

POINT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Ordinary Meeting

held on

4th October 2021

via Google Meet

Present: Alex John Murray (Chair); Ken MacLennan (Vice Chair); Joanne Dixon (Treasurer); Margaret Ralston; Donald Macritchie; Lina Koser; Matt Bruce (guest) Rhona Somerville (Clerk).

Apologies: None

Declaration of Interest: None

Minute of Meeting 26/7/21: Update on CalMac – booking system being improved to better facilitate online booking. Ongoing issues with fleet not yet resolved. LACC in dialogue with CalMac about the possibility of setting up a Lewis Ferry Committee in line with other community groups across the Calmac network, as the present Comhraile ferry committee negotiates with Hitrans , not Calmac . Previous minute approved.

Matters Arising: The three Point local authority councillors at the moment, to be cut to two at the next May elections.

Action Plan:

Re Playparks – Joanne confirmed that the new community liaison officer appointee may well be able to take some overall responsibility for playparks as part of their remit. Lina expressed an interest in becoming involved with a playpark committee. The suggestion to have an overarching committee created comprising of one member from each of the various Point playpark committees met with approval.

Re Bayble Footpath - A chart of the whole of Point has been sent to Alex. John and will be used to identify and note areas where improvements are needed. It was suggested that any interested parties be invited to give ideas and suggestions. It was further suggested that group members arrange to meet at Ionad Stoodie soon to look at the chart and discuss how to proceed. It was noted that the Comhairle have been clearing vegetation along the roadside walkway in Garrabost.

Re Gunnera – The Facebook gunnera group does not seem to be active. It was noted that gunnera is spreading faster than can be kept up with by the Community Council. On a croft it would be the responsibility of the crofter but on common grazing responsibility lies with the grazings committee. It was suggested that the Stornoway Trust be approached about this as funding for this held by the Community Council is all but exhausted. Matt Bruce reported that Knock and

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Lower Bayble have been tackled but that Portvoller Common Grazing and Tiumpian still require attention. Flesherin has also had some successful eradication. A further payment will be required from the Community Council for this. Matt recommended removing seed heads and said that up until mid-summer the seed heads can be left by the plant as they are not viable but that after that they can be put into the organic waste bin. The next step would then be to kill the plants with either weedkiller or salt inserted into its core then covering the crown with leaves to prevent the salt being washed away by rain. It was agreed that Alex. John will discuss the matter with the Stornoway Trust and suggest involving grazing committees and crofters as well as getting further funding for specialist intervention. It was noted that it would be cheaper and easier to deal with immature plants and seed heads in the spring next year which would be easier with a clear picture of the scale and location of the problem but that that in itself would cost money.

PST communication with community groups led to a request by them for a copy of our action plan to see if funding could be allocated,

Planning Applications: A question was asked about an application to move a memorial within the castle grounds with the advice that further information can be found online at the Comhairle's website.

Treasurer's Report: The bank balance remains the same with £3,632 of free funds available.

AOCB:

An apology was noted for not having been able to give notification of tonight's meeting on Facebook.

Re Speed Limits – the subject was raised again in relation to a recent road traffic accident involving a dog. It was suggested that we try again to have a representative from Police Scotland attend a meeting to discuss this. It was further suggested that the community be consulted in regard to this via Facebook. It was recalled that the Comhairle had previously been approached with regard to safety along the main Point road but that funding is eternally an issue.

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The Community Council has been contacted by the organiser of Point Beavers and Scouts group requesting assistance with finding funding and a permanent base. A grant of £100 from Community Council funds was proposed and agreed.

Alex. John has contacted Derek McKay, the Comhairle's Governance & Election Manager, for permission to fast track the formal election of co-opted members and awaits a reply.

The Lewis Association of Community Councils (LACC) asked for a meeting with Donald Mackinnon of The Crofting Federation, who agreed with the suggestion that local meetings could be held with grazing committees. It is proposed that Point Community Council set up a meeting with the local grazing committees and the Crofting Federation, so that in the absence of the Scottish Government including Crofters on its manifesto, Crofters should have a chance to put their ideas forward with a view to establishing a crofting working group.

Next Meeting: 15th November 2021 at 7pm.