

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

APPROVED MINUTES

from

**Berner Community Council Convened Public Meeting
held on**

**Wednesday 13th September, 7.30-9.30pm
Main Hall, Great Bernera Community Centre**

Meeting Attendees

Top Table:-

Chair, CnES Councillor. Cllr Norman Macdonald (also known as 'Misty')

Berner Community Council (BCC) committee members present: Madeleine Macaulay (BCC Chair), Robert Mackenzie, Calum Richings (Treasurer), Chrissie Macdonald, Rhiannon Teather (Secretary)

Present in a formal capacity to answer questions on behalf of GBCDT, Callum J Macaulay (Interim Chair, GBCDT)

Audience:-

GBCDT board of directors (current): Julia Higginbottom, Anne Ryan, Kevin Long

GBCDT board of directors (resigned). John Porteous, Sallie Porteous

Formerly employed or appointed by GBCDT: Norma Macleod (former Secretary), Joanna George (former Development Officer)

The meeting was attended by over a hundred residents from Bernera and Tir Mor. 94 people signed in formally, providing their names, addresses and contact e-mail (optional, if they wished to receive the minutes of the public meeting).

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Berner Community Council Chair Madeleine Macaulay opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. BCC committee introduced: Robert Mackenzie, Calum Richings, Chrissie Macdonald, Rhiannon Teather. From the GBCDT to assist in answering questions, Callum J Macaulay. Councillor Norman (Misty) Macdonald acting as meeting Chair. Madeleine summarised background leading to public meeting. Bernera Community Council were contacted by residents when notice of a successful funding award to GBCDT for the Hatchery was published in a newspaper. Residents felt their views were not represented regarding proposed use and asked BCC to take action. On this basis, BCC issued the Opinions Survey and this meeting will go over the findings. The purpose of the meeting is to facilitate a community discussion about the way forward. The opening presentation is divided into three parts to help summarise findings and structure meeting: transparency, GBCDT and the buyout.

Opening Presentation (Madeleine Macaulay)

PowerPoint Slide. Survey responses

- We distributed 140 letters (approximately one per active household)
- We received 90 responses and a total of 79 letters
- The rule was one person = one response
- This is the largest response we have ever received

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

PowerPoint Slide. Transparency #1

- 93% in favour of greater transparency
- 84 respondents do think there needs to be much greater transparency regarding the activities of all three Bernera committees, including the publication of full financial accounts, meeting minutes and planned projects.
- 2 respondents said that they did not think there needs to be greater transparency.
- A further 4 respondents opted not to select a response.
- This statement was originally point 5 of the opinions survey. It received the most responses in favour of one statement, with 84 out of 90 respondents.

PowerPoint Slide. Transparency #2 – Proposed Solutions

- An official cross-committee mailing list & database to ensure every household receives correspondence and by their preferred method of communication
- We propose to base this on the electoral register and issue another survey to establish preferred method of communication for each household/individual (e-mail or letter)
- BCC to organise consultation surgeries or drop-in-sessions (every six months?); a reminder that our BCC monthly meetings are public and all are welcome to attend
- Quarterly cross-committee meeting
- Public meeting every six months with updates from each committee
- BCC currently do not use Facebook; to set up / resume Facebook communication
- Other ideas from audience welcome; these are just our suggestions

PowerPoint Slide. Great Bernera Community Development Trust #1

- 83% of respondents do have concerns about the current projects proposed by Great Bernera Community Development Trust. (75/90 respondents).
- 76% of respondents do not consider the Hatchery consultation findings in support of the project to be representative of the views of the community. (68/90).
- 74% of respondents do not agree with the proposed plans for the use of the Hatchery as proposed by Great Bernera Development Trust (67/90).
- 68% of respondents do not have confidence in Great Bernera Community Development Trust to represent the community (62/90).
- 53% of respondents did receive a survey regarding the Hatchery proposals (48/90). 44% did not receive a survey (40/90).

PowerPoint Slide. Great Bernera Community Development Trust #2 – Proposed Solutions

- In advance of this meeting we submitted the following questions to the GBCDT on Friday 8 September 2023 and invited them to respond:
 - (1) How did the Trust arrive at the proposals included in the business plan and how the survey was completed/distributed?
 - (2) Why have so many Trustees resigned? Please confirm the current board members and who has resigned.
 - (3) Who can become members of the Trust and how can residents find out whether they are members? We note the membership form has been updated. Please confirm how these changes were authorised.
 - (4) When will the next GBCDT AGM be held?
 - (5) Please supply a copy of the up to date Articles.
- We hope this meeting will address some of these questions

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

PowerPoint Slide. Views on the Community Buyout #1

- 62% of respondents say their view has not changed regarding the buyout (56/90). 29% of respondents say their view has changed (26/90).
- 50% of respondents do not support the buyout (45/90). 34% of respondents do support the buyout (31/90). 15% of respondents were undecided or did not express a view (14/90).

PowerPoint Slide. Views on the Community Buyout #2 – Proposed Solutions

- We encourage everyone to join GBCDT and ensure they are a member so they can fully participate in matters going forward; membership forms are available at the door
- Concerns have been raised that the new membership form does not mention the buyout, which we understand was the original purpose and remit of GBCDT; there needs to be a renewed conversation about purpose and remit of all three committees
- We propose there should be another public meeting to establish the current view on the buyout as soon as possible
- We propose that BCC and BCA have a role in the buyout going forward in terms of involvement in the discussions

End of formal presentation. Madeleine Macaulay states meeting will now be open to the floor for questions. Cllr Norman Macdonald outlines ground rules: everyone's views are welcome but please be considerate of time keeping and the views of others when making your comments; we have moderators on hand to assist.

Open Floor Questions & Answers

Q. If people have already in the past filled in a membership form, how can they find out whether they are still members? Was the membership for life, as we previously understood?

Callum J Macaulay [hereafter abbreviated CJM] stated individuals should contact by telephone in the coming days and he will confirm whether or not they are current members.

Q. What is the criteria for voting on the community buyout? Is the Trust taking this forward?

CJM we are looking at going for 'Part Three' at the moment. This is a crofter buyout rather than a community buyout. If resident on Bernera and have a boundary with the estate, then will be able to vote; a number of people are excluded from vote since they do not have a boundary with the Estate. CJM personal view is that all resident on Bernera should be able to vote and GBCDT would look to expand voting to include those currently excluded. Trust is here for Bernera, not as a management group.

Q. Can anybody in the community become a GBCDT member?

CJM. Yes any resident can become a member. Associate members do not have a vote, so there are some restrictions on that.

Q. Can anyone be a co-opted member?

CJM. Do you mean on the GBCDT board? People can be nominated and co-opted.

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Q. Trust membership is one thing, but what about voting on the buyout?

CJM. Buyout voting determined by Scottish Office, not by us. Bernera Estate excludes Tir Mor but we recognise this is not how community sees Bernera. In other matters, Trust wants to be less restrictive than their [Scottish Office] criteria to ensure everyone can vote.

Q. If you are on the GBCDT board, and not on the electoral roll, do you have a vote?

CJM. No. Anyone on the current board and not a resident on Bernera Estate cannot vote.

Q. How many members of the Trust in total actually live on the island?

CJM. Over a 170 [on Trust Register].

Comment from the floor. The Hatchery survey was filled out by people not living on the island [Bernera]. 10% not living on the island.

Julia Higginbottom (GBCDT, current Director) stands up from the audience to respond in defence of Hatchery survey and funding application. She explained that those with a registered interest were able to be included in the results and the Hatchery survey was conducted by an independent company. Stated that the 10% from Uig expressed an interest in possibly using Kirkibost facilities and this is why they were included in the survey. The respondents were sifted. 9 stakeholders were interviewed by independent company; understands community groups were all invited but no control over whether they took this up. Higginbottom explains 'social attack' was the one criticism received in their survey. Higginbottom addresses that criticism; funding application would have not been progressed if there was a genuine conflict with the Community Centre; highlights issues regarding governance, professionalism and transparency on the board; now being rectified with training etc. More information for the community to follow. We (GBCDT) were unable to release details regarding the successful funding regarding Hatchery due to – 'what is the word?' [someone else answered] 'an embargo'.

[A member of audience asked her to 'sit down.']

Q. Trust was set up to buy the island, when was it agreed that it would branch out into these other matters? I understood these sorts of projects were to wait until the island was bought; now become a spider's web and GBCDT is not focusing on its original purpose.

CJM. The development group was set up before island put up for sale or it was offered; the group was actually initially set up to do community projects; buyout took over development group but this was never the original plan; for example when Pontoon Scheme was originally put together by Pier & Harbour group, and proposals got further ahead, the Trust were asked to take this over and then the funding for the pontoon facility achieved. GBCDT was not there just to buy Bernera, though the Articles were changed to focus on this and people may have thought that was the only focus, but this is not correct.

Q. Is it not better to focus on the buyout? You are bringing in a lot of money for other projects, but as an observation, you do not appear to have a lawyer dealing with other party of buyout. Should resources not be diverted? Get a lawyer and do it properly.

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

CJM. We have had lawyers employed for buyout and we were pursuing that avenue for years, getting nowhere. At the same time we are seeing what is happening in Bernera, loss of shop and school. We had success with the Pier Harbour group project, in the making from 20 odd years ago. We need to be seen to be doing something. Yes it is a phenomenal amount of work for the GBCDT board; people are overwhelmed.

Q. If you had lawyers working on the buyout, what was their opinion re engaging with the other side? And Landlord's refusal to correspond?

John Porteous [former GBCDT Chair, now resigned] answered from the audience that lawyers concurred with view of SNP and MSPs that it is ridiculous. CJM missed an important point in his answer to previous question. We were restricted by focusing on the island alone. GBCDT were not going to wait for island to die. Decision was taken that we can buy land part of Estate and try and reverse the loss of people, jobs and future; housing needed for young people.

Q. Why was buyout progressed?

John Porteous explained public meetings, including over 50 people, were held indicating strong support for buyout. We were pushing ahead with the mapping, feasibility study and application process. It is a very high bar for Part Three.

Q. Do you have to pay people to do this work?

Q. Can we back up to GBCDT board membership question, can co-opted members vote?

CJM. Trust board can co-opt members onto board for their skills. They do not have to be full members or associated members. CIB is the current office for GBCDT for example.

Q. I have read the Articles. I do not agree. Articles allow co-opting of three resident members from Bernera community. I understand we have a Director who does not live on Bernera and therefore should they be on the board?

Julia Higginbottom stated from audience that she is not on the electoral register but is eligible to vote and therefore able to be a Director.

Comment. Interesting that you volunteered that. I was referring to Virginia [Allum].

CJM. Virginia Allum is an associate member of GBCDT. She was co-opted for her skills.

Comments in the room querying what 'skills' means and how this is determined. It was noted Allum does not live on Bernera Estate. In response, Julia Higginbottom queried how GBCDT can recruit skilled people then.

Chrissie Macdonald (BCC) commented that there is a double-standard when it comes to voting and co-opting by GBCDT. I was specifically contacted and told I was not allowed to vote or be a member of GBCDT as not technically resident on Bernera Estate. Different rules are applied when it comes to your friends.

Q. The other issue is length of terms of office. Several members are in breach. Does this call into question the validity of the legitimacy of the decisions made?

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

CJM. I have been on and off many years. I will have to come off at next AGM.

[Audience members commented that it is difficult to hear what is being said. Please can you get a microphone? Brief pause while this is set up.]

Rhiannon Teather (BCC Secretary). Please can CJM clarify for the room who is currently on the GBCDT board, who has resigned and why they resigned. People may not be aware that there is a significant split on the board and there have been a number of resignations.

CJM. Current board is David Boag, Virginia Allum, Kevin Long, Julia Higginbottom and Anne Ryan. CJM is also on board as interim Chair. Katie Booth resigned due to work commitments. Since, there was a motion to take John Porteous off the board as Chair, after that meeting Sallie Porteous, John Porteous, Findlay MacIver, Brenda Jones and Secretary Norma Macleod all resigned.

Q. John Porteous has made a longstanding, valued contribution to the community, no issues previously and we have always been able to work together with him. I would like to know why John [Porteous] was removed?

CJM. There was a vote of no confidence in his actions.

[John Porteous indicates he wishes to speak and comes to the front to the microphone].

Porteous explained that BCC submitted questions for GBCDT to respond to. I was removed due to the e-mail response I issued to BCC; I chose to answer with my own opinions as well; I wanted to work together with other groups and this was not well received by the board. I decided to resign as GBCDT not representing the interests of the community.

Julia Higginbottom answers from the audience that Porteous was removed as Chair because he was not passing questions and/or corresponding on other important matters; that he had added his own personal views on the questions asked and therefore he was removed as Chair. It took him 2 days to pass BCC questions to rest of board; there was an agreed response and he lost the confidence of the board.

Comments from the floor asking CJM if he was aware of what was going on and/or approved decision to removed JP as Chair.

CJM I was unaware of matters and locked out of discussions. Audience queries how Julia Higginbottom provided a proxy vote to remove John Porteous as Chair when the Chair and Vice Chair were unaware that this vote would happen. Higginbottom stated she did not know the vote would take place.

Norma Macleod (Bernera Community Association Chair/former GBCDT Secretary) recounts her experience of the board meeting in question: increasingly bad situation over the past year with multiple people leaving the board; without my knowledge my removal as Secretary had been discussed; I turned up to the meeting, expecting I was to remain as Secretary; I was not allowed to speak at meeting and was told I needed to leave the room. I was left waiting outside with Tom Macdonald [GBCDT founder and member, also present at GBCDT meeting in

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

question] on the stairs for one and a half hours. If there is transparency, you do not put the Secretary out of the room. I have never seen the like or the lack of respect. [Applause from audience].

Comments from the floor that Trust should cease to operate. Round of applause from audience.

Kevin Long (GBCDT, current Director) comes up to the front to the microphone. [Someone shouts from audience: 'Who are you? I have never seen you before'; Laughter from audience]. Long explains he is in charge of governance for Bernera. Long queried whether people in the audience knew what governance was. He said there have been failings in governance, now to be rectified. Issues with meetings not being chaired correctly, the board not minuting the meetings properly, communication not been circulated properly.

Kevin Long has various indistinct exchanges with audience members regarding meaning of governance; states issues are complex. Audience member responds that 'I think we can handle it'.

Further comments from multiple members of audience stating no confidence in the current board; GBCDT AGM should be called urgently.

Q. If everyone is a member of this community, why are you discussing things privately? What are you discussing that people in community should not know about?

Kevin Long takes the microphone and states there are a lot of things we cannot discuss now for confidentiality reasons. Once DTAS report is out, community will be better informed.

[Joanne George, former GBCDT Development Officer, indicates she wishes to speak and comes to the front to the microphone].

Joanna George recounts her experience as Development Officer: good first year as Development Officer; dynamics changed in the Trust in my second term with the new board; we were supposed to have cross-committee meeting; different things were falling by the way side; I was met with a lot of hostility when I tried to put forward views of the community; it got so bad I resigned; I was spoken to horribly. They threatened to take a grievance out against me and I still have not received the investigation report. It has been months now.

Julia Higginbottom (GBCDT Director, current) responds from audience that this was the responsibility of the former Chair, John Porteous, as it was his responsibility to send the report to Joanna. Notes another example of governance issues.

John Porteous responds and requests that they stop slandering him. Notes that Kevin Long requested minutes to be changed after a meeting to include matters that were not discussed at the meeting; you cannot do that as minutes should only record what transpires at a meeting, not future events.

General discussion ensues among parties regarding minutes and transparency regarding what is being discussed.

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Anne Ryan (GBCDT Director, current) speaks from the audience. She comments it is common that some things that are discussed at meetings and not minuted. She asked Cllr Norman Macdonald to comment and confirm this also happens at his meetings. Cllr Norman Macdonald rejects this; our discussions are always minuted.

Norma Macleod (BCA/former GBCDT Secretary). If it was not a regular meeting, it should have been agreed as such; minutes should still be taken by Secretary at any meeting.

Madeleine Macaulay (BCC) stands and summarises: Huge points about the running of things by GBCDT; the community clearly want to revisit the purpose of the hatchery project and GBCDT should call a meeting to discuss this; minutes are missing; Articles have been changed without due process; I have asked the Trust for information regarding community bikes and current projects. Reluctant to bring up the Bosta toilets saga but I been writing about the Bosta toilets for months and getting no reply. This all needs to be addressed by GBCDT.

Q. Where are financial statements and the accounts?

Anne Ryan (GBCDT, current Director) responds from audience. She notes there are two things that happen at AGM; (1) Articles are changed; (2) accounts are approved.

Rhiannon Teather (BCC Secretary) takes microphone and responds: I resigned from GBCDT board back in February over a long running dispute with former GBCDT Chair Anne Ryan regarding accounts and project transparency; I was asked to sign off accounts without seeing the bank statements; even as a Trust Director I never received the information I requested and still have not; Companies House may accept abridged accounts but community deserves better; The Trust is getting a lot of more money now, for cost of living funds etc. Community needs to see what is going in and what is going out. Someone from GBCDT invited to come up and explain this. [No one from current board of GBCDT comes to the front].

Discussion turns to GBCDT Articles. It is noted draft GBCDT articles are with the Scottish Office due to buyout proposal but will be available for AGM.

Q. RE issues with Trust, who is investigating this? Where are the minutes and the reports?

CJM explains he is new as interim Chair and it has been difficult; he does not have the reports or access to all the information. Kevin Long has the reports and has refused to share them, citing a conflict of interest. Information has not been shared and CJM feels this is being withheld unfairly; I wanted to consult other bodies before doing anything but Long blocked this and said he [Long] had already spoken to other groups and asked CJM to correspond through him.

The issue regarding reports availability and conflict of interest is debated between parties. Noted this 'conflict of interest' terminology is a recurring theme/issue when dealing with GBCDT. Norma Macleod recounts that she was accused of having a conflict of interest because she is Chair of Bernera Community Association. They carried on their secret meeting but did not include the eviction of myself and Tom in minutes; I submitted minutes that did include we had been removed from the room for one and a half hours.

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Kevin Long challenged how Norma knew what had happened at the meeting since she had been removed. Macleod clarified that she knew because Brenda [Jones] had taken minutes on her own laptop so she could see what other items were discussed; the minutes excluded Norma [Macleod] and Tom [Macdonald] being asked to leave.

Comments from the audience that we have always been able to work together previously, never had issues with members of different community groups being on more than one committee; this has always helped with communication. Indistinct discussion continues about what information CJM does/does not have access to and why.

Q. To GBCDT Directors, are you going to have a vote to remove CJM as well? There seems to be a pattern. Why are you leaving CJM out of communications?

It was noted Sallie Porteous had been waiting some time to ask her question; she is encouraged to take the microphone.

Sallie Porteous (GBCDT, former Director) stands to speak from audience: big issue with current board of GBCDT is that this Island is a crofting community where people share and support each other and the new GBCDT people are from different places culturally, for them it is all about competition and getting ahead/there first; this is not how community works on this island, people should work together for benefit of the whole community, and it should not be about ego. A comparison is made about Kevin Long's appearance and how much time and energy he puts into it versus the neglectful treatment of his animals. [Applause from audience].

[Kevin Long requests Cllr Macdonald intervene at this point].

An audience member stands to object and comes to the front to the microphone: I am really uncomfortable right now and feel like I want to leave this meeting; this language and behaviour from both sides is not acceptable; ground rules stated at the beginning of meeting about respecting people and their views are not being followed; please be kind. [Applause from audience].

Madeleine Macaulay (BCC Chair) stands and takes microphone: Thank you and yes we agree and understand that, please everyone be respectful and avoid making personal comments about individuals; emotions are running high but we all need to be able to work together and find a way forward; however we still need to have a lot more information from the Trust regarding the current funding projects. Does anyone have questions about these?

Q. Re Hatchery project, can someone come to the front and talk about it?

Anne Ryan (GBCDT, current Director) comes to the front and takes microphone. She notes it will not be possible to reach a resolution to all this tonight. [Audience member responds 'who says we want a resolution?']. Anne responds with saying she has a suggestion to make; we (GBCDT) will be putting together an 'information pack'; how we have come to decisions and with report outcomes etc.; people can make up their minds when they are better informed about what is going on.

A discussion ensues about the timing of 'information pack' and GBCDT AGM. Audience member queries how long before they release their information pack. Anne Ryan confirms about a month's time, due to time this will take to put together; a lot of work for Directors.

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Ryan proposes that 'information pack' is released, then we have a meeting about the information pack and then AGM; meeting re 'information pack' may require AGM to be pushed back.

Q. Can this meeting re 'information pack' be rolled into the AGM? We do not want AGM to be delayed.

Ryan states she thinks people's opinions will change after information pack is out and therefore it is important Trust is given 'opportunity to defend itself'.

BCC committee members at top table state to Ryan that the Trust have had months to come before the community and 'defend themselves' and explain what has been going on. This is not about the Trust, it is about the community. Meeting shows there is a severe lack of confidence in the current Trust board and it is not appropriate to delay AGM on that basis.

[Audience members state they cannot hear what is being said at the front, please use the microphone.]

Q. CJM, please can you set GBCDT AGM date?

CJM responds that he cannot set the date himself, as this will need to be agreed at the Board meeting. He has proposed previously that the AGM date is set at the next meeting and expects this to be the case.

Robert Mackenzie (BCC) states to CJM that an AGM meeting at the end of October/early November should still be feasible, there is time to release 'information pack' and still have AGM on time or only a week delayed.

Q. Comment on the double-standard in GBCDT communication. You have the current interim Chair being denied access to a report; yet you admitted that you removed John Porteous as Chair because he did not circulate an e-mail within two days. It is fine to produce a booklet – I will read it – but that our issue is that none of this information is being shared or produced by your own Chairman. I demand an apology for Norma and Tom – no matter what the issue was that they should not have been left out there – they should have been told to come back in or that they could go home.

Indistinct discussion ensues regarding how the decision to expel Norma and Tom from the meeting was made. Anne Ryan states that with the benefit of hindsight, it would not have happened.

Q. Audience members insist GBCDT apologise for the way Norma [Macleod] and Tom [Macdonald] were treated at the board meeting.

Ryan is pushed further to apologise and does so. Audience members acknowledge her apology and thank her.

Q. Audience member repeatedly asks (until heard), who instigated the expulsions from the meeting?

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Norma Macleod confirms this was Kevin Long. Anne Ryan states that she cannot remember; only that what we had agreed as the message to BCC was not followed through by John Porteous and therefore resolution put forward.

Q. Was a motion taken that people should be expelled from meeting?

Inconclusive discussion follows between parties regarding what happened. Norma Macleod (former Secretary) states that regardless whether people were expelled from meeting, a minute apart should have been kept by those present; GBCDT meetings are supposed to be public meetings which members can attend; closed session was not on the agenda.

Anne Ryan states the 'information pack' might shed some light on things.

Q. Ryan asks audience what do you want to see in 'information pack'?

Audience member responds that they want to see the full accounts, detailing all the funding, money in, and all expenses and expenditure out.

Audience members states that you [GBCDT] should include the BCC questions in your booklet.

Q. Multiple audience members ask whether CJM will be kept in the loop?

Confirmation that CJM is interim Chair. Anne Ryan responds this year has been 'a perfect storm' and 'year of turmoil'; just as we are getting progress; people should not be blocked from making progress and achieving good things for community. Subcommittees taking matters forward.

Q. If GBCDT only has six remaining Directors, how can you have subcommittees? Surely you will just end up with one person in a room talking to themselves?

[Audience laughter]. Anne Ryan reiterates that there is a huge volume of work for the current board.

Q. Please can you publish the GBCDT membership list? Why does everyone not have access to this on the website?

Anne Ryan refused request on grounds of data protection.

Comment. Any membership organisation I know like a golf club, cricket etc. always list members, so this should not be a barrier.

Anne Ryan said they would look into it; no further comment given.

Q. I would like to make a suggestion. Please can you commit to negative responses being included in your report, as BCC have done. Please can you commit to give Joanna George the report she has been waiting for within two days of this meeting. It is appalling to have made her wait this long.

[No commitment made.]

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Q. Can you have GBCDT meetings or the AGM on Zoom?

Anne Ryan says Zoom meetings are a breach of Articles.

[Some members of audience objected that Trust have held meetings on Zoom previously. No response.]

Q. We want to see GBCDT accounts; we want total amount Trust has been spent since formed; Trust has wasted money. You are on third reiteration of mapping. Who is paying for it?

[No coherent response].

Q. Rhiannon Teather (BCC) points out Trust board voted to share the community bikes with the BCA/Community Centre while I was on the board. Why has this not been done?

Anne Ryan responds that that vote was taken before GBCDT found out how much the insurance would cost, prohibitively expensive. Norma Macleod (BCA Chair) comments that BCA are happy to cover the insurance for the bikes at the Community Centre; please just arrange to deliver half of them to BCA/Community Centre as previously agreed.

Chrissie Macdonald (BCC) points to the fact batteries will be flat now. They require to be run down fully in order to recharge them properly. They may not be usable now. It is very wasteful. BCC committee asked for some of the bikes to be kept at the hall and offered to pay for charging points. Ryan said 'if you want bikes, we'll get you bikes.'

Q. An audience member points out Community Bikes being kept in Kirkibost is really inconvenient for most members of the community; Kirkibost Pier is not near anything; not accessible from Bosta, Croir, Breacleit, which is the main road through Bernera. Surely this not the best way to be using them?

Anne Ryan responds that this is not a good enough reason to move bikes from Kirkibost and people will need to get their own bikes if they live in Croir or elsewhere. Members of BCC committee at table respond to Ryan that we understand this is a breach of your funding. The bikes were funded on the basis of being used for community health for residents; it is a breach of your responsibilities, fraudulent even, to prevent members of the community using them by making them inaccessible. Anne Ryan responded that 'we'll help you get your own'.

Q. Please can we have a date for the GBCDT AGM now.

Q. Are you just going to plough along with the Hatchery? People are not happy with the purpose you have put forward.

Anne Ryan responds that this will be discussed at meeting regarding information pack. Members of audience dispute this and request that everything is discussed just at GBCDT AGM as soon as possible.

BERNERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Ryan proposes a show of hands regarding proposed two meetings. A show of hands is taken. Show of hands shows a clear majority in favour going straight to AGM, a minority favoured two meetings.

A member of audience stands and objects that there are people who might want to two meetings not in the room, therefore not fair to decide to go straight to AGM on basis of people here; proposes a survey is distributed to community to decide.

Madeleine Macaulay (BCC) notes that this is a matter for GBCDT. We encourage GBCDT to arrange AGM as soon as possible. Any other questions before we close?

A member of the audience notes issues using GBCDT website. Julia Higginbottom queries whether these issues have been reported to GBCDT, not aware of them.

A member of the audience highlights the governance issues with GBCDT – previous chair noted minutes were being doctored; current chair does not have access to reports. I have no confidence in the Trust.

Madeleine Macaulay (BCC) closes meeting, stating that we encourage everyone to ensure they are members of GBCDT so they can vote and participate at AGM; GBCDT membership forms available at the back; the minutes and information from this public meeting will be sent out to everyone. Refreshments, cheese and wine, also at the back and sure everyone needs this after such a long meeting. Thanks everyone for your time tonight.

Meeting concluded.