

# Benera Community Council

## Minutes of Meeting

14 February 2019

7.30-8.50pm at Benera Community Centre

### **Present**

Fiona Douglas, Chair (FD)  
Rhiannon Teather, Clerk (RT)  
Callum Ritchings, Treasurer (CR)  
Cllr Norman MacDonald (NM)  
Phillip Dunn (PD)  
Joan Macaulay (JM)  
Neil James Macaulay (NJM)  
Madeleine Macaulay (MM)  
Chrissie MacDonald (CM)

### **Apologies**

Cllr Angus Morrison  
Cllr Ranald Fraser  
Catriona Macleod

### **Actions**

- FD to contact Andrea Rutherford and Donnie Morrison about holding a public meeting on the Broadband rollout; details to follow
- RT to amend Broadband letter with disclaimers; this will be distributed to the committee via email pending event details; committee to distribute letter in their respective villages (ideally prior to next meeting)
- JM to establish when Marcus Vergette (Time and Tide Bell) will be available for proposed meeting during his visit on Friday (22nd) or Saturday (23rd)
- RT to locate the most up to date copy of BCC constitution.

### **Previous Minutes**

There were insufficient numbers at the meeting of 10 January 2019 to take formal minutes. The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2018 were approved by Callum Ritchings and seconded by Madeleine Macaulay.

### **Finance**

CR provided a finance report. The latest balance is £3,440.77. There will be wages coming in March and money in from the Council for the Kirkibost toilet at the same time.

### **Broadband**

The rollout letter drafted by RT was discussed. It was noted Openreach are not contractually obliged to provide fibre to 100% of properties. We agreed we will need to clarify which properties will be excluded from the rollout and what access will be available for future properties (this may affect where people will choose to build for example). This would require access to the maps for FTTP connection points in each village. People should be made aware that there are costs associated with installation and not everyone will pay the same amount depending on their distance from the road etc. Different ISPs may provide different prices.

We agreed that a public meeting including Andrea Rutherford and Donnie Morrison would be beneficial. It was suggested that committee members distribute the Broadband letter to their own villages for efficiency and to ensure everyone receives a copy. FD to approach Andrea about holding a public meeting, ideally this will be added to letter prior to distribution.

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## **Publicising role of Community Council**

We agreed both the Broadband letter and the potential event are a good opportunity for this. We may want to produce a newsletter in due course.

## **Membership of CC**

The next CC elections will be held next year. We agreed to recruit a new member since GD has stepped down.

## **War Memorial**

JM reported she is awaiting a response from the contractor.

## **Road Signs**

A resident raised this issue sometime ago but still no action. It was established that the signs have been ordered but workers are currently catching up with winter maintenance. A question was raised about road markings but it was established that it will be the wrong time of year for the paint to stick. There was a discussion about who is responsible for maintaining the ditches. NM confirmed this is the Council and these works were done last year. The general safety of road use in cold weather discussed and the importance of driving slowly emphasised.

## **BCA News**

There was no news to report.

## **AOCB**

1. Time and Tide Bell. Marcus Vergette is visiting next week on Friday (22nd) or Saturday (23rd) and wants to meet with the School's Headmaster and a member from BCC. The Museum was noted as already involved. Funding has been provided by Lottery Fund and the project will be on the curriculum soon. They will be looking at 14 locations.
2. Self-build fund. FD received a document about self-build properties and the potential loans available. There was also a facts sheet for crofters. It was agreed to put this on the notice board to make it available to residents.
3. Empty homes. 1000 unoccupied houses falling into disrepair in the Hebrides. NM explained that the Council will be trying to persuade people who own these houses to make them available to people to renovate and use. Any house that is wind and water tight will be of interest. There will be incentives who own them to sell them and for people who want to buy them. The relevant representative for the project was confirmed to be Murdo Macleod.
4. Fish farm debris. A resident raised this issue. Those responsible for doing this work are progressing around the coast. The pipes are difficult to remove and very long (100m) but there is a financial incentive for these to be removed. The Community Council have written to the fish farm multiple times about this issue.
5. BCC Meeting time. It was agreed to change the meeting time to the third Monday of each month.

**Date of Next Meeting: Monday 18 March 2019**