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MANOR & CASTLE NEWSLETTER



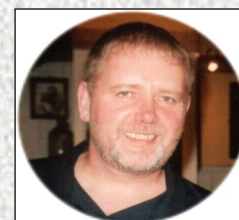
Manor & Castle Newsletter

Special points of interest:

- Chairperson's Comments
- Councillor's Comment's

Chairman's comments

Welcome to the December meeting and Newsletter.



Well here we are only another couple of weeks until Christmas day and no real sign of stormy weather yet and thankfully no snow either. The days will start getting longer again next week, another bonus. Hope you are all keeping well wrapped up during the coldest of the days.

The planned bag packing in the co-op on the 30th and 31st December is getting closer we must take full advantage of these days to bolster our funds .Any help from friends and family would be a great help. Please give names to Katie/ Dolene, myself or on our facebook page, time is getting short now.

We will continue taking names for the spring trip at the meetings and up until the end of January. If you know someone who wishes to go but cannot come to the meeting please let us know before then.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and prosperous New Year, hope Santa is good to you all.

Regards

Eric

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Councillor's forum

I am sure you will be rushing about getting things ready for the festive season. It was a very busy few weeks for me as the council had their last series of the year at the start of the month.

There were quite a number of important issues that were discussed.

One of the first longer discussions was when the Chief officer of the Integrated Joint Board (IJB) put forward his report. I raised two issues.

He first being the very worrying situation where there are a lot of vacancies in the care service. Agency staff from the mainland are being used to plug gaps which is an unsustainable situation. What we must do is find out why people are leaving the service which has in some way known through exit interviews. We also need to attract people to the service and my suggestions were to provide a career progression so that carers can see their career path possibly into nursing. Also to upskill our staff to alleviate the high locum costs that the Health Board need to pay. I suggested that there be a full public information campaign extolling the virtues of living and working in the care service in the Western Isles—we have a lot to offer!

The second issue I brought up was the closure of the Clisham ward and called for a review. The financial report told us that the savings made from closure were already spent and that it didn't look like a cost effective way to proceed. I would not be pushing finance as a primary factor in such a sensitive issue as it has caused families extra worry and expense being separated from loved ones and also putting those who need extra care into care homes has not really worked. Dr Culley is going to have a review on mental health but not specifically Clisham ward unfortunately.

Stornoway Primary again was the subject of debate as the Education Committee discussed the holistic approach on all the educational estate and ranked its position in terms of other schools. There was a long debate as Stornoway Primary came sixth which I, and other councilors, found completely ridiculous. My comment was that holistic approaches in theory sound a great idea but one of the consequences is parochialism and councilors fighting for their school. The children are missing out year after year and sadly nothing is being done about it.

A new Energy strategy was unveiled by the Comhairle looking at using community generated energy to supply locally. As you would have read in previous newsletters and hear me mention at a number of association meetings, I have been pushing for this for a number of years. When I first got elected, I sent the then leader, Angus Campbell, an email asking for the Comhairle to pursue this. So I am delighted they have caught on to this and hope they will pursue it and look to eradicate the fuel poverty that still plagues our islands.

Can I take this opportunity to wish you and your families an very merry Christmas and happy new year,

Councillor Gordon Murray

Volunteers for Backpacking

Please help our fundraising by volunteering or getting someone in your place to backpack

Funding for:

**Senior Citizens Trip
Senior Citizens dinner
Children's events**



Senior citizens dinner Wednesday 8th January at 12 noon Caladh Inn

Local housing forum praise for providing a voice for HHP tenants

Western Isles Housing Association Communities Forum has received an award for helping to improve services for HHP residents.

The group provides a voice for tenants and residents living within the bounds of Hebridean Housing Partnership (HHP) social housing schemes throughout the Western Isles.

The voluntary body received the champion group runner-up prize at the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) National Good Practice Awards.



The judges found the forum made an outstanding contribution towards their community participating with HHP and influencing services, performance and culture of participation.

A number of the forum members attended the award ceremony in St Andrews, including chairman Alasdair Mackenzie and HHP tenant participation officer Jane Ballantyne.

Anna Coyle, head of executive office of HHP, said: "It is very encouraging to see those in our communities being recognised for the important work they do.

"We are always glad to hear from our tenants and work closely with the forum to ensure that all voices are heard to shape and improve the service we provide."

The forum is made up of members of registered tenants and residents' organisations throughout the Western Isles, and holds regular liaison meetings meets with HHP, making contributions and recommendations on how they can do things better.

(Hebrides News, 15 December 2019)

COOKS CORNER

Christmas Pudding

Ingredients

- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup sultanas
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 1 cup finely grated [butter](#) (about 115g/4oz)
- 1 cup fresh brown breadcrumbs (from around 4 thick slices of bread)
- 1 cup light muscovado sugar
- 1 cup mixed nuts, chopped plus extra to decorate
- 1 tsp ground [cinnamon](#)
- 1 tsp ground mixed spice
- 1 cup [milk](#)
- 1 large [egg](#)
- [butter](#), for greasing
- 85g [butter](#)
- 100g light muscovado sugar
- 200ml double cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Method

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Cut squash in half vertically and place cut side up in a small roasting pan. Drizzle with half of the olive oil and half of the salt and pepper. Bake for 30 minutes, or until fork tender. Remove from oven and let cool.

In a medium dutch oven, saute onion, carrot and celery over medium heat for 5 minutes. Season with remaining salt and pepper. When the delicata is cool enough to handle, gently scoop out pulp and add it to the vegetables. Add broth and bring to a gentle boil. Add the pasta, cooked beans, spinach and grape tomatoes. Cook for 10-15 minutes or until pasta is done.

Serve immediately with crusty bread.



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