

Berneray Community Council
Minutes of Meeting 4th November 2024
Berneray Community Hall, 7.30pm

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

Members of Public: Jinny Jackson, Loriani Pauli, Anthony McCord, Keith MacIntyre, Pat Haskell, Neil Cameron and Mary McCormick.

Apologies: Mustapha Hocine.

Margaret MacLean (Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Minutes of 16th September 2024 read and adopted.

Proposer – Donald MacLean Seconder – Eilidh Carr

1. Matters Arising

- a) **Loch Bhrusda** – Keith MacIntyre gave an update. Looking at community buying Loch Bhrusda from Scottish water with the 3 assets and discussions have been ongoing for a year. When Keith researched this found that Lewis and Harris Welfare Development Company have rights to fishing and access. This company does not run at the moment and seems to have been formed around 1919. This was a surprise and a follow up needs to be done. This needs to be researched in more detail. Keith MacIntyre has agreed to take this on board.
- b) **Crown Estate Money** - £15,000 has been allocated to the Berneray Community Council and a list of proposed projects and monies is available. Hopefully this will be available to apply for next year.
- c) **Tesco Fund** – The deadline for this fund was the 4th of November. The committee decided to apply in the next round, approximately in 3 months.
- d) **Sea Grass Restoration** – Andrew Rodgers, the application is ongoing.

2. Councillors' Reports

Uisdean Robertson

Uisdean has written to **Neil Gray** asking for his support in moving forward and dealing with Health Issues and finance, especially with patient travel. Loganair have denied they are cutting services but there are concerns regarding patient travel and reduction of passenger numbers.

Single Island Authority – The Scottish Government are supporting and approving this initiative.

Ferries – Uisdean discussed meeting with Cal Mac, CMAL and Transport Scotland. The Turkish vessels are now looking to launch in January 2025.

Small Vessel Replacement – There is a meeting this Tuesday regarding the problems with the ferries when all 3 are the same, for example having different draughts etc.

Lochmaddy Link Span – Will be a new upgraded replacement link span to suit new ferries.

1st Meeting of the Forum – The forum had their 1st meeting with Eilidh Carr and Cassandra MacLean attending. The next meeting will be 25th November 2024.

Budgets – Approximately £7.5 million but Uisdean will know in December and February for own budget settings. Not looking good as to what will happen.

The next Council Meetings – To be held late December. There was an officer down looking at the flood damage in the Uists. The damage was severe from the recent storms.

Community Renewal Fund - £20 million in the fund but do not know the criteria as yet.

Mustapha Hocine - Apologies

3. Correspondence

a) Anthony McCord sent an email to the community council regarding signage for the Cnoc Gunns road end. He asked for a sign to let visitors know it was a dead end and no access to the beach. An email was sent to Angus MacDonald, no reply has been received.

b) Loriana Pauli sent an email to the community council asking on where the community wants to go and concerns regarding wildlife, erosion and taking care of the land. Loriana discussed the lack of certain birds, numbers dropping, particularly tern numbers. Discussion followed and flyers were given out from the Outer Hebrides Climate Hub. Community can give data regarding insects, bumblebees. UK Research and Innovation is the main body which researches this and will give support. Suggestion for Loriana to create a small group of people to look at a way forward. Sharon MacPherson to work with Loriana.

c) Keith MacIntyre sent an email to the community council with an in-depth report on Traigh Bheasdaire erosion and concerns regarding the systematic changes that are happening. In January, the Council received a letter from a concerned island resident about the rapid erosion at the south end of Traigh Bheasdaire. The Council asked Keith to make further enquiries and report back to Council.

The research in the report has been informed through discussions and communications with:

- *Patrick Hughes, Hebrides Warden, Nature Scot
- *R Nicholson, Crofter at No 8 Rusharry
- * N Nicholson, Thatcher and harvester of Marram Grass
- * Western Isles Planning
- *Casey McIntrye, MA Geography thesis on Traigh Bheasdaire
- * Island community residents.

Keith discussed the concerns of erosion and with data that 35 metres of land has gone already. He also discussed the Dynamic Coast Website which shows the Berneray Coastline and predicted coast. The East and West Beaches are highlighted. The concern of erosion especially where the campsite is going to be. Discussion of the effect the erosion will have and how the beach is being carved in. A

suggestion to look at research and Anthony McCord offered to research agencies to help where a baseline is needed to compare. A suggestion to get in touch with Ian Hoyle who took aerial photos of the beach.

Keith MacIntyre proposed that the council should convene a meeting with all agencies to discuss the concerns and look at all the research. The idea of a Township approach was suggested where the crofters would meet. Keith to ask the Township Clerk of Rushgarry to look at this suggestion.

4. A.O.C.B.

a) **War Memorial** – Community Council members cleaned and tidied up the War Memorial. Thank you to Jim Smithdale who painted the metal plaque at the front of the Memorial.

b) **Sign at Seal View** – sign needs to be looked at.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 2nd December 2024, Berneray Community Hall at 7.30pm

