

Berneray Community Council

Minutes of meeting 1st July 2024

Berneray Community Hall, 7.30pm

Present: Margaret MacLean (Chair), Donald MacLean (Vice chair), Sharon MacPherson (Treasurer), Eilidh Carr, Cllr Uisdean Robertson, Andrew Ross and 14 members of the public.

Apologies: Lorna MacKillop (Clerk), Willie Fraser, Keith McIntyre and Cllr Mustapha Hocine.

Margaret MacLean (Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. (Eilidh Carr to act as Clerk for this meeting as Lorna MacKillop away).

Minutes of 13th May 2024 read and adopted.

Proposer – Donald MacLean, Seconder – Sharon MacPherson

Minutes of 6th June 2024 (Planning application for campsite 8 Rushgarry, Berneray)

Proposer – , Seconder –

Contents of these minutes were discussed between members of the public and committee (further details below). It was agreed these minutes would be looked over and any relevant amendments to be made for the next Community Council meeting to be held in August.

1. Matters arising

Bays of Harris Buy Out – Andrew Ross (board member & Berneray representative) attended the meeting to provide a current update on the Bays of Harris Buy Out. He stated at the time of the vote in September 2022 there was a 72% turnout with 64% voting for the Buy Out. Recently, a new valuation of the Estate was completed by Savills, this value will remain confidential for now while the current Estate owners commission their own valuation. Once the Estate value is agreed between all parties the Buy Out will move to the next stage / point of purchase.

Pamela MacAskill who was acting as Berneray's other board member is to step down and in the weeks to come a new member from Berneray will be co-opted to work alongside Andrew and those based in Harris.

Loch Bhrusda (fishing) – Steve Clark (Berneray) and Andy (North Uist).

Donald MacLean provided a brief background to the ongoing work and discussions between Keith McIntyre and Scottish Water regarding Loch Bhrusda, the water tanks and the pump station regarding valuation etc. with the view to obtain for the community. Steve and Andy discussed the idea of restocking Loch Bhrusda with fish for fishing purposes (catch and release only). Idea of reintroducing permits similar to years ago with day tickets. Outer Hebrides Fishing Trust to be contacted for more information and advice moving forward. Loch Bhrusda thought to be not included in the Bay of Harris Buy Out assets.

Gunnera, Backhill – area at Backhill before Church Road where 10 to 12 plants are growing in large quantities – possibly Gunnera. If confirmed as Gunnera, plants to be removed.

Berneray Community Council, Campsite meeting – 6th June 2024 –

A number of residents living in Rushgarry have requested a follow up meeting as the next step following on from the public meeting held in June. Also a request for the minutes from the meeting to be relooked at. Examples of points raised regarding the minutes were all opinions were not shown; possible information missing and one sided. It was noted by Berneray Community Council committee, the minutes were completed to cover the points and issues of the meeting – comments, issues, opinions and facts were covered throughout by both those for and against the campsite planning application. Rushgarry residents raised issues they didn't get to put their side across as the planning applicants had shown a presentation, they weren't aware this was to happen on the night.

Questions were asked about the vision of the island in 10 to 20 years – birds, landscape, island, Buy Out, Campsite, young people etc.

Contents of the minutes were discussed. It was agreed these minutes would be looked over and any relevant / possible amendments to be made for the next Community Council meeting to be held in August.

The campsite planning application is ongoing.

2. Councillors' reports

Uisdean Robertson –

Calmac – Uisdean thanked Eilidh Carr and Lorna MacKillop for attending various Calmac meetings held in Carinish and Lochmaddy at the end of May. These meetings were to gather information from both business users of the ferry and also the local communities / public. A proposed timetable for the new ferry entering service on the Lochmaddy to Uig route was shared. Important to gather views and needs to suit businesses & community – early / late sailings, starting from Lochmaddy or Uig, frequency of sailings, named days and timetable to work around Uig/Tarbert were all discussed. These views will be passed onto Calmac in due course to aid new timetables being produced.

Small vessel replacement – 2030, phase 2. Berneray and Eriskay ferries to be included.

Hebridean Air Services – service continues to run between Stornoway and Benbecula. Still issues with customers using the plane due to small size of aircraft, mobility issues etc.

Patient travel (hospital) – Some patients are refusing to travel to hospital appointments and treatment due to costs, duration of trip, overnight stays etc. Issue is ongoing. Also onward travel from Stornoway to Inverness does not match up with Uist flight times.

Crown Estate Funding - £15,000 available for Berneray.

3. Correspondence

Keith McIntyre – email requesting a follow up meeting (Campsite meeting – 06.06.2024) and also for the minutes to be relooked at.

Loriana Pauli – email regarding the campsite / Buy Out working alongside each other.

4. A.O.C.B

Verge cutting – another round of verge cutting has been completed. Positive comments received regarding areas of wildflowers left uncut.

Harbour toilets – hot water element now fixed and replaced by Andy Carr.

Calmac toilets – New equipment to come to replace broken paper towel dispensers etc.

Old pathways – paths to Trealigarry and some on Borve hill in disrepair or damaged.

Sections on croft land or common grazing, too old and not in constant use to fix.

Chemical toilet disposal point – possibly overflowing from tank, will need look into further.

Cemetery area – idea of new bins to be provided, but may cause more issues with rubbish building up and bins would need to be brought to road end at hall for emptying on collection days.

Berneray harbour / pier area – skip & recycling run by volunteers, Harbour toilets looked after by Berneray Community Council and self-funded. Loch Duart pays towards use each month, Uist Asco to be asked to contribute also. Issue with pier ladders – ladders to each side damaged or missing due to age and use. Repairs or replacements to be looked into.

5. Date of next meeting -

Monday 12th August 2024, 7.30pm at Berneray Community Hall