

North Uist Community Council Meeting Comhairle Coimhearsnachd Uibhist a Tuath



MINUTES	Date: 28 th January 2020	Location: Hosta Hall, 7.00PM
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Present:	John MacDonald – Treasurer (JMD)	Ragnall Maclain (RMI)
	Sarah MacDonald - Chairperson (SMD)	Lee MacDougall (LMD)
	Joan Ferguson – Vice-chairperson (JF)	Kenneth MacDonald (KMD)
	Michelle MacDonald - Secretary (MMD)	Marion MacCorquodale (MMC)
	Donald Ewen Morrison (DEM)	Connor Lawless (CL)
	Rachel MacLean (RML)	Cllr Roddy MacKay (RMK)
	Cllr Iain MacLeod (IML)	PC Ross McClenaghan (RMC)

Apologies:	Effie Rodgers	Domhnall Angie MacLennan
	Cllr Uisdean Robertson	PC Gavin McDevitt

Public:	Cathy Laing	Flora MacDonald
	Angus MacDonald	Morag MacDonald
	Ada Campbell	

	Agenda Item	Action
1.	<p><i>Apologies:</i></p> <p>Apologies from Effie Rodgers, Domhnall Angie MacLellan, Cllr Uisdean Robertson, PC Gavin McDevitt</p>	
2.	<p><i>Adoption of Minutes:</i></p> <p>JMD proposed the minutes from the December meeting and KMD seconded the minutes.</p>	
3.	<p><i>Statement of Account:</i></p> <p>JMD reported that the account is currently sitting at £19,775 with some cheques still to clear. He said he will give a full statement of Accounts at the next meeting.</p>	
4.	<p><i>Matters arising from last meeting:</i></p> <p><i>Kilmuir Cemetery:</i></p> <p>Concerns over the Old Kilmuir Church and the lack of information on its history. Suggested the idea of an information board being put up. Also concerns over the maintenance of the church grounds and inside the building, keeping it free from litter. Worries about the writing on the gravestones fading away and the stones falling down.</p>	

<p>JF Read out email response from Catriona MacCuish regarding Kilmuir Church, which stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital records are only held for the new Kilmuir graveyards, new North and South. • https://www.findagrave.com/ - useful website for inputting and researching gravestones. • Donald MacAulay, Mullach Mor has been researching the old church building and has also recorded some of the older gravestones in the old Kilmuir Cemetery. <p>Decided that the Community Council would help to write letter to North Uist Development to support the idea of maintaining and preserving the gravestones.</p> <p>It was reported that rabbits are also still an issue in Kilmuir Cemetery.</p> <p><i>North Uist Flag:</i></p> <p>SMD has been in touch with Sheena Stewart and the cheque is now ready to be sent from the community council. £750 from Councillors towards flag cost.</p> <p><i>Flooding:</i></p> <p>List of particularly bad flooding areas in North Uist as picked up by Community Council Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Road • Carinish (On bend after temple view) • Carinish circular • Carabhat • Heading towards Sollas before Uist Asco (Usually after heavy rain) • Dip at the bottom of Blashival Hill (Lochportain side) • Ahmore road • Malaclate just before old church, thatched cottage on right. • Heading south in the dip between Carinish and Baleshare road end. • Causeway over Horisary Loch, one mile south of Bayhead. • Ardhashgar – Can't see road after heavy rain. <p><i>Parking area at Lochmaddy Shop/Red burn house:</i></p> <p>Response from Angus MacDonald CnES was read, which stated that the council do not own this land. Land ownership still to be identified.</p> <p><i>Display of Postcodes in Public buildings:</i></p> <p>It was noted that more places are beginning to display postcodes, to help emergency services identify places such as shops, local halls etc. No action points. All committee members to make a conscious effort to display postcodes in work places etc.</p> <p><i>Committee Road:</i></p> <p>JF reported that Derek MacKay has said that the issue of overweight vehicles using the committee road is not a community council issue.</p> <p>Angus MacDonald Kyles came to the meeting and clarified that when he uses the committee road, the larger vehicles are empty therefore not over the weight limit.</p>	<p>JF to contact Catriona MacCuish to take this matter further, meet up with Cathy Laing to write the letter to be sent to N.U.D</p> <p>MMD to contact Uisdean Robertson to see what progress happened in regards to the rabbits, as it is an issue that keeps being brought up.</p> <p>MMD to email list of flooded areas and pictures to Iain MacLeod</p> <p>Iain MacLeod to find out ownership of the parking area between lochmaddy shop / Red burn House</p>
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	<p><i>Training for community council members:</i></p> <p>Date still not been given for training.</p> <p><i>Abandoned Vehicles:</i></p> <p>KMD read the email sent from Ewen Morrison clarifying that Western Isles Classic Cars Ltd are not scrap metal dealers of any kind, that it is a European wide car removal/delivery service that they offer. He stated that the dumped cars at Clachan and various other places, and the boat dumped at Langass are not his. He said that Western Isles Classic Cars Ltd will not be offering transportation of end of life vehicles to the mainland anymore due to the amount of complaints made to the community council.</p> <p><i>Lochmaddy Slaughterhouse:</i></p> <p>IML reported that the slaughterhouse still has its license but it needs an island impact assessment done – the criteria for this is still to be confirmed.</p> <p><i>Funding:</i></p> <p>Councillors clarified that councilor ward funding and community council ward funding are separate. If anyone would like to apply for councilor ward funding they can be given the contact details for the Councillors. The Councillors also said they will give a statement of funding to the community council.</p>	<p>Councillors to chase up the training.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><i>Police Report</i></p> <p>PC Gavin McDevitt could not attend the meeting but sent the following report: <i>“Included everything from 1st December to 28th January.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Calls to N.Uist beat – 22</i> • <i>Dropped 999 calls – 2</i> • <i>Loss of service alarm – 3</i> • <i>Concern for persons – 3</i> • <i>Information only – 2</i> • <i>Drugs related – 1</i> • <i>Theft related – 1</i> • <i>RT related – 6</i> • <i>Weather related – 1</i> • <i>Neighbour Dispute – 1</i> • <i>Other/Misc – 2</i> <p><i>Crimes recorded in North Uist Beat</i></p> <p><i>Theft of Prawns x2 – Two reports of thefts of prawn storage (and prawns) from Lochmaddy Harbour. Both being actively investigated and most likely linked due to M.O and closeness Of commission. Someone would have had to row out to steal</i></p>	

these, so I'd ask for any Suspicious behaviour down at the harbour to be reported to us asap.

No Insurance

Vehicle stopped crossing over from Berneray with no insurance, MOT or Road Tax. Driver Charged, reported and vehicle seized by me. Seems to be some conflicting information on where MOT's are required on the island, for the sake of clarity, our position on it is that any vehicle with road access to an MOT testing station requires an MOT and we will continue to report any drivers we stop without MOT's. I understand that the DVLA website says that MOT's aren't required on Benbecula or South Uist, but this guidance predates the causways, so I assume this would have been when North Uist was the only island with a testing station. That's not the case now, and until we get a test case into court, our position on it is that everyone needs an MOT.

Drugs

Just under an ounce of Cannabis seized from an address in North Uist following information from the public. The distribution of cannabis (and other drugs) remains a priority for the community and for us, but it's only when we get information that we are able to act on it. I'd encourage people to come forward with their concerns, any information provided to us is confidential and treated as anonymous. I'm aware of, and dealing with, the concerns raised regarding the dances on the island and drugs being taken at them. I'm very keen to stamp this out, rather than have to start objecting to licenses, so I'd continue to encourage anyone with information about drug misuse to speak to us, or contact crimestoppers.

Other Matters of Note

I saw the note about abandoned vehicles in the December Minutes, I totally appreciate the community council's concern regarding them. Apart from being an eyesore, abandoned vehicles pose a risk to the environment and an opportunity for vandalism, none of which we want.

While the police do hold a responsibility for vehicles which are abandoned and causing an obstruction to the roadway, or vehicles suspected to be stolen/used in the commission of a crime, in all other circumstances, this is a matter for the local authority to resolve.

Section 3 (1) of the Refuse Disposal Amenities Act 1978 sets out the statutory responsibility for this as follows:

"Where it appears to a local authority that a motor vehicle in their area is abandoned without lawful authority on any land in the open air or on any other land forming part of a road, it shall be the duty of the local authority, subject to the following provisions of this section, to remove the vehicle."

It is worth noting that "any land in the open air" actually extends to privately owned land as well.

While we will respond to any calls about abandoned vehicles, we would do so only to ascertain whether there was any concern for the owner, or if there was any evidence of the vehicle having been used in criminality. We don't have the power to uplift abandoned cars, except in very specific circumstances."

PC Ross McClenaghan came along to the meeting and also reported that the police will be objecting to any licenses for over 16's dances in the halls. They could still be approved by the council so this alone will not stop them going ahead. This is to tackle the issue of underage drinking and drug use at the halls. Ross also reported that the drug dog is also being encouraged to come down to Uist throughout the year and not just for big events such as EDF.

6. *Councillors report:*

Roddy MacKay and Iain MacLeod were both present and spoke about the following:

1. HHP report on potential house builds:
 - 8 Houses in Garrynamonie
 - 2 houses in Torlum
 - 1 house in Winfield Way
 - 12 possible houses in Howmore
 - Feasability being looked at for houses in Claddach Illeray
 - Lochmaddy Hospital – 20 possible houses. 4 by Tighean Innse Gall, 6 by HHP, and 10 by Private firms.
2. Council Budget for year on 6th February and a Budget Seminar for all Members on the 18th
3. Hoping to have a health forum with all main agencies in Uist sometime in March with the following subjects
 - Dentistry
 - Primary Care
 - Secondary care
 - Social Care
 - Patient Transport
 - Mental Health Services
4. An update was given as to the current situation of the proposed downgrading of Benbecula airport by HIAL to a FISO service rather than an ATC service which we currently have. It was explained to CC that a petition will be launched to gather public support for the retention of the ATC service and the jobs. A joint letter to cabinet secretary from Orkney Shetland and the Western Isles asking for the ATC decision to be put on hold until it has had an island impact assessment done.
5. Connected community's withdrawal of service in March. Email concerns over alternative services to Connected Communities to hidigital@hient.co.uk
6. A share of revenue from crown estates to be distributed across all wards for infrastructure projects (more details on criteria to follow) potentially 97.5k per ward.
7. Councillor Uisdean Robertson was attending the call for evidence on the new ferry debacle by the rural and economy connectivity committee in parliament.
8. Discussed the Spaceport with the UK Space Agency due to visit the proposed site, West Camp and the Range on the 30th January.
9. There will be a public meeting regarding the programme of upgrading work at Lochmaddy Pier in Lochmaddy Hall on the 30th January between 4 and 7pm.
10. Lochmaddy abattoir remains licensed although not currently slaughtering due to additional costs of installing CCTV as a requirement making it currently uneconomical to operate. It is hoped to make a case for the regulations to be softened slightly due to it being a small island slaughterhouse.

7.	<p>AGM</p> <p>Derek MacKay is hoping to do away with AGM's and have annual reports instead. This is yet to be confirmed and the constitution would need to be updated if this is the case. Until there is clarity over this, we have been told not to organize an AGM for April unless told otherwise.</p> <p>People may still join the committee at any meeting.</p>	
8.	<p>AOCB</p> <p>Flora MacDonald put forward that she would like to join North Uist Community Council. Flora joining the committee was proposed by John MacDonald and seconded by Ragnall Maclain.</p> <p><i>School trip Funding:</i> A letter was received from Liniclate School asking for funding from the community council for a school trip to France. The funding would go towards the cost of traveling off the Island to Glasgow. A funding form was given for the School to fill out and return.</p> <p><i>Infrastructure Funding:</i> IML reported about an infrastructure fund that is available for projects that would create and sustain jobs in North Uist and Benbecula, there is £97.5K available for each ward. He asked that anyone with any projects in mind that would be able to start before April, to get in touch.</p> <p><i>Rats:</i> FMD reported that there is a problem with rats at Grimsay Pier and in the boats. Person to get in touch with for this would be the Harbour Master in Lochmaddy.</p> <p><i>Closure of Uig Pier:</i> Concerns were raised over the closure of Uig Pier due to the development works being carried out. There has been speculation over the possibility of the ferry going from Lochmaddy to Ullapool via Tarbert which would cut capacity from Lochmaddy in half and would take approx. 3.5-4.5 hours.</p> <p>Cllr Iain MacLeod to contact Uisdean Robertson about this as he is Chair of Transportation.</p> <p><i>Lochmaddy playpark:</i> JMD asked if the community council could hold funds for the Lochmaddy playpark development as they have no bank account to hold the money. This was agreed by all present members.</p> <p><i>North Uist Flag Committee:</i> KMD volunteered to represent the North Uist Community Council at the unveiling of the North Uist Flag – date to be confirmed.</p> <p><i>VE Day:</i> RMI asked on behalf of Taigh Sgìre Sholais, if the Community Council knew of any potential local events to commemorate VE day. This was for information only to prevent any clashes of dates with other groups, should the Taigh Sgìre be in the position to host such an event.</p>	

	<p><i>Potholes:</i></p> <p>DEM reported bad potholes on Langass roads. This to be added to list of road issues and sent to Councillors.</p>	
	<p>Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 10th March at 7.00pm in Carinish Hall</p>	

	Action items	Person responsible
1.	Contact Catriona MacCuish to take Kilmuir Cemetery matter further, meet up with Cathy Laing to write the letter to be sent to N.U.D	Joan Ferguson
2.	Contact Uisdean Robertson to see what progress happened in regards to the rabbits, as it is an issue that keeps being brought up.	Michelle MacDonald
3.	Email list of flooded areas and pictures to Iain MacLeod	Michelle MacDonald
4.	Find out ownership of the parking area between Lochmaddy shop / Redburn House	Iain MacLeod
5.	Councillors to chase up the training for members.	Iain MacLeod/Roddy MacKay
6.	Contact Cllr Uisdean Robertson regarding concerns over alternative ferry route Via tarbet during Uig Pier Closure.	Iain MacLeod