

Castlebay & Vatersay Community Council

Meeting of 6th November 2024 - Draft Minutes

CCC members Present:

Katie Denehy (KD) - Vice Chair

Sarah Ann MacLean (SAML) – Treasurer

Eileen Frater (EF) – Committee

Donald MacNeil (DMN) - Committee

Rose MacDougall (RMD) - Committee

In Attendance:

Cllr Kenneth MacLean (Cllr KML)

Cllr Ian MacNeil, (Cllr IMN) (via Teams)

Rachael Saunders (RS minutes)

Summary of Actions at the end

- 1) Welcome – KD welcomed everyone to the meeting which started at 19:05
- 2) Apologies – Paul McGuire (PMG) – Chair
- 3) Minutes of previous meetings proposed by Eileen McLeod Frater and Seconded by Rose MacDougall.

4) Matters arising/continuing from last meeting:

a) Playpark, Streetlights & Roads

Road markings: Road markings machine is due back to Barra later in 2024 and CNES due to resurface more roads in 2025. KM confirmed that £20million has been allocated for roads, £15million of which is to be used in Uist and Barra.

Streetlights: As of 4th September the streetlights now go off at 10pm; there have been complaints about this. It's been highlighted that it can also be a struggle in mornings as the streetlights don't turn on in time for travelling to the ferry; this is likely because of Barra having the only service with such an early departure so was not taken into consideration. KML said he would speak to Callum MacKenzie to see if anything can be done.

Action 1: Cllr KML to speak to Callum MacKenzie regarding street light timing

Football pitch/drains: A letter was sent to Callum regarding the pitch flooding, and contact attempted with the Comhairle however there has been no response. It is understood that there was work attempted a few weeks back however they stated they couldn't do much in terms of work as the water levels were too high. The smell in Horve is still terrible and is not pleasant for the children who play in Horve and on/around the pitch. KD said she'd email CMK a list of all the work that has been asked for, and KML said he would speak with Malcolm Burr when next in Stornoway to discuss further. IMN said he would ask CMK to meet with C+VCC to discuss the issues with the pitch however advised he has a tight schedule. From a public health perspective IMN said he would contact SEPA about the drains as it has been going on too long.

Action 2: Cllr IMN to speak with SEPA regarding drains; also speak with CMK to ask to meet with C+VCC

Action 3: Cllr KM to speak with MB to discuss the work required for the drains

Action 4: KD to email CMK a list of all work that has been asked for

b) Hub Update

Castlebay School: A project board has been put together to discuss the planning for the school campus; Cllrs IMN and KML are both on the board at their request.

Arrangements are yet to be made for a first meeting. Architects have visited the school and made notes of the extent of work required for the two new children requiring

support who are starting school next year; they require enhanced transition from January however the scope of work needing to be done is so large that it's not feasible to be completed by then. IMN advised he'd raise this with Callum.

[Action 5: Cllr LMN to speak with CMK regarding the work requirements at Castlebay school for enhanced transition](#)

Hospital/Care Facility: The dentist vacancy is live however still not filled. Issues regarding patient travel have been sent to locality group, and address local health issues on the island.

c) Local Health & Social Care

22/11/2024 is the first IJB meeting and it was asked that concerns around CAMHS referrals be raised. A concern had been to the CC that CAMHS had offered their service via teams to young people. Another concern is around speech therapy referrals where there has been very few visits since March. This is particularly challenging for under 5s who need the in-person meetings.

[Action 6: Cllr IMN to discuss with KD before raising concerns](#)

d) Castle

SAM met with John Fountain in June, and a further meeting date has been proposed for 4th December. Currently there is high level masonry work being carried out. As yet there is no update as to whether the castle will open in 2025.

e) Transport Committee

The transport committee is a core group of business and representatives from the community who continue to meet monthly, however there have been 4 meetings since September to discuss the lack of timetables and service delivery to Barra.

Other Items for the Agenda

- 5) Insurance – KD contacted the C+VCC insurance company regarding adding the astro turf area onto the public liability insurance. The insurance company have said it could be done at no additional cost; they are going to come back to us with a quote for including cover for the materials including the astro turf and removal/replacement. This would then need to be discussed further once the quote is received.
- 6) Herring Walk - C+VCC paid the insurance for the herring walk last year which was almost £400, and CBAB reimbursed the council. KD spoke to another insurance company and they provided a quote of £148 for the same level of cover.
- 7) Uist and Barra Association Community Council – an online meeting has been scheduled for 20th November at 7.30. EF has offered to attend as C+VCC representative.
- 8) Trees – CMK has emailed to advise there are around 3,000 trees being delivered and there will be a surplus so these will be available to anyone who could make use of them on their crofts, gardens etc. The herring walk was discussed as an option however the type of tree arriving is not suitable for there; they are Scottish native so will be Alder or Rowan trees. Anyone who wants some of the surplus trees should contact CMK by the end of November.
- 9) Christmas competition and Tree Giveaway – In previous years, the competition has been for best dressed indoor and outdoor trees, however the competition can be anything festive. It was suggested to do a Christmas bake off and have a childrens and adults competition. This will be organised for mid December. There is also the tree giveaway which is picked at random by the school children using a map of the island; SAM to send KD the link for the trees.

[Action 7: SAM to send KD a link for the trees for the tree giveaway](#)

10) Swing parks – There has been a complaint about the swing park; KML has spoken to CMK about it and was told if the council address it, as they don't have the budget to replace or maintain the swings, they will need to remove them. £6k was believed to have been awarded to Castlebay in 2019 for swing parks however there is no record of this. It was suggested perhaps approach previous people on community council and also previous play park association. There is no record of monies in the CC account of that value.

11) AOB – the funding for the new houses in Cuithir has been agreed and it's expected that work will start on 6 houses in the New Year with MacInnes Brothers doing the work. These houses will be going in between the two current estates, and a footpath between them has been requested to prevent children walking along the main road between the estates. The council have said they can also look into the possibility of a playpark in the area for the children.

Finances: SAML updated on finances as follows:

£28,535.41 is the account total, of which most is ring-fenced as follows:

- £8,700 for bus stops however only half of this was used; the remaining amount will be used for Vatersay bus stop and maintenance
- £18,000 still ringfenced for other expenses so £10k remains

Date of Next Meeting: **Wednesday 29th Jan 7pm at Barra Learning Centre.**

Summary of Actions:

| No | Description | Who | Completed ✓ |
|----|--|-------------|----------------|
| 1 | Cllr KML to speak to Callum MacKenzie regarding street light timing | Cllr IMN | |
| 2 | Cllr IMN to speak with SEPA regarding drains; also speak with CMK to ask to meet with C+VCC | Cllr IMN | |
| 3 | Cllr KML to speak with MB to discuss the work required for the drains | Cllr KML | |
| 4 | KD to email CMK a list of all work that has been asked for | KD | |
| 5 | Cllr LMN to speak with CMK regarding the work requirements at Castlebay school for enhanced transition | Cllr IMN | |
| 6 | Cllr IMN to discuss issues around CAMHS referrals with KD before raising concerns | Cllr IMN/KD | |
| 7 | SAM to send KD a link for the trees for the tree giveaway | Sarah-Ann | |

Abbreviations:

- C&VCC – Castlebay & Vatersay Community Council
- CnES – Coimhairle nan Eilean Siar
- CBaB – Coimhearsnachd Bharraigh & Bhatarsaigh
- VABV – Voluntary Action Barra & Vatersay
- LAF – Local Area Forum
- MB – Malcolm Burr
- LPG – Locality Planning Group
- IJB – Integrated Joint Board
- AA – Alastair Allan