

North Uist Community Council

Comharle Coimhearsnachd Uibhist a Tuath



NUCC minutes

Meeting held on Tuesday 1st March 2022 at 7.30pm in Carinish Village Hall

Present:

Joan Ferguson (**JF**) - Chair
Conor Lawless (**CL**) - Vice-Chair
Lynda MacLean (**LML**) – Secretary
Flora MacDonald (**FMD**)
Effie Rodgers (**ER**)
Donald Ewen Morrision (**DEM**)
Kenneth MacDonald (**KMD**)
Ragnall Maclain (**RMI**)
Cllr Uisdean Robertson (**UR**)

Public:

Douglas MacLean
Jessie Morrison
Jemma MacVicar (North Uist & Benbecula Locality Planning Partnership)
Iain Stephen Morrison (Am Paipear)
Abigail Taylor (Am Paipear)

1. Apologies:

Michelle MacDonald, Rachel MacLean, Donald Angie MacLennan, John MacDonald, Joanne Kane (Police Scotland), Cllr Roddy MacKay, Cllr Iain MacLeod

2. Adoption of minutes & Matters arising:

CL proposed and **KMD** seconded the minutes

Kilmuir Cemetery

Comhairle have agreed to supply materials. Quote for labour obtained from Alasdair MacDonald £838. **UR** agreed to provide £500 of ward funding with NUCC paying the remainder balance of £338. Committee unanimously agreed.

ACTION: JF to progress this with Alasdair MacDonald.

Recycling Bins

Agreed if skip becomes available for plastic and tins for the summer months to decide between members where best placement is.

ACTION: NUCC to continue to peruse this.

Provision of 'just-in-case bags'

UR spoke to Loganair but difficulty with this provision due to planes circulated on different routes. Only other option would be for this to be available from the check-in desk.

ER and **FMD** working on survey to be sent round to those on Cancer journey during last 18 months for them to expand on any difficulties they have experienced which NUCC can feedback to Health Board.

Communications with the community

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CL has gathered all minutes and provided them to Belle Anne, they should be uploaded onto E-Sgìre shortly.

Outer Hebrides Flood Risk Management Plan

JF hasn't been able to get hold of Donald John MacDonald (Comhairle Engineer, Uist) yet.

ACTIONS: JF to continue to peruse this

Aquaculture Stewardship Council consultation

JF contacted MOWI and will arrange a site visit to Cheesebay once weather improves

National Care Service Consultation

Continued from previous minutes as no action has been taken yet in regards to writing to Comhairle to ask for new Care Home for North Uist be included in the Capital Programme.

ACTION: JF to write letter to Comhairle

Parking at Bayhead Shop

Car park has been filled in around mid to late December though due to gravel it has worn again. Member of community wrote to North Uist Estate and received response to advise once weather improves it will be looked at again.

Abandoned Cars

Issue now resolved.

Ferries

Triangle Team did not speak to anyone in community when they were here. Robbie Drummond has plans to be in Lewis and Harris next week though no word of consulting with Uist community. Plans for letter to go to all of North Uist and Berneray residents to make aware of proposed timetable - on hold due to no set timetable been confirmed yet. Calmac Community Fund is currently closed.

ACTION: JF to find out if RD is coming to Uist and if so arrange a face to face meeting with him

3. Co-option of Members

JF contacted Derek MacKay who advised constitution allows for 13 directly elected members with up to four co-opted and the three councillors, total 20 members. Can appoint directly to fill any vacancies in directly elected members. We have scope to co-opt four members.

ACTION: All members to email suggestions of potential new members to LML.

Leave one space free for a potential School pupil to come on from August.

4. Ferries

Calmac consultation event held on 15th December. KMD attended and raised questions but no response received yet. A number of local businesses have not been consulted. Calmac stated on their slides that they will liaise with Community Councils but NUCC has not been consulted by Calmac.

FMD advised on issue with supply of Red Diesel on the Island due to no space on ferry.

UR advised that Transport Scotland confirmed fares would still be the same if ferry goes to Ullapool.

Discussion of suitability of other routes, agreed that a night-time freight run may help and Ullapool to Lochmaddy would be the preferred option.

It has been proposed that we need to push Calmac to offer two ferries during the summer on the triangle route, one for North Uist and one for Harris. This would need further discussed with Harris for their view.

ACTIONS: UR will look into issue with supply of Red Diesel.

UR to send copy of confirmation of ferry fares to LML.

JF to email triangle team to arrange a meeting.

5. Spaceport 1 Planning

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Documents have been placed in both Hosta Hall and the Library for public viewing. Comments to be made to planning by 9th March.

Majority of members opposed to Spaceport and feel it is mainly objections from local community.

ACTION: JF to email Council with comments from NUCC.

6. Tracks update

NUCC challenge fund application successful for £1000 with an additional £1000 from ward funding. £20,000 has been applied for though the NHS WI Capital Grants, awaiting outcome.

Crown Estate funding closes for applications on Friday, NUCC looking for between £20,000 and £50,000.

Discussion of how best to distribute funds to townships. It was decided to wait on outcome of NHS application.

It has been noted that Baleshare track has recently been repaired by other means.

ACTIONS: CL to apply for Crown Estate Funding

7. Dunskeellar Graveyard

Plan is to map all marked and unmarked layers and get a digital survey done.

RMI meeting with Neil MacKinnon on Saturday to discuss initially what can be done.

RMI to keep CC updated on progress.

This brought further discussion of other Graveyards –

Part of Kilmuir Graveyard is responsibility of community to maintain though council do currently maintain it.

Baleshare Graveyard is this maintained and secure from rabbits?

ACTION: LML to check if Baleshare Graveyard is maintained and take pictures.

8. Bank of Scotland Parking

Raised by member of community on how difficult it is to exit car park due to where cars are parked causing blind spot. Letter from Ewen Morrison received and distributed to members. No action can be taken due to ground where cars are parked being owned by Ewen Morrison and family.

It has been suggested for the bank to reinstate parking lines.

ACTION: JF to email Rita, Bank Manager, to push to get lines reinstated.

9. Clachan Sands Telephone Box

A group has been formed, Clachan Sands Community Hub, to adopt Telephone Box as focal point. It will be formally adopted by Lochmaddy Village Hall. Members unanimously agreed.

ACTION: LML to email BT payphone contact to confirm NUCC happy for this to happen

10. Councillor's Report

Island Connectivity Plan

The Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) will replace the Ferries Plan and will consider island connectivity more broadly having regard to aviation, ferries and fixed links, and to connecting and onward travel. The ICP will develop objectives based on supporting delivery of the National Transport Strategy 2 and the National Islands Plan, and develop proposals to meet those objectives which represent value for money. There are 5 main "pillars" to the Plan:

- Updated community needs assessments, and market assessments
- A long-term investment programme for new ferries and development at ports
- A ferry fares policy review
- Pathways to zero/low emission ferry transport
- Onward and connecting travel

PSO Benbecula/Stornoway

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- The current contract was put in place as a temporary measure during the Covid 19 pandemic, with an intention to reinstate a four-year contract at the earliest opportunity
- Cognisance was taken of the low level of demand for the service but there was an expectation that demand would start to improve as the restrictions in place due to the Covid 19 pandemic eased during this period.
- Although there has been an improvement compared to 2020/21 the Omicron variant resulted in lower passenger bookings than was anticipated for the current year.
- Total passenger numbers are less than half of normal bookings pre-covid
- Non-business use has dropped significantly to around 4%. Pre-Covid non-business/leisure use was around 29%
- A high percentage of the remaining service users are Health Board staff or patient travel
- There has been no engagement from the Western Isles Health Board and no financial contribution from the Health Board
- Due to the level of demand, costs are likely to increase significantly
- The Comhairle has not been provided with any additional funding for PSO air services
- Service at risk if costs greatly exceed budget

All PSO air services could be better managed collectively by SG but even this would not guarantee access to sufficient funding to maintain the current service, especially if it is not being used. Should there be a change in the way that WIHB allocate provision of service, for example sending patients from Benbecula to Glasgow rather than to Stornoway/Inverness, the use of the Inter Island air service would drop even lower. This might be better for patient travel but make the Inter Island air service unsustainable as a consequence.

ACTION: **UR** to forward to **LML** who will circulate to members

11. Correspondence

Emergency planning

Letter received from member of community in regards to sourcing funding to purchase essential equipment for the elderly and vulnerable in our community which could be used when we experience storms and power cuts over the winter months.

This discussion lead onto looking into a resilience committee and having community hall networks prepared to be set up for this provision.

ACTION: **LML** to forward letter onto **UR**

To be added to Agenda for another meeting to discuss further and look at sourcing funding.

Metering issue

Email received from member of community who is in the process of building a house and has had an issue with gaining an electricity meter for the property. Discussion took place and it seems it is a very common issue on the Islands. **AT** at Am Paipear advised she is working on an article regarding this.

ACTION: Those that are experiencing issues to email **LML** who will pass on to Am Paipear if agreement given.

It was suggested for NUCC to gauge how many people are affected, should this be added to our Facebook page?

Defibrillator support

Request for support to upkeep of the Defibrillators in North Uist. Replacement batteries and pads are required for some.

It was unanimously agreed when NUCC gain money from sale of the HIAL boat that we could look at using some of this money to support this request. It was also discussed that a plan should be put into place of putting a small sum of money aside each year to aid upkeep of these, possibly also look at fundraising going forward.

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UCVO are working on a spreadsheet and map of all defibrillators on the Island but they are wanting to ensure they are all 'recuse ready' before releasing the spreadsheet.

ACTION: JF to contact Sarah to advise we are awaiting funds and will happily support.

Add to Agenda for next meeting to discuss plan to ensure they are maintained in the long term.

12. AOCB

Roadside rubbish

There is rubbish including white goods and tote bags dumped near Bayhead opposite Ashdail housing.

ACTION: DEM to take pictures and pass onto **JF** who will look into this.

Powercuts/BT difficulties

It has been reported that a number of phone lines have been affected by recent weather and powercuts which is a worry due to those relying on alarm systems. BT have not been helpful in getting this resolved.

ACTION: If issue is not resolved within next few days it has been suggested for **JM** to contact CAB for assistance.

Possible story for Am Paipear to pick up on.

Ukraine aid

Noted that NUCC thoughts are with all affected. There is collection being done by Ania in Balivanich with a number of gathering points open for donations by Saturday.

13. Date of next meeting

Next meeting scheduled for 5th April 2022 to take place at Ceann na H-Airigh, Grimsay.

With meetings agreed to take place monthly until summer holidays.

Jemma MacVicar (Community Development Officer) and Police Scotland to be invited to attend.