

Benbecula Community Council

Minute of Meeting held on Thursday 15th February 2018 at 7.00pm at

Tagsa Uibhist Office, East Camp, Balivanich

1. Welcome and Present:

Councillors: Andrew Walker (Clerk), Murdina Naylor (Treasurer), Hugh MacCormick

CnES: Councillors Uisdean Robertson, Iain MacLeod and Roddy MacKay

Public: No attendance

Police: Not present

Murdina chaired the meeting. Gail Robertson arrived later, Murdina continued as chair.

2. Apologies:

C'Ilor Iain MacNeil

3. Minutes of Meeting of 12th November 2017:

Proposed by Murdina, seconded by Hugh.

4. Matters Arising:

Play Parks ... C'Ilor MacKay is Comhairle contact, confirms that playparks will be dismantled if no community interest. Equipment in good condition can be given to functioning parks. Finance from the Comhairle is being disbursed on a Ward basis, £12,100 to Ward 1, and £10,900 to Ward 2. A questionnaire about current ownership and condition of equipment will be sent out by Eilidh Johnson. Benbecula Community Council discussed possibility of taking on particular playpark ownership, but decided against this option. Issues of public liability insurance may prove to be an obstacle to any community groups. Any views or suggestions to be forwarded to C'Ilor MacKay.

Internet Safety ... Gail maintains contact with relevant agencies. Clerk distributed Code for Young People from Children's Commissioner. Balivanich Primary School has ongoing work with pupils, and local Police.

Nunton Traffic Management ... White lining will be completed by 26th February.

Donation of Public Seating Bench, Balivanich ... Gail in contact with Planning Officer, CnES.

5. Treasurer Report:

Murdina referred to "Balance" presently standing at £8,546.82. A cheque for £500 to Uist Foodbank still to be lodged. Accounts will be prepared and taken to Stornoway for annual audit.

6. Correspondence:

Community Workshop, Market Stance

CnES Legal Services enquiring about any interest from Benbecula Community Council in the purchase of premises, now to be advertised for sale. After detailed discussion, agreed not to proceed with any interest, Murdina to reply.

Housing (SHIP ... Strategic Housing Investment Plan)

Councillors referred to Housing Seminar, and invitation to Housing Minister Kevin Stewart MSP to the islands. The existing SHIP remains in place for one further year. Potential sites for new build are being investigated.

Public Liability Insurance

Benbecula Community Council Public Liability Insurance has been renewed for a further year, and document to this effect will be displayed on notice board in Tagsa Uibhist Office (Murdina).

Western Isles Development Trust

Two Directors to be appointed from the Uists. Deadline for nominations is 26th February. Present Comhairle representative is C'Ilor Iain MacNeil. Other representative, from Crofting Union, is David Muir. The Trustees meet on the last Tuesday of every month. More details can be gleaned from their web site.

7. Police Report:

No attendance from local Police. No issues raised by councillors.

8. Ward Funding:

lochdar School Parent Council. Application pro forma completed, and payment of £250 agreed. Murdina to make payment to Alison MacDonald.

Sgoil Lionacleit Pipe Band. After some detailed discussion about Band going to perform at Tartan Day Parade, New York, Benbecula Community Council agreed to make a grant of £1000. Treasurer to action.

An Caladh, Youth Café. Murdina to request completed pro forma application, and present to next business meeting of BCC. Upwards of 38 young people now attend, so BCC keen to support, once details are available.

9. Members' Report:

A number of issues and recent developments and initiatives by councillors were discussed, including:

- Comhairle in receipt of an additional £1.2m Block Grant, after Scottish Government agreed Finance Budget, with support from Green Party. A narrow vote in CnES Chambers (15:14) decided not to fund proposal to improve facilities at Stornoway Primary School, but to keep money in Reserves.
- Capital Funding. £16m Lewis Care Homes; £2.5m St Brendan's Barra; £7.5m New Castlebay Primary School. £14m Scottish Futures Trust, Castlebay Secondary School.
- Roads Maintenance. Report to Committee next week. Contract with Breedon ends March. New contract with reduced budget not feasible unless this can be "front loaded" to deliver five-year spend in first two years. Transport Committee of the Comhairle to discuss.
- Revenue budget, service redesign, with cuts of 25% to be identified. Other revenue budget heads facing challenging cuts in expenditure were discussed, decisions from the Comhairle awaited.
- Single Island Authority. Integration of Island public service agencies (especially NHSWI and the Comhairle), being explored, detail awaited.
- ISLANDS DEAL. 30 identified projects for possible funding of up to £500m prioritised, with ten selected areas of need. 1. Stornoway Regeneration; 2. Digital/mobile connectivity; 3. Space Port Uists; 4. Tourism and Heritage asset Plan; 5. Inter-Island fixed link to Harris; 6. Remote and Rural Housing; 7. Island Innovation Zones; 8. Spinal Route completion; 9. Fixed link to Barra; 10. Food and Drink ... Island Investment and Promotion.

10. Other Competent Business:

CalMac Community Board. Chair is Angus Campbell, ex Comhairle Leader. Concern expressed that there is no Uist representative on this important newly formed group. The next meeting of the Uists Association of Community Councils will seek to rectify this anomaly.

Ferry bookings, Commercial Operators. Gail referred to CalMac "new unit" based in Gourock. Gail will email Angus Campbell regarding one or two concerns she has, as a commercial operator.

Benbecula Community Council Constitution. Clerk presented copy of model constitution, still to be formally approved by BCC. This to be item at AGM in April.

Fuel Tanks, Lochcarnan. Hugh informed the meeting that tanks out of operation since last October, for refurbishment. Tanks are owned by the MOD, but operated by Certus. Work should be complete by end of March. Improvements also to jetty.

Balivanich and Iochdar Primary Schools – Shared Headship. Headteacher Ann Graham operates on basis of three week days at Balivanich School, and two days at Iochdar. This is likely to become permanent, but operational practice will be reviewed after eight months.

11. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting of Benbecula Community Council will be the AGM, to be held on

Thursday 19th April at Tagsa Uibhist Offices, East Camp, Balivanich at 6.00pm

Andrew Walker

Clerk, Benbecula Community Council

