

SANDWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Meeting

Monday 6th February 2023 at 7.30pm

Sandwick Hall (upstairs)

MINUTE OF THE MEETING

Sederunt: Anna Macfarlane, Duncan Mackay, Rhoda Mackenzie(Vice Chair), Nicola MacSween(Clerk), Bob Walker(Chair), Mike Smith

Councillors: Cllr Frances Murray

Apologies: Cllrs: Rae Mackenzie, Angus McCormack, George Murray

Minute of the Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the meetings held on: Thursday 1st October 2020 & Monday 17th January 2022 were accepted. Proposed and seconded by DM, MS, & BW, RM respectively.

Matters Arising:

Posthumous Awards WW2 – Cllr McCormack reported, in absentia, that Ginny Hutchison, Sculptor had progressed the relief and a meeting was planned for the following week.

Association of Community Councils: Ongoing.

Street & Landscape Furniture:

- Plaques now in place on benches at Mossend arranged by Bob Walker
- Photos to be arranged with Anna Macfarlane and Angus McCormack

GDPR: On hold/CnES.

Local Electricity Bill: No developments to report presently.

Housing & Environment:

- Branahue T-junction visibility continues to be impaired by foliage/undergrowth. Cllr F Murray offered to take forwards with CnES
- Plasterfield Radar Station planning application turned down: lack of information/time lapsed

Dog Fouling:

Cllr F Murray offered to investigate obtaining a replacement bin for the Braighe access area. Sited nearer to the path itself preferably.

Traffic Issues:

- Cllr F Murray offered to seek an update on the introduction of 20mph speed limit in various locations
- The question was raised of the suitability for East Street of levelled, traffic calming measures such as those in Stornoway town centre

Sandwickhill Hub:

It was noted:

- that a robust group had been formed to manage this project which is progressing nicely
- SHARE was in the process of being amalgamated with the Hub given the importance of the hall facilities to the project

Point and Sandwick Trail:

The very positive impact of this project on many aspects of community life was noted together with phases currently under development as follows:

- Steinish, Phase 2 – awaiting planning, the Otter Survey now completed
- Sheshader to Bayble – works to commence shortly to include improved crofting access from Sheshader, Bayble and Eagleton
- Braighe – under consideration

Transportation: Ferry Services:

Various issues discussed: shelf life of vessels and the need for forensic scrutiny of all, increase in tourism numbers could not be predicted, boards need locals and an island base, regular dialogue between all agencies essential, unacceptable call waiting times to book, repeated, inaccurate examples of “ferry full” for foot passengers especially, 70% increase in vessel maintenance, emergency capacity essential and additionally, Loganair no longer reserving capacity for medical appointments and other emergencies.

Effort acknowledged of:

- Angus Campbell, Chair of Ferries Community Board organising a meeting with full discussion between CnES and Robbie Drummond, CE CalMac Ferries Ltd
- Cllr Uisdean Robertson, Transportation Chair, CnES in almost daily contact with all agencies and expressly asking for local representatives on boards
- elected representatives to reach compromise where possible

Forward focus agreed on:

- update from Councillors at next meeting
- upcoming, CMAL programme of community consultations headed by Angus Campbell, Chair of Ferries Community Board
- Green Footprint: CnES hydrogen hub essential

Local Place Plans:

Points discussed and noted:

- CnES plans to engage with the community from April 2023
- SCC needs to determine priority areas in the district for development opportunities thereby preserving, for example, agricultural areas. LPP could enable the community to do this
- currently CnES plan to build 95 houses in Steinish; community suggested 10 in a township of 50 existing houses
- North Street crofters face a similar threat despite investing in livestock and new roads and fencing
- potential sites for further housing identified by CnES at Melbost(70 houses), Stoneyfield(100 houses), and Oliver’s Brae yet land often not usable for housing in out of town sites
- new housing developments lack infrastructure
- 2000 empty properties in the Western Isles and a housing list of more than 600 people
- 55% of houses built in rural areas yet town always more popular

Suggestions:

- invite a speaker from CnES to the next meeting
- email CnES planning and place a marker to engage in LPP as soon as available
- engage with Stornoway Trust and determine Stornoway boundaries

Challenge Fund:

It was stated that the closing date for applications had been reached. Cllr F Murray undertook to speak to BA Scott at CnES ref the possibility of an extension.

Suggestions considered: assisting the purchase of drapes for the main hall and the installation of hybrid meeting facilities upstairs.

AOCB:

lolaire Remembrance 2023:

Thanks were extended to Duncan Mackay for attending the ceremony on New Year's Day and stepping forwards with a wreath on behalf of SCC.

Stornoway Community Council:

The meeting queried the use of Crown Estate monies allocated to Stornoway and Sandwick areas jointly.

Finance:

Point & Sandwick Trust Grant (£5k):

Duncan Mackay suggested the purchase of 4 new lifebelts for the environs of the lolaire Memorial. This was agreed and Duncan to take forwards.

Anna Macfarlane confirmed cheques issued for:

- Clerk retainer payments 2022/23 & 2023/24
- Reimbursement for the lolaire Remembrance Wreath to Cllr A. McCormack

Patient Travel/Chaperone/Loganair:

Cllr F Murray stated that the issue of absence of funding for chaperones had been raised with Alasdair Allan, MSP. Bob Walker agreed to take forwards.

Steinish Community Trust:

Mike Smith informed the meeting of SCT's proposal to Stornoway Trust for community ownership. An update awaited.

Anti-social Behaviour:

It was noted that this issue appeared to have improved.

DONM:

Monday 6th March 2023

