

Castlebay & Vatersay Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held in Castlebay School Monday 17th June 2019 at 18:00

Present: Michael Galbraith (MG) Chair Iain G MacNeil (IGM) Treasurer
Christina MacNeil (CM) Committee Euen Scott (ES) CBAB
Monica MacKinnon (MM) Clerk

Apologies: Cllr Paul Steele, Cllr Calum MacMillan, Cllr Iain MacNeil, Cllr Donald Manford, Eoin MacNeil, Marion MacNeil.

Welcome

MG welcomed all in attendance and welcomed MM back as C&VCC Clerk.

Previous minutes (14/03/19)

Proposed by CM and seconded by IGM.

Housing

MG asked ES if he knew of any updates from Claire MacNeil. Euen informed the group Claire was on holiday at present.

CM raised her concerns regarding how expensive affordable housing is for young people and asked if there are any help or schemes available to young people to enable them to become home owners. Do HHP have any policy's regarding help to buy schemes or are there tenants able to purchase their houses?

Group where unsure what HHP's policies are however, ES agreed there are help to buy schemes out there.

Action: Euen Scott to ask Claire MacNeil to email any responses to group.

Herring Walk

MG asked ES if there were any updates with regards to outstanding monies owed to MacNeil of Barra for the land rent for the Herring walk?

ES advised the group that Sandy invoices Voluntary Action Barra who then passes the bill on to CBAB to be paid. ES informed the group a variation of lease was needed and that outstanding payments must be paid first however; they don't see any hurdles. CBAB are looking to take over insurance however, not until this is looked into properly.

Action: Eoin to chase up invoice from MacNeil of Barra for land rent for the herring walk.

Cockling

MG asked if there were any updates on cockling?

CM informed the group that the other groups formed to work together to solve the problem don't really understand what they can do and are looking to the community council for help.

ES discussed lack of communication between people who are working on the issues cockle strand. He advised the group that Neil MacLennan should be approached regarding the study, he had previously looked into commissioning a study, on contacting Duncan MacInnes he discovered a study had already been carried out.

CM informed the group the beach used to be closed at certain times of the year however, this was lifted last year.

MG asked who counts or monitors the volume of cockles coming off the beach?

CM advises the groups that the buyers normally police this.

The group agreed that this could be regarded a conflict of interest.

CM informs the group the cockles must be tested every day when on amber, this can be a number of times a day and can be costly. Lorries who take cockles don't seem to have such strict guidelines.

Action: MG to speak to Northbay Community Council for thoughts on the cockle strand. ES to send email of follow up on the cockle strand from CBAB.

CalMac Car park

MG updated the group on signage required for the CalMac car park, as part of the Council Planning department requests. Cllr DM forwarded this request (email) onto Calmac for actioning. Until this is completed the planning application will not be completed/approved fully.

Group discussed how well the car park was working and all are in agreement that it had made a difference to the parking on the street.

Play Park

MG asked CM if the council grant forms were completed?

CM confirmed that they had been completed and sent, with assistance of Claire MacNeil (CBAB)

IGM confirmed we were awarded the funds and £1500 had been put into the account.

IGM said Claire MacNeil had applied for £4000. IGM explained that the funding was spread out between all successful applicants and some funds were held back in case of late applicants.

MG questions whether this was enough funding to carry out works on park?

CM informed group of funds which remains in the bank from the Barra and Vatersay Residents Association form when works on the park had been completed previously, CM advised the group that there was an estimated £2000 in the bank.

IGM raised his concerns with the rubber matting existing in the park, it gets very muddy when it is raining.

CM advised the group the reason those particular mats were used was too do with environmental factors allowing the grass to grow through, she said they had to be used for this reason.

IGM asked why other play parks which have been completed since have managed to get around this using full covered ground mats. An estimated £20,000 will be needed to resurface park.

Action: CM to speak to relevant persons from group to release funds over to CC account.

Roads

MG said the planned resurfacing was put off due to equipment breakdown.

CM asked if any work had been carried out prior to their breakdown, MG replied unfortunately not.

IGM asked if any works had been carried out when agreed when the new houses were getting tarred. CM informed the group that some works had been carried out on a small section of the Ardveenish Rd.

Action: MG to email Iain MacKinnon at the council to ask for any updates for Barra.

Allasdale Township - Erosion

No update

Planning Permission – Sailing Club

Container awaiting repositioning to new site. Planning permission has been granted from the Council

Transport

Ferries

MG raised concerns on behalf of another member regarding the lack of consultation on cancellation of ferries with their customers and hotels.

IGM suggests seeking compensation from Calmac maybe the correct avenue for customers and businesses to explore.

Motorhomes

MG asked group if there are any concerns anyone may have with the large amount of motor homes currently visiting the island?

CM believes when the motorhomes are getting discounted its unfair as the island can't cope with the volume of motorhomes arriving.

MG asked if there are stats available from CalMac on numbers coming onto the island? Committee were unsure.

IGM believes there is no issue with motor homes coming off the big ferries however the small ferry can be filled quickly, thus impacting on locals and business being unable to travel.

CM informed the group although Tiree have a system in place for motor homes there is no one who checks or polices this once motor homes are on the island, no one actually checks they have booked into campsites.

MG asked group if wild parking numbers are up?

CM said that it hard to tell if they are staying there the night as they could be out walking at night and moving on shortly after.

Airport

MG informed the group that discounted day trip scheme does not operate during the summer months.

HIAL are intending to hold a stakeholders engagement meeting regarding the extension of the terminal building back end of this summer. They are looking to extend part of the building out towards the beach providing and incorporating some outdoor seating/tables.

They are looking to undertake the work 2021/22.

Action: MG to feedback to group on any updates.

AOCB

ES asked the committee if tents down at the herring walk is acceptable?

CM asked if this was due to campsites being full? This was discussed and agreed that there is still availability at campsites as one in particular at Borve is always empty.

CM said we should bear in mind that we want to be welcoming to our tourists as we rely on them visiting, we should ensure we don't come across hostile to them.

ES said there is an average of 40-60 cyclists a day, potholes can be cause for concern with safety to cyclists.

MG asked if the road could be doubled from Castlebay to Admhor (West side) of the island? ES suggested this would encourage people to speed.

CM asked if a cycle track or footpath could be put in place to reduce the number of cyclists on the road?

ES suggested Neil Ingrum as a contact to look into this.

CM raised her concerns regarding the footpath coming out of Horve at the west exit. The grass is coming through the pavement and she is wondering who is responsible for this?

After discussion the group agreed the importance of the maintenance to paths to ensure we keep our paths clear and accessible to pedestrians, we don't want to lose any pavements we have.

IGM suggested that Shonaidh Ruraidh may be responsible for some maintenance on the stretch of pavement.

Footpath

Council have sent a proposed plan for an extension to the footpath that currently exists in Castlebay.

MG asked the group for any feedback they may have regarding the plans.

IGM informed the group that he has already emailed his feedback regarding the plans. He raised concerns with the 1m of verge which is not a pavement, why do they need to go from 2 lanes to 1 lane on the road this is cause for concern with speeding.

CM said she would rather see the money spent on the Herring Walk as this is a safer route for pedestrians taking them away from the traffic.

MG said the main case of concern at the moment is the safety of people walking with prams.

ES showed the group his proposed plans for the Herring walk and the footpath he would deliver with this. He could have a diversion for cyclists straight off the ferry to reduce the traffic delay instantly. He would also be looking at accommodating pedestrians. ES is looking at progressing with these plans. His track would be safer for the schools running clubs etc. and other clubs to access and use.

ES raised his concerns with the councils plans particularly at Dunard Hostel.

IGM believes there is too much work involved to complete the councils proposed plan.

Action: IGM to email response to Malcom Burgh. ES to consult with council.

Hub School / Hospital

MG informed the group of the meeting which was held in the hall to discuss the new hub. There was a number of selected people invited to join the meeting.

MG said that there are 5 options for the hub.

The feasibility, costings and designs of the hub are hoping to be completed by August 20th 2019.

They are looking at having the Hospital, Police station and school including the primary, secondary and nursery all together in one hub based in Castlebay. They did ask the fire brigade if they were interested in joining the hub however, they are happy where they are. They are also going to get quotes for the costings of building separate buildings for each area.

The hospital committee are concerned regarding the hospital as it may slow down progress which has already been made.

MG raised concerns with safe guarding patients or children and questions whether it's safe?

The group discussed and agreed to look at what they come back with in August for further discussion.

ES said they should work alongside the community as well as the tenants to reach a decision. He also stated its worth while bearing in mind that we will only be funded for 1 hub and not 2.

MG explained that although it is one hub it can be done in stages and it does not all have to be in the same area.

The group agreed that phases or stages would not be a good option incase of lack of funding to complete the project.

Balance

IGM that there is £7000 in the pot as we obtain funds for the play park.

The group discussed putting caps on the amount of funds they distribute when people ask for it for example the School.

ES suggested that CBAB could contribute money that they receive from Western Isles Lottery to the CC to manage, as it seems the CC frequently get asked for contributions from a variety of organisations in the community for help.