councillor Mitchell said that the Manager of the home had told him that there had been an increase recently in hospital appointments having to be cancelled for residents due to last minute cancellations by the Ambulance staff in Harris who would transport them. **Alan will speak to Isabel Campbell, manager of Leverburgh Care Home, to ask for more details.**

Date of next meeting – Monday June 10th 2019