

## ***Ness Community Council***

**Minutes 21.05.2018**

**Lionel School 7.30pm**

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**Present:** Mrs K M MacKenzie (Chair) Mr D Macleod (Treasurer/ Clerk) Mr P Inger Mrs J Hawkett

**In Attendance:** Mary C Campbell (Public) Rena McCritchie (Public) Mr Angus Morrison (Public)  
Sawan Morrison (Public) Calum Watson (Public)

### **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting

**Apologies:** Nil Received

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

Proposed: Peter Inger

Seconded: Donnie MacLeod

### **Matters Arising:**

1. Health and Social Care: Next LPG meeting to be held in Carloway Day Centre on 25 June, Donnie will attend this meeting. Donnie went through the results of the consultation on local priorities, which was held at the UOG Business Centre on 3 May 2018.

2. Ness Sign: The Chair has now spoken to James Leitch and he will take this forward.

3. Scrap Cars: To date 40 vehicles have been identified for this project, two funding applications have been submitted to help with the costs (total cost for removal to Muir of Ord £10,000). All being well it is hoped to start in mid May of this year. Funding applications have been submitted to UOG and Third Sector. UOG Have acknowledged receipt and Third Sector have asked for more information so the application will have to be resubmitted.

4. Tourism: Donnie attended a meeting with the UOG Tourism sub Committee on 18.04.2018, in the hope that a joint proposal may have more clout. Lisa agreed that a joint bid would probably be the best way to proceed. UOG will compile and submit the bid. (See Attached).

5. Community Council's Forum: Donnie attended the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018 and the Lewis CC Forum has been established with Donnie being appointed as Chairperson.

6. Roads: As yet no reply or acknowledgement has been received from the Transport Minister to the letter we sent him on 24.04.18. Katie Mary will take the matter up with Alasdair Allan.

7. As yet no solution has been found for this problem, it was suggested to write letters to the Common Grazings committees and to UOG as possible sources of funding. The treasurer offered to help with any funding applications if required.

**Police matters:**

There was no police presence at the meeting.

**A.O.C.B:**

Date for AGM confirmed as 26.06.18

**D.O.N.M:**

Monday 16.07.2018 @ 7.30pm Lionel School.

**Attachments to Minutes**

## **Proposed Infrastructure Development Project at the Butt of Lewis**



Rev	Author	Approved	Date
1.0	Lisa Maclean	UOG Tourism Sub Group	24.04.18
2.0			

Number	Recipient	Organisation
01	Murdo Mackay	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
02	Alison MacCorquodale	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
•	•	•

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## **Summary**

The project idea is to develop a key site, the Butt of Lewis which is situated on the community owned Galson Estate on the North West coast of the Isle of Lewis. The Butt of Lewis is the most

northern tip of the Isle of Lewis and enjoys a large number of visitors annually, ranking as the second most visited site on Lewis, behind the Callanish Standing Stones.

The Butt of Lewis is not only a site of scenic beauty but is home to a Stevenson lighthouse. The lighthouse was built in 1862 by the Stevenson brothers and has a tower rising to 37 metres. It is unlike many Scottish lighthouses as it has been built using red brick. The Butt of Lewis is in the crofting township of Eoropie, which is home to Eoropie Dunes Park (award winning children's play facility) and Eoropie Beach. The Butt itself is located very close to key sites of interest such as Port Stoth, Port of Ness harbour and Loch Stiapabhat Local Nature Reserve.

The local community wish to develop the site to ensure it is managed from a land management perspective, but also to ensure it offers an enticing welcome to those visiting the area. The Butt of Lewis is the start/end point of the Hebridean Way cycle route and this also makes it a very iconic site worthy of investment.

North Lewis is considered economically as a "fragile" area; which means it is considered to have "limited commercial opportunities and restricted provision of services". This definition with the dissemination of local data such as population decline and unemployment coupled with local authority cutbacks have all forced the requirement for regeneration at a community level and the development of this key site could act as a catalyst to a programme of development aimed at enhancing the site, protecting the environment, servicing tourism and sharing the rich heritage, culture, wildlife and archaeology of the area and the wider Galson Estate.

## **Background**

Tourism is very much on the increase. The number of people visiting the Outer Hebrides has risen by 27% over the past six years, according to a study.

The Islands Visitor Survey said more than 218,000 people visited the isles and spent more than £53.5m between October 2012 and September 2013.

Some 87% of visitors said they were very satisfied with their stay, with a further 11% saying they had been "fairly satisfied".

In 2006, a similar study reported 171,137 people visited the islands.

Outer Hebrides Visitor Survey 2012-13 (commissioned by VisitScotland/Comhairle nan Eilean Siar/Highlands and Islands Enterprise), a Scotland Visitor Survey 2015 and 2016 (commissioned by VisitScotland)

Surveys were undertaken across the Outer Hebrides between October 2012 and September 2013 involving 1,262 interviews.

There were a total of 218,000 visitors to the Outer Hebrides in 2012/13. Holiday visitors accounted for 59% of visitors, with business and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) each accounting for around 20%. Over 80% of visitors used ferries to travel to the Outer Hebrides. Holiday visitors were the main users of ferries, with VFR showing a preference for ferry, and business visitors evenly split between ferry and air travel.

The average spend per trip in the Outer Hebrides was £245. Business visitors had the highest levels of spend per trip (£279), followed by holiday visitors (£273) and VFR (£145). The results suggested that approximately 9% of visitor expenditure is on local products and produce.

Over half (54%) of visitors to the Outer Hebrides were on a holiday/short break, with a quarter on a business trip and 18% VFR. The type of visit differed significantly at different times of the year: business visitors accounted for around half of all visitors between October to March, whilst the proportion of holiday visitors was highest between April and September.

In total, 58% of visitors were Scottish residents, with VFR and business visitors more likely than average to be from Scotland. Just under a third of visitors were from the rest of the UK/Ireland, with holiday visitors much more likely than business and VFR visitors to be from elsewhere in the UK. In total, 12% of visitors were from Europe or elsewhere in the world, with almost a fifth of holiday visitors from overseas.

The social grade of visitors showed a high proportion in higher income brackets, with 61% of visitors classified as ABs, the top two social grades, and only 4% classified as DEs. Holiday visitors were more

likely than average to be ABs, whilst business visitors were more likely than average to be in the C1C2 social grade.

Approximately two thirds of visitors were on holiday or VFR staying overnight and, amongst those staying overnight, 43% were on their main holiday. Although 37% of all visitors were on a first time visit to the Outer Hebrides, the proportion was much higher amongst holiday visitors (53%) than VFR (9%) or business visitors (23%).

The average length of stay in the Outer Hebrides was 5.7 nights out of a total of 8.8 nights away from home during the trip. VFR visitors were spending longest in the Outer Hebrides: 6.5 nights compared to 6.1 nights for holiday visitors and 3.8 nights for business visitors.

Overall, Callanish Stones (54%) was the attraction most likely to be visited by visitors with Luskentyre/Seilebost beach (34%), Butt of Lewis (32%), Carloway Broch (27%) and Gearrannan Blackhouse Village (26%) the next most popular attractions. Holiday visitors were more likely than other visitor types to visit attractions: business visitors were unlikely to visit attractions except for the Callanish Stones, which 42% of business visitors had been to during their trip.

The most likely activities for visitors were visiting beaches/coastal scenery, followed by general sightseeing, visiting archaeological sites, walks (both long and short), trying local food and shopping for local craft/produce. As with visitor attractions, holiday visitors were more likely than other visitor types to undertake activities during their visit.

Basic studies have been carried out to assess the demand and current provision of tourism services in the area. A review of visitors to the area concluded a lack of facilities including showers, toilets, water & waste disposal. Local sports and visitor centre facilities are under pressure to provide washing, toilet and disposal facilities for camp and motor home visitors. As such the Butt of Lewis is suffering greatly from a lack of any provision and with such large visitor number the infrastructure requires investment. The infrastructure of the area is inadequate for the number of visitors, the road surface is suffering, the lack of turning space for larger vehicles/coaches is resulting in grass being damaged and a lack of bins and disposal areas means the area generally is becoming a dumping ground. There are no toilet facilities and there is a lack of signage and interpretation. This all creates a disappointing experience for visitors. Some of these issues are of specific concern for the bird life in the area and the marine life. Health and Safety must also be considered and prioritised.

UOG's strategic plan aims to link and align with other strategies with the aim of achieving a number of priorities within local and National Development Plans: The Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership; Outer Hebrides Tourism 2020 Plan; The Scottish Government's National Tourism Strategy.



Tourism is outlined in UOG's strategic plan as a key priority and much work is currently being undertaken to develop and promote the area as a destination for visitors. A tourism strategy is being developed for the estate area and this will help to outline the outcomes, priority actions and delivery partners for a series of activities/projects aimed at enhancing the visitor experience in a sustainable way.

The development of this particular project at the Butt of Lewis would mean an improved community space, providing toilets for day trippers and those visiting nearby attractions. It will also provide recycling bins, improved signage and interpretation and there will be opportunities to signpost to local businesses for services, which will have an indirect benefit on the local economy.

Managing the site will allow for increased marketing of the estate as a whole, but also the Butt of Lewis as a destination in its own right. This will allow the local community to foster a sense of pride in the area, rather than it being viewed as simple an area that is not being exploited to it's potential. All of the consultations listed below have highlighted the lack of and a need for facilities in the area.

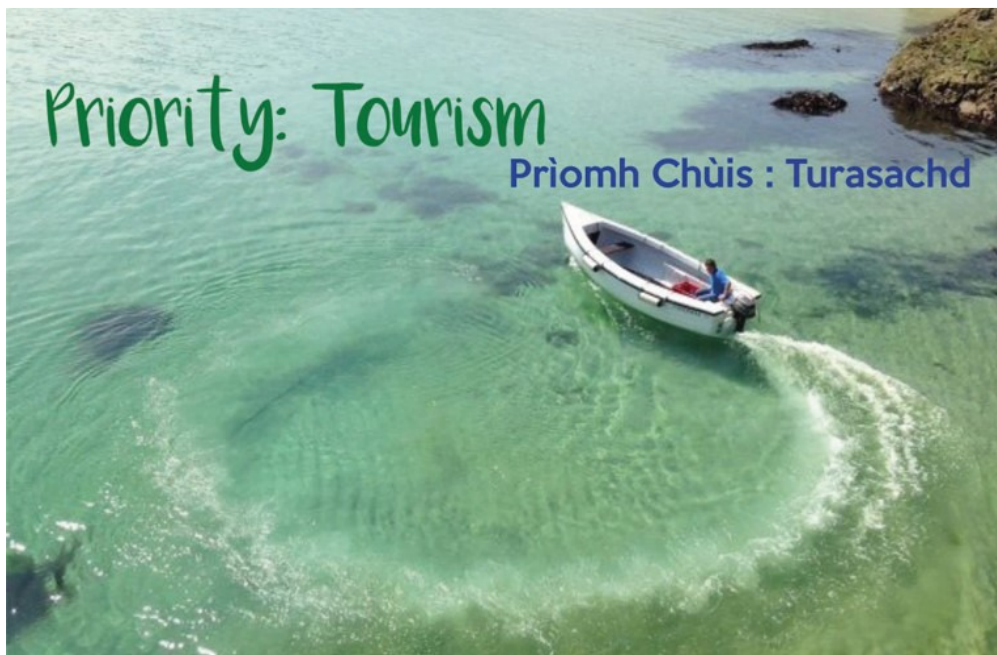
1. Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn's Community Consultation (July 2009) was arranged to receive feedback on issues of concern and development opportunities it should pursue.
2. A multi-organisation Advisory Group hosted a Ness to Ballantrushal "Have Your Say Day", co-ordinated by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) in November 2009 was arranged to identify aspirations of the community in line with the Scottish Government's priorities, this included a consultation with youth groups.



3. A community survey commissioned in June 2011 by Highlands and Islands Enterprise was carried out to outline the most important developments or changes residents would like to see over the coming years in North Lewis.

4. 2015 UOG Consultation to deliver the UOG 20-year Strategic Plan.

This project has also been driven by feedback from the residents of the estate dating back to consultations that took place in 2005; during the business planning process for Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn. The various consultations have all resulted in feedback that shows that the lack of facilities is a concern for the residents of the estate area.



## Project Scope

The project site is situated on Eoropie Common Grazings and the land is owned by Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn. Early discussions have taken place with a small project team and it is proposed the development should include:

- **Toilet Block** – one building with space for information, possibly making best use of technology to update information.
- **Dry Waste** - A collection point for dry waste will be included with space for recycling bins/units.
- **Lighting** – There is a requirement for some basic low-level lighting to allow easy access to toilets etc.

Other secondary considerations that are also vital to the project:

- **Signage/Interpretation** – signposting to other key sites on the estate and in the islands.

- **Access** – Road, parking and a turning point.

There is a requirement for technical assistance to enable further development of the proposed project.

A separate fund may be needed for the pre-construction elements of project, if these cannot be included. It could support design development, site investigation, building warrant fees, outline planning permission fees and the legal costs associated with possible resumption of the land, to remove it from crofting tenure, to allow for development works to take place.

As a result of these activities it is hoped the project will reach a stage whereby instruction can be given to mobilise the site and commence construction.

## SWOT Analysis

Butt of Lewis, Galson Estate

# Proposed Project SWOT Analysis



### Strengths

- Iconic site - 2nd most visited on Lewis
- Home to a Stevenson Lighthouse
- Beg/End of Hebridean Way Cycle Route
- Magnificent scenery
- Amazing wildlife
- Part of a network of coastal paths
- Located on a community owned estate
- Wider community has tourism outlined as a key priority - other projects underway

### Opportunities

- Increase activity offering for visitors
- Event development ( walking/wildlife tours)
- Development of lighthouse buildings
- ICT applications
- Tourism is an employment rich sector
- Creates focal point for tourist information for North Lewis
- Opportunities for partnership working
- Potential for continuing development for forthcoming 2020 Year of Coasts and Waters

### Weaknesses

- Visitor infrastructure
- Fragility of the site (erosion)
- Lack of signage
- Underdeveloped cultural/wildlife interpretation

### Threats

- Quality of infrastructure due to inadequate investment
- Quality of visitor experience does not meet expectations (end of cycle route)
- Lack of sanitary provision
- Vehicles driving on fragile grassland/grazings

## **Project Outcomes**

### **An enhanced visitor experience**

The community is working to a 20-year strategic plan. The plan outlines three key priorities; elderly care, tourism and crofting/land use. It was created following a nine-month period of consultation throughout 2016. The plan is a working document that is currently supporting the community to focus on strategic strands and ensure key issues are being systematically addressed, measured and evaluated against the key priorities. With regards to tourism the community of the Galson Estate are committed to enhancing every stage of the visitor journey and understand that delivering quality will have a direct impact on experience and therefore our economic return. The overall aim is to ensure visitors feel welcome. The current situation at the Butt of Lewis is not positive and reflects on the wider islands as a whole as the site is the start/finish of the Hebridean Way cycle route. With this in mind the community has committed to the creation of a Tourism Strategy, which will align with various other strategies and plans relating to the area. This approach will allow for alignment and best use of resources.

### **A sustainable approach**

A sustainable approach can be delivered by ensuring a strategy for tourism is adopted and each development/project underpinning the strategy has a plan for how it will be maintained, improved and developed. As community landowner UOG has a remit to ensure all development adopts a sustainable approach as the focus is very much on ensuring the land and assets are sustained for the future generations.

### **Community Capacity Building**

*Community capacity building* is of significant importance to the community of the Galson Estate. The estate has been in community ownership for 11 years and over that period the community capacity has developed to a point whereby the community are in a position to continue to develop, implement and sustain solutions to issues as well as seizing opportunities presented. This has been demonstrated through delivery of various projects of scale including a zero-carbon business centre, development of a wind energy project and the community are now working alongside various public sector agencies to address how services can be developed in partnership.

## **Effective Partnerships and collaboration**

Much work has been undertaken to ensure firm partnerships have been formed to shape solutions about increase the '*capacity*' of the local *community* to develop, implement and sustain their own solutions to problems in a way that helps them shape and exercise control over their physical, social, economic and cultural environments. The community vision is to have “a thriving and well-connected community with excellent local services and amenities, harnessing its natural assets to sustain a unique cultural and social environment.” In order to achieve the vision it is essential to work in a collaborative way.

For this particular project it is expected that partnership working would take place further between various groups within the local community and the wider community.

### Possible lead partners:

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn

Ness Community Council

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Eorpie Grazings Committee

Outer Hebrides Tourism / VisitScotland

Northern Lighthouse Board

### Other Possible partners:

Western Isles Tour Guides Association

RSPB

## **Project viability and deliverability**

The project will take place on the community owned Galson Estate on the Isle of Lewis. Galson Estate is a 56,000 acre estate, with over 600 crofts and a population of around 1900 people, across 22 townships.

UOG wish to adopt a wide partnership approach and consider this critical to “visioning the future”. This approach, wider tourism environment and the lynchpin of an established community land trust, with significant experience in delivery of capital project make the viability and deliverability of this project strong.

Visitors to Lewis are generally interested in walking, sightseeing/touring, historical and heritage attractions and wildlife. Galson Estate has a rich cultural heritage and has “Comunn Eachdraidh Nis” (CEN), a historical society on the estate which is currently undertaking a large regeneration project to upgrade their facilities/visitor centre. The investment in other facilities make it even more critical that the general tourism infrastructure is improved.

The Galson Estate Trust has 17 scheduled Ancient Monuments (Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979), a nature observatory which is situated at the edge of Lewis’s only Local Nature Reserve. The estate as a whole boasts so amazing natural and built heritage. Tourism is not going to become less important and with some many heritage assets it is vital that visitors to these sites have access to facilities.

The community is currently working to establish a tourism strategy to encapsulate all the ideas and act as a robust platform for further development; taking into consideration the intangible elements of the local heritage too i.e. the language, traditions, performing arts, *social* practices, rituals, festive events etc. This strategy would form part of the area wide strategy plan, which feeds into UOG’s wider priorities, but also the charitable objectives which seek to:

- *Develop skills,*
- *Improve health and wellbeing*
- *Protect and conserve the environment*
- *Protect and promote heritage and culture*
- *Develop and revitalise growing industry sectors*
- *Support active community engagement*

## **Procurement**

The project will be procured in packages comprising design/architectural services, civils and groundwork, building construction including electrical installations, civil engineering consultancy, possible design engineering consultancy, clerk of works, possible CDM co-ordination plus ancillary professional services.

Overall project management and co-ordination will be undertaken by Urras staff with support from a sub group formed from the UOG Board of Directors and Ness Community Council.

The table below details the various packages proposed with procurement process being adopted, the supplier if known, type of contract/appointment involved and the party taking liability for the majority of the main risks (e.g. cost over-run, time delays, etc.).

Package	Procurement	Supplier	Contract Type	Risk
Design/Architectural Services (pre-planning)	Dependent on funders requirements	TBC	Standard professional terms	
Architectural Services (post planning)	Dependent on funders requirements	TBC	Standard professional terms	
Civils and Groundwork	Open tendering	TBC	Supplier standard	
Construction of building/s	Open tendering	TBC	Construction pro - forma	
CDM co-ordinator *				
Civil Engineer Consultancy	Restricted tendering	TBC	Standard professional terms	
Clerk of Works	Restricted tendering	TBC	Standard professional terms	
Project management	Recruitment	UOG	Employee contract	
Legal services	Direct purchase (existing relationship)	TBC	Standard professional terms	

- This package may not be required and will be determined by funders requirements

## Costs & Resources

The total capital cost of the project is has not yet been determined, but it is likely to be broken down as follows:

Item	Estimated Cost
Pre-development costs	TBC
Civils & Groundwork	TBC
Construction	TBC
Legal/prof services	TBC
Contingency	TBC

External professional advice and resource can be deployed when necessary.

Funding for the project would be sought from various sources as the site is of extreme importance.

- **Scheduling**

A programme will be drawn up with key milestones when the project develops beyond the initial stages.

- **Project Control**

This will be included at a later stage.

- **Health & Safety**

This will be included at a later stage.

- **Risk Management**

This will be included at a later stage.

- **Technical Information**

This will be included at a later stage.

- **Reporting and Communication**

The Project Manager is the key contact for this project (contact details are provided at Section 12 below). In her absence, communications should be channeled through the UOG office to the sub group.

- **Contact Details**

The contact details for the key parties are as follows.

i) **Project Manager**

Lisa Maclean, Commercial Development Manager, Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn  
UOG Business Centre, Galson, Isle of Lewis HS2 0SH  
Tel - 01851 850393/07810804718  
E-mail - [lisa@uogltd.com](mailto:lisa@uogltd.com)

ii) **Project Sub-Group**

Sandra Macleod – UOG Director  
Norman Thomson – UOG Director  
Donald MacSween – UOG Director  
Katie Mary Mackenzie – Chair of Ness Community Council  
Donald Macleod – Ness Community Council  
Grazings Clerk – Eorpie Common Grazings

c/o UOG Business Centre, Galson, Isle of Lewis HS2 0SH  
Tel - 01851 850393



- **Annexes**

- UOG Strategic Plan
- Western Isles Tour Guide Association Recommendations for North Lewis



# COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

## LEWIS ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Minute of Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Stornoway, on Wednesday 23 May 2018 at 7.00pm.

### PRESENT

Mr Donnie Macleod (Chair)  
Mr Malcolm Dalzel-Job (Vice-Chair)  
Ms Cathy Macinnes  
Ms Lois Darley  
Mr Chris Mackenzie  
Mr Angus Mackenzie

Mr Robert Mackenzie  
Mr Alex Mackintosh  
Mr Angus Murray  
Ms Fiona Macleod  
Mr Bob Walker

### IN ATTENDANCE

Derek Mackay – Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

### CONSTITUTION

- |                                 |   |   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Appointment of Chairperson      | 1 | It was <b>agreed</b> to appoint Mr Donnie Macleod as Chairperson of the Lewis Association of Community Councils.  |
| Appointment of Vice-Chairperson | 2 | It was <b>agreed</b> to appoint Mr Malcolm Dalzel-Job as Vice-Chairperson of the Lewis Association of Community Councils.   |
| Appointment of Secretary        | 3 | Members discussed the appointment of a Secretary for the Association. It was suggested that interim support be provided by the Comhairle and that Community Councils be invited to consider the appointment of a Secretary from their membership. |

#### It was agreed that:

- (1) **that Comhairle nan Eilean Siar would provide secretarial support on an interim basis; and**
- (2) **that Comhairle nan Eilean Siar would invite Community Councils to nominate a Secretary of the Association from their membership.**

- |                    |   |   |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Draft Constitution | 4 | Mr Derek Mackay circulated a draft Constitution for the Lewis Association of Community Councils. Members recognised that there would be costs in respect of the work and administration of the Association and consideration should be given to introducing a membership fee of £50 per annum, payable from the Annual Community Council Administrative Grant, towards these costs. |
|--------------------|---|---|

#### It was agreed that:

- (1) **Mr Derek Mackay would revise the draft Constitution to include the comments of Members; and**
- (2) **the revised Constitution would be circulated to Community Councils for further comment.**

- |                                |   |  |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Appointment of Member to OHCPP | 5 | Mr Derek Mackay indicated that the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership were seeking the appointment of a representative from Lewis Community Councils to serve on the Partnership. |
|--------------------------------|---|--|

**It was agreed to appoint Mrs Fiona Macleod as the Associations representative on the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership for a period of one year.**

