

**Berneray Community Council**  
**Minutes of Meeting 12 August 2024**  
**Berneray Community Hall, 7.30pm**

**Present:** Margaret MacLean (Chair), Donald MacLean (Vice Chair), Sharon MacPherson (Treasurer), Lorna MacKillop (Clerk), Eilidh Carr, Willie Fraser, Councillor Uisdean Robertson and Councillor Mustapha Hocine.

**Members of Public:** Keith MacIntyre and Andrew Rodgers.

**Apologies:** None

Margaret MacLean (Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Eilidh Carr thanked for work as Clerk and will work with Lorna MacKillop to work on administration together.

**Minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 (Amended Campsite Meeting for 8 Rushgarry, Berneray) read and adopted.**

Proposer – Donald MacLean    Seconder – Willie Fraser

Keith MacIntyre thanked Clerk for their work writing minutes. Keith also asked if Minutes would be used in the planning process of the Campsite. Cllr Uisdean Robertson said they would not be. He also highlighted the remit of the Community Council regarding planning applications. Point of accuracy regarding this to be investigated by the Councillors and they would get back to confirm. Also, checking for updates for planning applications discussed.

**Minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 read and adopted.**

Proposer – Sharon MacPherson    Seconder – Donald MacLean

## **1. Matters Arising**

**Bays of Harris Buy Out** – Pamela MacAskill resigned, and Community Council went back to original nominations sheet and Cassy MacLean is now to work with Andrew Ross.

**Defibrillator** – Pads had expired and were replaced at a cost of £50. Pads were replaced again after being used in an emergency free of charge. It is costly to run and the defib is old now. Margaret MacLean can train people, 6-8 at a time. The expired pads can be used in training. Training was suggested and this could take place Autumn/Wintertime. Margaret MacLean plans to organise a country and western night to raise funds for the defibrillator and hall heating.

**Loch Bhrusda** – Keith MacIntyre gave update, and the process is ongoing and the valuation process. Andrew Rodgers received email from Scottish Government regarding license for the fishing on Loch Bhrusda looking for a name on license. Andrew Rodgers to update details and name can be changed in the future. Berneray Development Group to be revisited as its registered at Companies House. Development Group suggested as a vehicle to carry forward future development plans in Berneray.

**BCC Campsite Meeting – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024.** Amended Minutes were made, Proposed and Seconded at beginning of meeting. Keith MacIntyre indicated that he had spoken to Ruairidh Nicholson and asked for a meeting, but this did not happen as Ruairidh declined. Keith MacIntyre expressed concern regarding the erosion of the dune system. Keith has approached Nature Scot and is waiting for a reply

on this issue. Keith also raised concerns regarding motorhomes and the controls that could be applied to this in collecting data. He also raised that he had no feedback on his suggestion concerning the Tiree model and how the campsite could be adapted. Concerns were also raised regarding the condition of the roads and infrastructure. Discussion followed regarding fares and having a debate locally and nationally on over development and tourism. Keith MacIntyre reminded the meeting that a community plan had been raised at the last meeting as to where Berneray is going. A follow up meeting was suggested but this did not take place and Keith MacIntyre expressed his concern. Margaret MacLean to speak to Ruairidh Nicholson and ask if he is willing to meet with the community and discuss the campsite planning. Keith said that on Ruairidh's croft there is a donation box specifying a specific sum of money and no more than 3 campervans. There have been complaints of people telling campers to move off the land. The planning application decision is to be made late September. There could also be a township effort to spread out and distribute campsite to other areas.

## **2. Councillors' Reports**

**Uisdean Robertson** – There have been no meetings since our last meeting.

**Scotland Transport** – they delayed meeting and the boats being built in Turkey are delayed. The first boat is delayed and there will be a domino effect of 2 months on last ferry. There have been problems with transporting the equipment they need.

**Lord of the Isles** is out of circulation due to a fire and trying to source parts.

**Timetable** – the timetable that was submitted there has been no feedback yet.

**Small Electric Ferries** – the Barra and Berneray electric ferries will probably not be seen till 2030.

**Planes** – Uisdean Robertson to meet with Neil Gray, Secretary for Health soon to discuss patient travel and discuss finance. The Stornoway to Inverness route to be discussed regarding the weakness in this service.

**Road Repairs** – road crews are working in Barra but coming to Uist late August to repair roads. Angus MacDonad replied to email stating the same.

**Crown Estate Monies** – Process closed. £15,000 available for Berneray. List to be sent to Uisdean by Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> August.

**Mustapha Hocine** – Looking at **Nursery and Early years** and seminar to be held September/October regarding this especially 0-2 years. There is no statutory obligation to pay for 0-2 years.

**Stornoway Abattoir** – abattoir is going to open at end of August in Stornoway and to be run by the Local Authority.

**Fixed Connections** – Looking at tunnels or ferries for Uist and Barra. Discussions to be held in future.

**School Transport** – Question was asked regarding bus drivers who were not sure who they were picking up. Mustafa to investigate this and report back.

**Higher Results - the** results were not as good as predicted having dropped a lot. Nat 5 and Higher results to be looked at in detail.

**Gaelic Issue - discussion** is being held in Lewis for a specific Gaelic school in Stornoway.

**Single Island Authority** – this will involve bringing together and streamlining services and to have 1 Chief Executive, Finance, HHP, Health Board etc will be together and this is believed will give a better service.

**Surgery** – Mustafa suggested having a surgery in Berneray and council agreed that Wednesday evenings would be suitable for all residents.

Keith MacIntyre raised issue of campervans and tourism. Is this debate being raised at Local and National level? Keith suggested a survey to be held on the number of campervans and visitors on the island where data could be collected accurately. Cal Mac can supply some data but actual figures for Berneray would need to be done locally. This has to be managed properly and Mustafa Hocine suggested a visitor plan to deal with this and a structure be in place.

### **3. Correspondence**

Update on Loch Bhrusda and campsite/erosion – Keith had given update and campsite discussed under Matters Arising.

### **4. A.O.C.B.**

**Brusda Road** – the road repair crews are in Barra and will be moving to Uists and Berneray at the end of August. The road in Rushgarry before the school turn-off was also mentioned and this was condemned. Angus MacDonald replied to email with the same information.

**Gunnera** – this is ongoing and will be looked at soon.

**Harbour Toilets** – Andy Carr replaced toilet seat. The committee is to look at toilets and see what exactly is needed. This to be part of the Crown Estates Project.

**Andrew Rodgers** – Andrew explained in detail the funding application he has put in today, Monday 12 August for the restoration of sea grass round Berneray. This is an expression of interest. The full application to be put in in November. Fishermen would also need to be consulted. There will be 5 jobs available over 3 years, with 4 divers and 1 student but also administrative work. Sea grass is important as it filters water, produces habitat for fish etc and is like marram grass. Andrew wants this project to be put out for discussion and explained this project to be exciting work. The Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS) is involved, and this is to improve climate, sustainability of nature. It is a conservation project and will create benefits in the economy and health. This is a seasonal project with research opportunities and there are lots of other marine projects out there. SAMS provides specialist marine consultancy and survey services and is a respected and independent third-party based in Oban. Andrew Rodgers asked the community council if they would be interested in being involved in this project as decisions would need to be made in the future regarding the project. Margaret MacLean said the community council would discuss this at the next meeting.

### **Margaret MacLean (Chair) clarified a few points of the meeting:**

\* Margaret to approach Ruairidh Nicholson and ask if he is willing to meet informally for discussion re campsite. \* Checking that the road in Rushgarry was condemned, to be confirmed. \* Campsite numbers, how to collect, could prove difficult. \* Rules – visitor code. Could a code be made available. There are leaflets available, but this is a discussion for a future meeting. **Skip** – signage to be followed up stating Berneray residents only.

**Date of next meeting – Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024, 7.30pm at Berneray Community Hall.**

