



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held in the Council Offices, Stornoway, on Wednesday 26 September 2018 at 2.00pm.

PRESENT	Mr Donald F. Crichton (Chair) Mr Norman MacDonald (Vice-Chair) Mr Calum Macmillan Mr Iain A MacNeil Mr Roddy Mackay Mr Uisdean Robertson Mr Finlay Cunningham Mr Norman A MacDonald	Mr Alasdair Macleod Mr Angus McCormack Mr Iain M Macaulay Mr Gordon Murray Mr John A Maciver Mr John Mackay
APOLOGIES	Mr Donald Manford	
MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE	Mr Paul Steele Mr Iain M Macleod Mr John G. Mitchell Mr Rae Mackenzie	Mr Charlie Nicolson Mr Calum Maclean Mr Kenny John Macleod
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE	Mr Malcolm Burr Mr Calum Iain Maciver Mr Joe Macphee Mr Domhnall MacDonald Mr Murdo Mackay Miss Alison MacCorquodale Mrs Mairi Maciver Mr Nick Smith Mr Pete Middleton	Mr David Macleay Mr Robert Emmott Mrs Anne Macdonald Mrs Dolina Macleod Mr Colin G. Morrison Miss Mairi Sine Macdonald Mrs Fiona Maciver

Prayer The Meeting was preceded by prayer, led by Mr Calum Maclean.

Welcome The Chairman welcomed Mr David Newman, Secretary and Treasurer and Mr Alasdair MacEachen, Depute Chair of Sealladh Hiort to the Meeting.

MINUTES

Minute of Meeting of 13 June 2018	1	The Minute of Meeting of 13 June 2018 was approved .
Minute of Meeting of Fisheries Joint Consultative Committee 31 August 2018	2	The Minute of Meeting of Fisheries Joint Consultative Committee 31 August 2018 was noted .
Declaration of Interest	3	The Chairman declared an interest in item 13 as a Member of Stornoway Trust.

PRESENTATION

Sealladh Hiort 4 With reference to item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 6 December 2017 the Director of Development submitted a Report providing an overview of Sealladh Hiort; a proposal to develop a St. Kilda viewing point in North Uist as part of a proposed Slighe Hiort (St. Kilda trail). The Report stated that North Uist was the closest point in the Outer Hebrides to the St. Kilda archipelago and had the best direct views of the islands on clear days; digital technology would be used to enhance the views when and where necessary. The Report further stated that whilst keeping St. Kilda as its core theme, other displays and interpretation in the Viewpoint Centre would focus on other outlying Hebridean islands which had very similar cultural and natural histories to St. Kilda and also St. Kilda's modern role in defence and maritime matters.

The Report stated that three community groups based in Uig, Harris and North Uist proposed to develop specific projects suited to their particular areas and that Harris Development Ltd. were focused on the historical archived information linked to Seallam and the departure point in Leverburgh for boats taking visitors to St. Kilda on day trips.

The Report acknowledged that, whilst funding for projects of this nature remained a challenge, the proposed islands-wide initiative to create several distinct projects linked by a common theme would strengthen funding bids to appropriate bodies.

Mr David Newman and Mr Alasdair MacEachen of Sealladh Hiort provided a very informative presentation to the Committee following which Members were afforded the opportunity to ask questions.

Mr MacEachen provided an introduction of the formation of Sealladh Hiort which consisted of six trustees and a further 30 member of the community. Mr Newman presented on the following points:-

- Brief history 2009/16
- Community engagement and consultation
- Site
- Initial appraisal project
- Capital cost issues
- Best value design project
- Funding
- (Cameras)

The presentation focused on the location, which was 43 miles from St. Kilda and provided many camera images of the views from the proposed site. Further details included development of the site, building design and costs and the reasoning for arriving at the agreed design giving a total project cost of £3.2m (including VAT). In regard to funding it was noted that HLF would only provide interpretation funding and the project would therefore rely on any 'Islands Deal' funding, HIE and ERDF contributions and make an attempt at 'crowd funding' targeting the 1000 members of the St. Kilda Club.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Mr David Newman and Mr Alasdair MacEachen for their presentation and wished them good luck in taking the project forward.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle note the Report and Presentation.

Performance Management (Development) 2018/19: Quarter 1 5 With reference to item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 13 June 2018 the Director of Development submitted a Report providing an overview of the Business Plan and related performance issues for Quarter 1. The Report stated that the Development Department Plan covered the following service areas with relevance to the Committee: Cultural and Information services (Heritage); Development Services; elements related to Strategic Planning; Economic Development and the Energy Unit. The presentation indicated that all Business Plan actions and KPIs were to target and the progress against individual actions and key performance indicators were summarised in the Presentation as follows:

Cultural and Information Services: Heritage

It was noted that there had been a 22% increase in visits to museums compared to Q1 last year. Scotland's Early Silver exhibition had opened on 3 May at Lews Castle and the Donald MacKenzie exhibition had opened on 15 March 2018 in Uist and Barra. HLF had given permission to start the Great Place Project and object loans had been secured for the Iolaire exhibition. It was noted that the Conservation Officer was now in post.

Planning and Building Standards

An update on the preparation of Local Development Plan adoption and Planning Brief for Blackwater Housing Proposal Site was provided together with an update on participation in Local Authorities Aquaculture event. Members were also reminded to attend the LDP Training Seminar on 3 October 2018.

Economic Development

The presentation highlighted the Castle Grounds Regeneration Programme with an overall project total of £4.3m. The project had been novated to the Comhairle with anticipated start date in October 2018.

The outcome of a joint application for Rural Tourism Infrastructure Funding was anticipated in October 2018 with potential investment of over £700k for camper van facilities, toilets, parking areas, signage etc.

An update was provided on the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund stating that 19 community groups had been supported to secure external funding in Q1 2018/19. The Committee commended Mr David Macleay and his team for their achievements and success rate. An update was also provided on LEADER, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and it was noted that independent assessment of Business Gateway had received a 100% score across every matrix in Q1 and the Team were commended for their achievement.

Energy Unit

An update was provided in respect of the Radial Connector and highlighted submission of a 'Needs Case' to OFGEM by SSEN for 600MW. The CfD Auction would open in Q2 2019 with contracts awarded circa Q3 2020 and it was anticipated that the Radial Connector would be completed in Q4 2023. A significant supply chain from converter stations in 2021 through Wind Farms in 2022/23. All dependent on Developers making successful bids.

An application had been submitted to Local Asset Management Pilot Scheme in respect of The Crown Estate (TCE) Pilot Scheme seeking management of seabed out to 12nm and a favourable initial response had been received. The Marine Planning Partnership would be recommending decisions and TCE Scotland would manage leases over lifetime. TCE Bill was favourable to the islands and amendments on transfer of management to Local Authorities and the introduction of Community Benefit schemes was currently being clarified and would be a critical work stream over the next period.

The presentation concluded with risk management, financial performance and priorities for the next quarter and highlighted that spaceport development activity was ongoing with private partners despite the proposed Uist site not getting support from the UK Space Agency and UK Government.

Under consideration of this item the introduction of a tourism tax and a levy on mobile homes was discussed on which Members remained divided.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle continue to scrutinise Business Plan performance through Interplan and through engagement with the Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Presentation.

Arising out of consideration of this item it was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle agree that the Director of Development submit an update Report to the Committee on community windfarm projects and the joint venture with Stornoway Trust.

Service
Redesign
Options

- 6 With reference to item 6 of the Minute of Meeting of 25 April 2018, the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources submitted a Joint Report presenting options for service redesign and recommended the next stages of the process. The Report stated that the scope of the service redesign programme had been agreed by the Comhairle in April 2018. The Report further stated that the proposed model for transformational service redesign, which had been the subject of a Member Seminar, was based on the opportunity for community partnerships and income generation to maximise the benefit of Comhairle resources including the development of charters for the delivery of services and would form the basis for community conversations.

Reports, by the relevant Directors, on the service redesign proposals were provided in Appendices A to F of the Report. A revised savings plan set out in Appendix G to the Report showed that the savings would be realised later than originally projected and it was proposed that alternative spending reductions strategies be developed and that work on the remaining redesign areas commence as early as practical. An additional document providing additional information and a summary of options in respect of Library Services was also circulated to Members. The document concluded that the Community Hub Model outlined in Option 5 presented the most compelling opportunity to deliver service transformation in partnership with the local community and noted that there may be merits in undertaking elements of Options 3 and 4 in parallel with Option 5.

It was agreed to recommend, insofar as the Committee's interests were concerned, that the Comhairle:

- (1) adopt the model set out at the Seminar as the preferred means of service redesign, and in this context and agree:**
 - (i) to develop community conversations incorporating: education; libraries; transport; waste collection, recycling and related service; cemeteries; grounds maintenance; housing; and any other service areas identified by communities or considered appropriate by the Chief Executive;**
 - (ii) that the Director of Development seek to proceed with a partnership agreement with Highlands and Islands Enterprise including co-location and the service redesign of Economic Development;**
 - (iii) that the Director of Development develop a detailed model for the delivery of Heritage Services through an Arm's Length organisation or Trust;**
 - (iv) that the Director of Development develop detailed proposals for the delivery of Housing services;**
 - (v) that the Director of Development develop an integrated wraparound service in conjunction with the Chief Officer of the Integration Joint Board to meet the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan requirements;**
 - (vi) that the Director of Technical Services proceed with the development and tendering of options for bus services in parallel with the community conversations;**
 - (vii) that the Director of Technical Services develop detailed proposals for revisions to commercial charges for waste for approval in December 2018 and implementation from January 2019;**
 - (viii) that the Director of Technical Services continue to develop options for waste and related services in parallel to the community conversations;**
 - (ix) that the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources carry out place based reviews of accommodation, with Community Planning Partners to develop solutions in line with the service delivery model; and**
 - (x) that the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources, in conjunction with the Director of Technical Services, undertake a review of property maintenance and delivery arrangements within the Comhairle;**
- (2) authorise the Chief Executive to make appropriate arrangements for the management, monitoring and reporting of the redesign programme;**
- (3) authorise the Chief Executive to implement the necessary workforce change processes to support the redesign programme; and**
- (4) authorise the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources, in consultation with Corporate Management Team, to identify opportunities for the Comhairle to realise savings should this prove necessary to ensure the savings needed as part of the Budget Strategy are achieved.**

HERITAGE SERVICESArchaeology
Action Plan

- 7 With reference to item 16 of the Minute of Meeting of 17 June 2015, the Director of Development submitted a Report seeking approval of an updated Archaeology Action Plan 2018-2020 outlined in Section 5 to the Report. The Report stated that the six point Action Plan approved by the Comhairle in June 2015 had identified the areas for action as Archaeology Framework and Toolkit, Economic Impact Assessment, Research Framework and Agenda, Assistant Archaeologist (Udal), Hebridean Archaeology and Environment Resource Centre, and Funding. As Actions had been significantly progressed or concluded, an updated Action Plan had been developed for 2018-2020 which developed actions from the previous Plan and added new priorities.

The Report stated that the key areas of action for the next period were contributing to the Research Framework and Agenda, supporting publication of research into the Udal peninsular, and advocacy and advice in support of research and interpretation of Neolithic sites. Achievement against the plan was dependent on the availability of resources within the Heritage Service and it was noted that applications to external sources may be required.

It was noted that the Comhairle would continue to work closely with external organisations to promote and market archaeology in the Outer Hebrides and that Dig It! had recently approached the service to work with them. Dig It! was co-ordinated by two charities – the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and Archaeology Scotland and promoted research into the past and Archaeology Scotland focussed on education, promotion and support of archaeological heritage.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle approve the updated Archaeology Action Plan 2018-2020.

DEVELOPMENT PLANSGovernance:
Planning
Decisions

- 8 With reference to item 7 of the Minute of Meeting of Environment and Protective Services Committee of 3 September 2013 and item 3 of the Minute of Meeting of Audit and Scrutiny Committee of 11 September 2013, the Director of Development submitted a Report seeking approval of the Scheme of Delegation for determination of local planning applications appended to the Report. The Report stated that the Scheme was a requirement of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) and required to be reviewed at five year intervals for submission to Scottish Ministers. The current Scheme of Delegation had been adopted by the Comhairle in September 2013 and the Report proposed to re-adopt the existing Scheme as it had performed satisfactorily with no obvious drivers for change.

The Report highlighted the new Planning (Scotland) Bill laid before Parliament on 4 December 2017 which was currently progressing through parliamentary stages. Subsequent to the Act coming into force and any requirement to review and change the Scheme of Delegation would be reported back to the Committee in due course.

Under consideration of this item, Members were encouraged to attend the Local Development Seminar on 3 October 2018 which afforded an opportunity to introduce the adopted Local Development Plan and policy framework to all Members as future planning applications, such as the proposed Goathill Development, would be required to be submitted to full Council based on the new framework.

It was agreed to recommend, insofar as the Committee's interests were concerned, that the Comhairle:

- (1) **authorise the Director of Development to submit the Draft Scheme of Delegation appended to the Report to Scottish Ministers for approval;**
- (2) **authorise the Chief Executive to amend, if necessary, the Comhairle Scheme of Delegation in light of the Scottish Ministers response; and**
- (3) **note that the content of the Planning (Scotland) Bill indicates the new Act would introduce a requirement for future change to the Scheme and a Report would be brought to Committee at the appropriate time.**

BIODIVERSITY AND COUNTRYSIDE

Core Path Plan Review 9 With reference to item 9 of the Minute of Meeting of 20 March 2013, the Director of Development submitted a Report seeking approval of the Core Path Plan Review process. The Report stated that the preparation and maintenance of a Core Path Plan was a requirement of all Local Authorities by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. Section 5 of the Report outlined the process of preparing a draft of the reviewed Core Path Plan providing a step by step approach to achieving the review and summarised the formal adoption process which would be the subject of further reports to the Committee. The Report stated that the Comhairle had worked with partners to develop and enhance walking and cycling routes throughout the Hebrides and had secured ERDF and SNH funding to develop the Hebridean Way walking and cycling routes. The procedures outlined in the Report would provide a process which was inclusive while minimising the resource implications for the Comhairle.

Under consideration of this item it was noted that the formation of a Countryside Trust was progressing and that community landowners and community bodes would be contacted in the next 2-3 months.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle approve the Core Path Plan review process outlined in Section 5 of the Report.

FISHERIES

Marine Scotland Consultation Improving Protection given to Priority Marine Features Outside the Marine Protected Area Network 10 With reference to item 19 of the Minute of Meeting of 27 September 2017, the Director of Development submitted a Report seeking homologation of a Comhairle response to the Marine Scotland Consultation on Improving Protection given to Priority Marine Features outside the Marine Protected Area Network. The Report detailed requirements under the National Marine Plan and The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and stated that as there was no equivalent mechanism for fisheries, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) had been commissioned to identify locations where there was a need to consider additional management for bottom contacting mobile fishing gears to ensure there was no significant impact on the national status of Priority Marine Features (PMFs) within the 6 nautical mile (NM) limit.

The Report further listed the eleven priority marine features and outlined the main basis for the consultation. It was noted that the consultation did not ask whether measures should be implemented which would be the subject of a further consultation and a sustainability appraisal.

The Report further highlighted that the Outer Hebrides and surrounding area contributed through several environmental designations and made a significantly greater contribution than any other part of Scotland. The Comhairle was strongly of the opinion that there was a direct correlation between the inappropriately high level of environmental designation and a lower level of economic performance.

The Comhairle response to the consultation was appended to the Report and had been considered and agreed by the Fisheries Joint Consultative Committee on 31 August 2018.

The Chairman highlighted that he would be taking forward, as Chair of the parent committee, the recommendation of the Fisheries Joint Consultative Committee to seek a meeting with Scottish Ministers in respect of the impact of marine protected areas.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle agree to homologate the response to the Marine Scotland Consultation on Improving Protection given to Priority Marine Features outside the Marine Protected Area Network detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report.

- UK Government Consultation Fisheries White Paper: Sustainable Fisheries for Future Generations 11 The Director of Development submitted a Report seeking homologation of a Comhairle response to a UK Government Consultation on the Fisheries White Paper: Sustainable Fisheries for Future Generations. The Report stated that the Fisheries White Paper set out the scope of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) proposed new approach to fisheries management with the aim to build a vibrant and sustainable UK fishing industry and taking cognisance of Brexit transition and opportunities, improving and promoting sustainable fisheries, access agreements and future quota allocation, technical regulations and reforming fisheries management.

The Report highlighted that the Fisheries Bill provided an excellent opportunity to review fishing opportunities and to ensure that UK fishing communities derived maximum benefit from UK quotas and the fishing resource around the UK should benefit the coastal communities from which it had traditionally relied on. In respect of quota, the Report proposed investigation into alternative quota allocation such as zonal attachment whilst acknowledging transparent economic and social criteria and operated for the long term benefit of those communities. The Report further stated that the Comhairle had successfully operated a Community Quota Scheme for a number of years with nephrop quota held for the long term benefit of fishers wishing to access the sector on an annual lease basis. This mechanism had encouraged a number of younger, first time skippers to invest in the industry who see a long term fishing future in their local coastal community.

The Comhairle response to the consultation was appended to the Report and had been considered and agreed by the Fisheries Joint Consultative Committee on 31 August 2018.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle agree to homologate the Comhairle response to the UK Government Consultation Fisheries White Paper: Sustainable Fisheries for Future Generations appended to the Report.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Scottish Government Consultation 'A Cultural Strategy for Scotland' 12 With reference to item 18 of the Minute of Meeting of 7 December 2016, the Director of Development submitted a Report seeking homologation of a Comhairle response to the Scottish Government consultation 'A Culture Strategy for Scotland' and its relevance to local strategic planning in this sector. The Report stated that the Scottish Government were currently working to deliver 'A Culture Strategy for Scotland', the first such national strategy in a decade and had consulted with the public and stakeholder organisations in communities across Scotland, culminating in the publication of a draft strategy document. The draft strategy centred on the fundamental value of culture, its empowering and transformational potential, recognised Scotland as a world leader in cultural excellence and examined the impact, value, experience and diversity of cultural activities, products, venues, practitioners and audiences across the country. The document committed to long term change through greater collaboration and integration across culture, communities and policy development.

The consultation response submitted on behalf of the Comhairle was detailed in the Appendix to the Report and informed Members of the position of the Outer Hebrides Creative and Cultural Industries Strategy in relation to the national policy framework.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle agree to homologate the Comhairle response in regard to the Scottish Government Consultation 'A Culture Strategy for Scotland' appended to the Report.

The Chairman declared an interest as a Member of the Stornoway Trust and left the meeting during consideration of the following item. The Vice-Chair Chaired the meeting for this item.

- Castle Grounds Regeneration Project 13 With reference to item 29 of the Minute of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of 5 October 2016, the Director of Development submitted a Report providing an update on the recent award of Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funding for the Lews Castle Grounds Parks for People project. The Report confirmed that HLF had agreed in July to increase the grant rate from 72% to 83%, therefore project funding contributions were as follows, securing a total of £4,725,200 for the Castle Grounds Regeneration project:

HLF	£3,903,600
Comhairle	£250,000
Historic Environment Scotland	£250,00
Stornoway Trust	£321,600

The Report stated that a Novation Agreement had been agreed and signed off by both the Comhairle and the Stornoway Trust on 11 June 2018 in order to progress the project, with works being carried out by the Comhairle, as grantee. The Report further stated the Comhairle and Stornoway Trust had also committed to delivering and maintaining “Green Flag” status, one of HLF’s Approved Purposes; as defined in HLF’s standard terms of grant. The successful conclusion of the project would greatly enhance the environment of the grounds, benefiting the local population and visitors to the area, contributing to the regeneration of the greater Stornoway area.

The Committee commended the work and effort of all parties involved and welcomed this news and looked forward to the project coming to fruition.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle note the Report.

Balivanich
Strategic Vision

- 14 With reference to item 15 of the Minute of Meeting of 27 September 2017 the Director of Development submitted a Report providing an update on the ‘Balivanich Strategic Vision’ exercise undertaken by Threesixty Architecture. The Report stated that the Comhairle, in partnership with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, had commissioned Threesixty Architecture to deliver a strategic vision for Balivanich, building on previous work undertaken by the Comhairle, and following a similar approach to that adopted for Stornoway during 2016/17. The Report further stated that the Balivanich Strategic Vision Report provided a framework for the phased implementation of projects leading to improvements in the economy, environment and infrastructure of the settlement. A key criterion for several funding programmes was the ability to demonstrate community engagement and buy-in and Threesixty had been successful in securing buy-in from the community, key local stakeholders and members of the Uist Economic Taskforce throughout the development of the Report. It was hoped that by identifying a set of initial ‘quick-win’ projects, the community interest in, and commitment to, the regeneration of Balivanich would be sustained through to the point where investment for the medium and large-scale projects would be secured.

The Report highlighted that the strategy had been presented to the Uist Economic Taskforce Working Group in August 2018 and to the community at a public meeting on 20 September 2018 and to the wider Uist Economic Taskforce on 21 September 2018. Following the public meeting, it was proposed that the Working Group would prioritise some initial ‘quick-win’ investments and work would also be undertaken to ensure that medium to long-term priorities were developed to meet the criteria for any future funding opportunities, including the next round of the Scottish Government’s Regeneration Capital Grant fund.

The main focus of the Strategy was to create a heart in Balivanich and the key recommendations were summarised at Section 5 of the Report detailing the large, medium and small scale strategies. The full Balivanich Strategic Vision Report was appended to the Report and had also been presented to the Sustainable Development Strategic MOWG at its meeting on 10 September 2018.

The Chairman stated that he had attended the meeting in Uist along with the Leader, Director of Development and local Members and that the proposals had been fully endorsed by the community and he looked forward to see these being progressed.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle agree to endorse the outcomes of the Threesixty Architecture ‘Balivanich Strategic Vision’ Report.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Reports
Outstanding

- 15 The Chief Executive submitted a Report detailing those Reports outstanding arising from decisions of the Committee.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle note the Report.