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AIRIDHANTUIM COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 13th March 2023 at 7.30pm

Venue: Clan Macquarrie Community Centre, Borge.

In Attendance:

Office Bearers: Chair; Roderick Martin (RM) Chair; Donald A Macdonald (DMD), Clerk/Secretary

Elected or Directly Appointed Members: Murdo Nicholson (MN) – from 8pm; Sandy Jack (SJ); Kenneth N Graham (KNG); Iain Murray (IM) ; Donna Dorris (DD)

Councillors: Kenny Macleod (KML); John N Macleod (JNML)

Members of the community: D J Morrison (DJM); P J Macdonald (PJM); D Macleay (DM)

Guests: Angus Campbell (AC); Murdo Maclean (MML) both Ferries Community Board – **Item 3 only**

Apologies: Mairi Macdonald; Luke Mackay; Kevin Matheson; Mathew Maciver; Iain Maciver; Councillor Donald Macsween

Item		Action:	Action by:
1.	<i>Welcome & Apologies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">RM welcomed all the attendeesApologies were noted as shown above		
2.	<i>Minutes of the last Meeting</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Minutes of the 16th January 2023 meeting were agreed as accurate, proposed by DD and seconded by IM</i>	Provide a copy of these Minutes to CnES	DMD



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<p>3.</p>	<p><i>Ferries Community Board Chair Angus Campbell(AC) has been tasked by Scottish Government with following up on the Project Neptune Report commissioned by SG via Ernst&Young last year which had focused on how our west coast ferry services are delivered and future options. His main focus is on the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Engaging across Scotland</i> <i>Speaking to island communities, ferry users and other stakeholders</i> <i>Asking how Scotland's ferry services can be improved</i> <i>Providing a report to Scottish Ministers, probably during April 2023</i> <p><i>AC's aims at this community council session were to try and obtain answers to the following, by way of affording all in attendance a chance to address the following key questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Can the way ferry services are organised be improved to help deliver?</i> <i>In what way does the current set up lead to issues?</i> <i>What do you think is the best way to organise ferry services?</i> <i>What other things can be done to ensure a first rate ferry service?</i> 	<p>A wide-ranging discussion took place, during which MML of the Ferries Community Board took notes.</p> <p>Some of the areas raised were around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complexity of current structures and potential for inefficiency and avoidance of responsibility How "far removed" Calmac/David MacBrayne Ltd executive and Board seem to be from island issues The importance of long-term planning for future investment in ferries The merits or otherwise of having a Regulator appointed for ferry services The need for dispersal of CalMac jobs to island locations Whether Transport Scotland currently have the knowledge, resources and experience to effectively deal with ferry services The need to set aside ferry space for urgent/last minute islander travel The merits of differential pricing for islanders and visitors <p>Residents of our community council area to be advised (through our Facebook channel) that they can respond to AC on Project Neptune and the questions alongside here.</p>	<p>DMD</p>
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4.	<p>Matters Arising from Meeting held on 16th January 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scrap problems (RM updated the meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some progress achieved - with vehicles cleared from all around North Lewis and others currently lined up at roadsides awaiting collection ▪ MacLaughlins/Stornoway Skip Hire continue to be active and are quite efficient at removing vehicles, often within a two week period of requests – free uplift extended until end March. They have acknowledged how beneficial our efforts have been in increasing the level of interest and uplifts ▪ Fios have also been good for promoting collection services ▪ Now in communication with The Stornoway Gazette to achieve publicity for our efforts and the island-wide need for action ○ Upper Shader kiosk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimal change to previous situation, BT say however that an engineer resource for decommissioning has been identified now - needed prior to formal handover of the kiosk to ACC (all paperwork has already been signed by us) ○ Tom na Ba bus shelter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most recent estimated costs of supply, delivery and erection of the shelter using CnES shelter supplier was £6,000 including VAT - which is approx £2,400 more than we had originally budgeted. ▪ The shelter was ordered anyway and, pleasingly, is now installed in fact – we agreed to fund any shortfall from the re-allocation of WILL funding and if necessary, from our Social/Admin funds. Invoice awaited from CnES, recently sought by DMD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The item is likely to remain on the agenda for future meetings and may need input from CnES, SEPA, Crofting Commission and UOG among others • Awaiting further contact from Stornoway Gazette – what we seek is a proper journalistic piece from them in order to try and make the right organisations take some responsibility for the problem • Retain on agenda, chase up ahead of next meeting • Retain on agenda until fully paid 	<p>DMD</p> <p>RM</p> <p>DMD</p> <p>DMD</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Authority actions – old school, bus shelters, streetlighting, pavements, road gritting etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Old school still showing under offer ▪ Sidewalks in parts of Shader, in High Borge and in Melbost still require cleaning/scraping, also to review the white line markings on all these. Given it is a safety concern, Councillors were previously asked anew to give it attention on behalf of ACC. ▪ Road gritting –some improvement in timing and frequency and locations noted in recent months ▪ Potholes noted as really problematic following recent and previous snow and ice – Councillors advised of a backlog, albeit previous worst affected areas had been dealt with (eg Newmarket). Expectation is Council staff and contractors will be working their way through these ▪ Melbost Bridge – Council engineer e-mail response noted. No deterioration since 2012 and being monitored regularly with HGV etc operators aware of structural concerns. ▪ Signage – Council (John Macleod) responded promptly and positively to our request for a “Borge” sign at the approach to the bridge from High Borge. It may be several months however before new sign is in place ○ Gunnera problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UOG are keen to train local people in safe use of weedkiller and gunnera destruction going forward given a full eradication programme may take several years to be successful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noting • Councillors to follow up for remaining areas • Councillors previously advised any poor road surfacing should be reported as a safety concern – via CnES “Report It” page on their website. Usually good at repairing if a genuine road safety issue • Noted, to re-visit later in the year to establish if any updates • Noting • Re-engage with UOG in advance of the next growth season and ask that they advertise any training opportunities for locals 	<p>Councillors</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>DMD</p> <p>DMD</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Galson Speed Limit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>A Scot Gov initiative on which little further update can be expected before mid/end-2023 per Councillor K Macleod at a previous meetings. It does appear that Galson is on the list of villages being considered however.</i> ○ Northland Power <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>No further communication or correspondence received or sent since their attendance in Spring 2022 by conference call</i> ▪ <i>We believe a new Community Liaison Officer has been appointed by Northland – Eilidh Whiteford possibly</i> ○ Deer Problems on roads/in villages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Noted that cull was ongoing</i> • <i>Noted that problems exist throughout the CC area</i> ○ Waste and Littering in Melbost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Nothing new to report. Planning Dept at CnES are aware and will monitor further applications/construction in line with normal guidelines</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted – retain on agenda meantime • Noted – retain on agenda • Report any issues/concerns to UOG • Noting 	<p>DMD</p> <p>DMD</p> <p>ALL</p>
5.	<p>Financial Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasurer was not in attendance but provided a written Report in advance of the meeting, for noting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Latest balance of account being £14,582 at 10/3/23, now allocated to the following as a result of recent agreements reached with Western Isles Lifestyle Lottery and with CnES as admins for Crown Estate funding: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For noting – including that a bill of circa £6k is expected very shortly for the bus shelter project • Clerk has written to WILL to advise that 	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coastal/Shader River Walkway £ 721 ▪ Galson Bus Shelter £5,309 ▪ Borge Bridge Picnic area £1,000 ▪ Admin/Social/General £7,552 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,000 recently received via CnES Challenge Fund for picnic area at Borge plus £40 room hire costs paid in advance for our 2023 meetings - these noted as the only change from the previous Report 	<p>the bus shelter has been installed and has also provided them with before and after photographic evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note that CnES need to be similarly advised when the alternative projects we have in mind for their Crown Estate funding are ready to “go” – giving a note of the specifics plus before/after photos 	DMD
6.	<p><i>Upper Shader Village/Main road junction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Concern expressed by one of our Community Councillors ahead of the meeting regarding this junction where she had experienced a “near miss”, not for the first time, with main road traffic whilst exiting the junction from the village road.</i> • <i>All present accepted this junction has been causing problems for many years</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary to write to Council (Calum Mackenzie) to ask what can be done to try and make this junction safer for all road users 	DMD
7.	<p><i>Bus Services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>RM mentioned he had attended a Young At Heart group meeting recently where a presentation had been made on behalf of Transport Scotland – the subject matter being generally around how local bus services might be improved</i> • <i>Those present at the meeting had concerns about the general unsuitable nature of the large coaches being used for our bus services here – accessibility issues being the main concern (high steps entering and exiting the coaches and also a step accessing the passage leading to the seating)</i> • <i>There was a view also that smaller vehicles running more frequently might be of benefit to our residents</i> • <i>These matters were widely agreed as being pertinent by those in attendance at this CC meeting</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary to write to the consultants/ reps of Transport Scotland in relation to these matters – each of which were repeated at the meeting 	DMD



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9.	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Short discussion took place re Crown Estate funding application deadline (31st March) and amount allocated to our "ward"</i> • <i>Also re Councillor Ward Monies – amounts</i> • <i>Speeding traffic - felt to be a real concern again, throughout the community council area</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CE funding - Groups within the community should apply by deadline date • Speeding – we are to express concerns again to the senior officer in Stornoway, last correspondence on this matter having been in October 2021 	<p>ALL</p> <p>DMD</p>
10.	Date of Next Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Thursday 18th May 2023 at 7.30pm, Clan Macquarrie Community Centre</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Noting 	<p>ALL</p>