

Berner Community Council
Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday 26th September 2018 19.30-21.00
Berner Community Hall

Present

Fiona Douglas, Chair (FD)
Philip Dunn (PD)
Cllr Norman MacDonald (NM)
Cllr Angus Morrison (AM)
Joan Macaulay (JM)
Madeleine Macaulay (MM)
Neil James Macaulay (NJM)
Rhiannon Teather, Secretary (RT)
Glynis Davis (GD)
Chrissie MacDonald (CM)

Apologies

Catriona Davies (CD)
Callum Ritchings, Treasurer (CR)

1. Welcome

The new secretary RT was introduced to the committee.

2. Previous Minutes

The minutes dated 27th June 2018 were approved. No additional comments or amendments made.

3. Finance

CR was not present for a finance update.

4. War Memorial

- JM provided an update that funding had been successful for £4,608 of the total estimate for the works (£6,144). £2000 from the challenge fund has come through, £400 to be paid to Malcolm Maciver Construction.
- Neil Mackay has signed the contract for the work but its commencement is weather dependant.
- The possibility of 'tidying up' around the base of the War Memorial was discussed. It was noted that this had been talked about previously but the work had not yet been done. It was agreed it would be ideal to have something done prior to Remembrance Day, including improvements to the railings and cementing.
- It was suggested that someone enquire as to whether the Fire Service would be willing to help with the works.

5. Bosta Road Issues

- The issue of passing places and possible improvements to the Bosta Road has been raised by a resident.

- Cllr NM outlined that the potential obstacle to works was ownership (who holds the responsibility for the road and whose permission is required to do the works). It was established that works would require the permission of the Tobson Grazings Committee.
- It was agreed that Misty would be best placed to provide assistance on the issue and that he should be approached.
- On the possibility of a new lay by, there was concern about it not being suitable for use by coaches as it would not be a large enough area. Cllr NM noted that new grids would cost 3000 and another 3000 to install if there was not already suitable terrain.

6. Broadband

- FD provided an update on the broadband rollout and stated information had been put up on Facebook. The rollout may begin in October.
- FD asked whether Andrea Rutherford and Donnie Morrison should attend a meeting to provide an update. It was agreed that Donnie should be contacted to confirm that every house in Bernera will have access to broadband.
- The importance of the correct placement of the 'cabinets' for broadband access was emphasised and discussed. It was concluded that community engagement was important in order to get this right.
- The question of when residents will have access to broadband was raised. It was established the rollout will be publicised as the work goes on and then people need to contact BT to make sure they are connected.
- The concerns associated with the age of the copper pipes and logistical problems with connections were discussed. Cllr NM outlined that 3.5 million pounds put aside for the purpose of installation and that 12/19 miles of ducting already in place.

7. Update from BCA

- Ken MacAulay (Chairperson of Community Association) contacted FD to discuss information sharing. There was an agreement to share minutes and circulate relevant information.
- No additional news.

8. AOCB

- The issue of cleaners' wages was raised. It was agreed that Callum should be approached.
- CM discussed the matter of road markings in Hacklete. She has observed there are no white lines to mark the junction which has caused confusion for drivers and is potentially dangerous.
- FD presented some information about the TIG Western Isles Climate Challenge. The possibility of having a representative come to a meeting to explain the programme was discussed or the possibility of an open day event for the Community Centre to raise the profile among residents who might be interested. FD to contact the relevant people to establish a date and book space in the hall for possible open day.
- Cllr NM raised a concern about insulation companies and the consistency of the quality of the work. He recommended that residents use companies recommended through word of mouth. The poor safety practices of some companies during works in some homes have resulted in serious injuries. Residents should be aware.
- Kirkibost Pier pontoons have progressed through stage one of the Scottish Government funding and are now onto stage two. The project is looking for community support now. Residents who are supportive of the project should write personal letters expressing their views to help. Toilets, showers and laundrette are currently proposed as facilities.

- On the Bernera Buyout: there has been no response from the owner as yet. The deadline is approaching and the next steps to be formally decided.
- PD raised the issue of the flag pole and the seafarers. FD reported that she has had some conversations with relevant parties but it was decided not to pursue this project at this point. The flag pole may be more expensive than previously thought and the practicalities in terms of the location, the Bernera flag itself, and who would be responsible for putting up/changing the flags on the relevant 5-10 days a year required more consideration. It was suggested the children could make a flag for Bernera if this is pursued in future. There was a consensus to put the flagpole idea on hold for the time being.
- Schools and Remembrance Day Services. Cllr NM explained that the plan is that every school sends a representative to the Stornoway Service but that schools also visit their own local memorials. FD to liaise with the Bernera School and establish how many wreaths need to be ordered for Bernera (a wreath for the Community Council, Community Association, the school, and potentially another for the Stornoway service). This matter is urgent as the Council is in the process of ordering the wreaths.
- JM to enquire about tourism funding for Bosta - 6 million available nationally, 750,000 has already gone, bids being collected. The idea is to get the funding in place to get the work done before the summer. No limit per application but needs to be realistic. Permission from Tobson Grazings Committee required for works.
- A concern was raised about use of the Hacklete Road by visitors unfamiliar with the area. The possibility of putting up a sign was suggested. Cllr NM responded that anyone could put up an informal sign for this purpose over the summer. The possibility of putting up a sign in the Community Centre was also suggested. For a permanent sign, it was stated that planning permission would be required. Cllr MacDonald said he would enquire about the best course of action.
- The reliability of emergency signal in the area was raised and it was noted that there are still patches where there is not coverage. Cllr NM outlined that it is a Scottish government requirement (in the contract for new masts) that they must give emergency services priority but that they also must also provide 4G to residents in the area. It was noted that some will need to be updated to 4G.

Date for next meeting: Wednesday 31 October 2018 - possibly subject to change on account of Halloween.