

Minute/Note of Meeting	TITLE	Uist Association of Community Councils Meeting		
	DATE	Wednesday 21 st April 2021	TIME	7.00pm
	VENUE	online		

Present:	Chair : Peter Bird (Iochdar), Marie Campbell (Bornish), Vanessa Langley (Benbecula), Cllr Uisdean Robertson Angus MacDonald (Lochboisdale) Donald John MacDonald (Bornish) Tracy Walker (Benbecula), Cllr Iain A MacNeil Morag Ann MacAulay (Iochdar) Cllr Roddy Mackay Joan Fergusson (North Uist) Rona Mackay (Benbecula) Anne Bird – minutes
Apologies:	Cllr Iain M Macleod Cllr Paul Steele Donnie Steele Gail Robertson CalMac Communities Board Robert Currie Ronnie McPhee

	Agenda Item	Summary	Action	Who?	When?
	minutes 15/09/20	Minutes of 15 th September 2020 proposed by DJM seconded by TW			
	Matters arising	<p>UACC: Idea of setting up a Uist Transport group – to be discussed.</p> <p>Cllr IAM, U&B Housing Group update: Crown Estate Funding secured for a 2 year post, advert going out for a Development Officer in conjunction with Rural Housing Scotland. Website, Twitter and FB to go live when the post is advertised. WIDT funding has been received for office equipment, successful candidate will be working from home.</p> <p>Cllr UR: Issue of Driving Tests was raised with CnES Chief Exec and appears to have been resolved, albeit subject to lockdown restrictions over the winter months.</p> <p>Cllr UR: Request that CalMac promote passing place etiquette – done.</p>			

	Transport Group	<p>Cllr IAM has been in touch with some members of Lochboisdale Ferry Users Group.</p> <p>Concerns raised as ferry service is severely constrained by ferries that are out of service. The new South Uist timetable, has no sailings to/from Mallaig and no direct sailings to/from Lochboisdale, giving a 7hr sailing both ways to/from Oban.</p> <p>Cllrs reported extensive efforts to effect change but with no success.</p> <p>Queries raised about the Ferry Contract, Cllrs explained that it is in place until 2024. Cllrs continue to push for CalMac to enlist the Pentalina to improve network coverage and also requested that the commitments that CalMac have made are examined.</p> <p>Question raised re the level of disadvantage experienced by Uist, and South Uist in particular in regards to the outcome of ferry repositioning etc.</p> <p>Question re capacity, mezzanine deck may not be in use on Uig to Lochmaddy, reasoning given is social distancing (even though the mezzanine was reportedly in use during the lockdown of 2020).</p> <p>Question re possibility of a freight ferry for Lochmaddy- Uig run, no freight ferries currently available.</p> <p>Agreement for a co-ordinated response to the current ferry situation.</p>	<p>Write to MSP highlighting the issues with the ferries with reference to the commitments of the Islands Plan and</p> <p>Query to CalMac re the restricted use of the Mezzanine deck</p> <p>Draft a open letter from CCs to CalMac expressing concerns</p>	<p>UACC</p> <p>Cllr UR</p> <p>UACC</p>	<p>After the election in May</p> <p>asap</p> <p>asap</p>
	HIAL and Benbecula Airport, update	<p>The petition organised by BCC went to the Petitions Committee and HIAL executive were questioned by the Committee. The impression is that at HIAL board level there has been a lack of understanding of local conditions and a lack of evidence-based decision-making.</p> <p>A second petitions committee has considered the issues further.</p> <p>There has been a pause in proceedings for the May Election and there will be a further hearing by the Petitions Committee after the election. Decision is expected in May regarding the HIAL plans for change.</p> <p>HIAL are still pushing for change but the concerns of stakeholders are being widely publicised and have raised the awareness of the issues.</p> <p>Uist Economic Task Force have led the second petition submission, highlighting HIAL's conflicting position regarding the Islands Act. UETF are pressing for local decision-making, and placing of community reps on the Board.</p> <p>There has been support throughout from MP for the petitions process and a joint effort by the three local authorities, Unions and Community Councils.</p>			

		<p>Government Ministers are due to meet with the Council soon, until now, those involved report a lack of engagement by Government Ministers and the Chief Exec of HIAL.</p> <p>Legal options, Policy options, and opinion of Counsel is being considered with a view to calling for a Judicial review.</p> <p>It has emerged that significantly Benbecula was not mentioned in the plan for change until after the Islands Bill was passed.</p> <p>Broader flight issues: Air service at the moment is a skeleton service, supported by Scot Gov, financed to end of June, GLA BEB run will be supported beyond that.</p> <p>Concerns have been raised with Cllrs re jam packed planes and no routine sanitising between passengers getting off and on in Stornoway. Loganair has taken details of the reported incidents.</p> <p>Next week a direct flight from SYU to GLA is hoped to give more capacity to spread people out on the planes.</p>			
	Deer Management	<p>Bornish CC area are experiencing difficulties with deer in the townships and on the roads and have been in dialogue with Stornoway Uibhist.</p> <p>Stornoway state that they are trying to strike a balance between supporting crofters and maintaining sporting income. Last year 120 deer were culled.</p> <p>North Uist CC also have difficulties with deer.</p> <p>Cllr IAM is on the Uist Deer Management Group for Uist and a Ticks and Lymes Group.</p>	Seek an update from the Deer Management Group and report back to UACC	Cllr IAM	For next UACC meeting
	Climate Change	<p>General discussion about the various Western Isles groups and studies that have focussed on Climate Change over the last few years.</p> <p>There are several new initiatives in the pipeline and there is interest in inviting a speaker to UACC to further explore the issues.</p>	Collate a summary of Climate Change groups, projects and studies	RM	For next UACC meeting
	Community Councils and Covid Recovery	There is an interest in recognising and celebrating the efforts of CCs during the pandemic.	Co-ordinate collection of the stories/experiences from CCs	MC	On-going
	HIAL boat funds	£6.5k has been received by BCC for the donated HIAL boat. BCC are keen to see the funds used fairly across the community. A broad range of suggestions have come in for allocation of the funds.	Circulate the list of suggestions to CCs for comment.	RM	On-going

		Discussion regarding how funds could be shared e.g a single project v's an equal split of funds.			
	Visitor Management	<p>A report went to CnES Sustainable Development Committee recently re Visitor Management with the approach being aligned as an economic issue not a transportation issue.</p> <p>Community Councils have been expressing concerns about lack of facilities and the expected influx of visitors to the islands this summer.</p> <p>Some question the lack of clarity and drive on the part of the Council to take measures to alleviate the visitor pressure, particularly from campervans and motorhomes.</p> <p>There was an acknowledgement that most experienced users of campervans and motorhomes understand the issues but there is a particular concern about hired vans and inexperienced users.</p> <p>The possibility of a Tourist Tax was raised.</p> <p>Question raised about a leaflet for visitors – this has been produced and should be available to ferry passengers.</p> <p>There should also be a video shown on the ferry.</p>	Contact CnES with concerns raised about visitor management	UACC	asap
	South Uist and Eriskay Forum	<p>This group has had several meetings and is moving towards a forum model with Community Councils at the centre.</p> <p>Next steps are to recruit a Development Officer and prepare a plan.</p>			
	Salt Bins	BCC have secured funding for 28 bins from Maclellans Shop in Balivanich, CnES have agreed to arrange for distribution and providing salt. There will be up to 4 for each CC area, Clr RM offered to print the stickers for each CC to put on their bins.	Consider where the salt bins would be situated	Each CC	ongoing
	Date of next meeting	Tues 8 th June TBC			