



## **Ness Community Council**

**MINUTES 29.01.2018**

**Lionel School 7.30pm**

**Present:** Katie M MacKenzie (Chair), Peter Inger (Vice Chair), Jean Hawkett, D. MacLeod (Treasurer).

**In Attendance:** N/A

**Welcome:** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Apologies:** All Councillors.

**Note:** Cllr K MacLeod joined the meeting at 20:05hrs.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:** The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

**Proposed by:** Jean Hawkett

**Seconded By:** Peter Inger

### **Matters Arising:**

1. **Health and Social Care:** Unfortunately no one from the C C was able to attend the meeting held at the UOG on the 17<sup>th</sup> of Jan
2. **Ness Sign:** Chris barrowman has stated that he can no longer carry out the work due to other work commitments. The Chair will now contact James Leech.
3. **Scrap Cars:** Possible funding options via Third Sector Hebridies and UOG.
4. **Tourism:** Jean has produced an update on the work she has carried out so far (see attached).
5. **C C Forum:** No word on this as yet – Still awaiting notice from Derek MacKay, all CCs will be contacted when notification is received.
6. **Roads:** The Chair gave a brief history of the problems we have encountered over the years regarding the poor state of the roads in the area, including the problems encountered when a petition was sent to the Scottish Office. It was felt that a renewed effort/representation should be made to the Scottish Government and CNES, with invites to Malcolm Burr and Iain MacKinnon (Director of Tec Services) and Calum MacKenzie to visit and see for themselves the awful state of our roads.
7. **Alzheimer Scotland (Lewis Branch):** The Treasurer presented the organisation with a cheque for £100 on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, this was gratefully received.

**Police Matters:** There was no Police presence at the meeting.

No Issues were raised.

### **A.O.C.B**

**D.O.N.M:** 19.03.2018 at 7:30pm in Lionel School.

## **TOURISM UPDATE – JANUARY 2018**

### **NORTHERN LIGHTHOUSE BOARD**

I've had positive communication with the NLB. A feasibility study is to be undertaken.

They promise to keep me "in the loop" regarding developments.

### **ZERO WASTE [Ian Campbell].**

More bins and more emptying to be arranged. On-going pressure to get another "blue bin" refuse truck so that collections are twice a month instead of the present once a month. All black bin refuse goes to landfill and yet much of the waste is recyclable.

### **TECHNICAL SERVICES, COMHAIRLE [Calum MacKenzie]**

Responsible for, and dealing with:

Road to Lighthouse – potholes and extending length of passing places.

Road signs:

- Junction of A857/B8013. Signs are congested and some are out of date. They need tidying up.
- Small speed signs along the B8013 [Lional to Eoropie] similar to those in Swainbost, Habost and South Dell. This is now a very busy road in the summer months, plus it suffers from "boy racers".
- The "Children Playing" sign, which is meant to indicate the Play Park, has been facing the wrong way for several years. It needs turning round and securing so that the wind doesn't move it.
- Signage for Sporsnis needs updating to include toilets, waste-emptying facility for campervans and electric power hook-up for vehicles, as well as other amenities in the Sports Centre.

Roads generally need more maintenance, and the provision of pavements in Lional is desperately needed [the traffic increases considerably in the summer and it is dangerous trying to walk, push a pram/pushchair or wheelchair along a grassy-mound verge, or getting on/off a bus].

Public toilets are desperately needed in the northern part of Ness. One toilet at Port of Ness is not enough and it is often locked. Cyclists and many motorists turn off the A857 at Lionel Junction and head to the Butt of Lewis, missing out Port Of Ness.

Street Furniture – the stone seat at Eoropie Beach has been eroded by storm waves resulting in rocks falling out of the structure [plus rocks have been removed by visitors to make barbecue pits].

The seat needs repairing as it is now very dangerous.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMHAIRLE [Alison MacCorquodale]**

Responsible for Tourism Strategy and Hebridean Way.

Tolsta-Skigersta Path. I've asked for details of the surveys and plans that were made in the past.

Plus any other information re. this path.

### **PLAY PARK**

Toilets to be built. Don't know when, but hopefully before this summer. These will **not be PUBLIC TOILETS** as mentioned in newspaper reports, but for the Play Park users only. And they will only be opened when the kiosk is open.

This does not solve the problem of there being no Public Toilets for people using the beach, cyclists, walkers of the coastal paths, and visitors to the Butt of Lewis.

### **CEN**

Have obtained money from "Museums Galleries Scotland" to renovate buildings and create a better museum, archives and offices. No plans yet to expand catering facilities.

### **URRAS [Lisa]**

I had a meeting with Lisa, and the URRAS are willing to part-fund projects which are presented to them with a proper plan etc.

They will support a project plan from the Ness Football/Social Club for improved catering facilities.

She also mentioned that they would be in favour of Ness Hall being developed for tourism and would help with funding. Plus the Pump Track and a campervan waste-emptying facility.

The URRAS is involved with Stiapabhat Nature Reserve and are creating new signage, parking, information boards etc. They want to encourage more visitors [and locals] to visit the Hide. The RSPB are to arrange more events such as bird-watching walks etc.

She's also keen to see the car scrappage scheme extended to the Galson Estate.

### **URRAS [Lindy]**

I had a meeting with Lindy Cameron-Saunders and Murdo Smith [Airidhantuim CC] about the proposed coastal footpath that is to be created between Upper Barvas and Skigersta [which will join on to the Skigersta-Tolsta Path]. So far 15kms have been surveyed and it will take over a year to do the rest. Infrastructure, in areas where there is already a path, is to be improved or provided eg: gates, bridges, boardwalks, and waymarkers, and all new areas will have the same additions.

Groups of volunteers will be trained to look after small areas of path. Access will be available for long-distance walkers, and short walks will be possible for elderly people and those with mobility issues.

Lindy is also involved with the Nature Reserve and at present is cleaning the boardwalk which has become dangerous to walk on.

She is keen to "clean the beaches and countryside of plastic" and will be organising a number of events associated with this.

She is also keen to meet up with NCC and we can arrange to see her at the URRAS or she will attend one of our meetings.

### **MEETING WITH ALASDAIR ALLEN, MSP.**

The £6m funding is due to be launched this Spring!

I have registered our interest.

We need a proper project plan if we want funding and certain criteria need to be met eg: the project must be available for local people as well as tourists, it must benefit the community, and it must be available 7 days a week.

### **MEETING WITH CHRIS BARROWMAN**

Chris is unable to build the Ness Sign because of pressure of work. He has suggested James Leitch.

Have we sorted out the wording on the sign? Can it include "part of the Galson Estate"?

Jean Hawkett

NCC

copy of letter to Comhairle

JH

JEAN HAWKETT

### **SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT £6m FUND FOR TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE**

Ness Community Council has registered its interest with the Scottish Government to access some of the £6m funding that they have set aside for Tourism Infrastructure in the Highlands and Islands. Final details will be available in the Spring this year. All we know at the moment is that the funding is for local groups to help improve, or create, infrastructure to help cope with the increased impact of tourism. The criteria are:

- the group must work with their local County Council ie the Comhairle
- the facility must benefit the local community as well as visitors
- the facility must be available to all 7 days a week.

The Scottish Government suggest that we can apply for things like:

- car parking bays at visitor attractions

- footpaths
- street furniture such as seats and picnic tables
- information/sign boards
- waste-emptying facilities for campervans
- improved passing places on single-track roads.

The NCC can apply for total funding for a small project, or match funding from another source such as the URRAS.

We feel that it would be a shame not to take advantage of this proposed deal, but of course need to work in conjunction with the Comhairle.

The possible projects we are looking at in Ness could come from the following:

- Butt of Lewis road – lengthen some of the passing places so that they can accommodate today's coaches.
- Butt of Lewis car turning area – this area needs resurfacing and edging rocks, or similar, put in place to stop vehicles from parking too close to the edge of the cliffs.
- Eoropie Beach/Play Park - the parking area needs to be increased.
- Eoropie Beach – new picnic tables.
- Eoropie Beach – the stone seat at the beach needs repairing.
- A new campervan waste-emptying facility is needed as there is only one for the whole of Ness [situated at Sporsnis].

Please can you let me know if the Comhairle can help in any way, with anything.

Jean Hawkett

NCC