

Berneray Community Council
Minutes of Meeting 24th February 2025
Berneray Community Hall, 7.30pm

Present: Margaret MacLean (Chair), Sharon Mac Pherson (Treasurer), Lorna MacKillop (Clerk), Eilidh Carr, Councillor Mustapha Hocine.

Members of Public: Keith McIntyre, Pat Haskell, Neil Cameron, Lorian Pauli, Craig Jump and P.C. Nicola Stanfield

Apologies: Cllr Uisdean Robertson, Donald MacLean (Vice Chair), Billy Fraser and Andrew Rodger.

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

Minutes of 13th January 2025 read. Proposed by Cllr Hocine and seconded by Pat Haskell.

1. Matters Arising

- a) **Loch Bhrusda** – Keith McIntyre – ongoing.
- b) **Crown Estate Money** - £15,000 to be allocated and earmarked. Skip signage discussed and importance of sign and meeting with keyholders to be organised.
- c) **Sea Grass Restoration** – Andrew sent an email to the meeting. Unfortunately, the main seagrass funding bid was unsuccessful. The main reason given was that the project was too early stage. However, Andrew has been given a small grant to do some survey work to develop the project. Andrew will keep us updated.
- d) **Buy-Out Questionnaire** – update. Questionnaire is still being finalised.

2. Councillors' Reports

Councillor Uisdean Robertson – Apologies

Councillor Mustapha Hocine

Meeting for CNES Budget – Meeting to take place in Stornoway on 25th February 2025

Health – Meeting with Neil Gray discussed patient and there were 17 recommendations.

New plane – a new plane is being looked at 5 days a week and is on view next Wednesday in Benbecula. This plane carries 9 passengers and is on trial between BEB /STY and BARRA/STY.

Additional money is needed from the Scottish Government.

Visitors Levy – Consultation is to come out soon regarding this extra tax on accommodation.

Levy Fund – 20M is this fund. 75% to be spent in Uist and Barra. Looking for ideas/projects up to 3M – roads and services/infrastructure.

Crown Estate - If budget approved £92,000 for the North Uist and Berneray Ward under Councillors Robertson and Hocine to use. Hopefully, Berneray will get £15,000 for projects/ Bid to be in as soon as possible – March. Feedback from community as to ideas/projects.

Increase in Council Tax – Hopefully keep as low as possible, suggested 8% by Cllr Hocine.

Housing Issue – Discussion regarding Council Tax especially for young people.

Education – South Uist re-zoning consultation regarding primary in progress.

Keith McIntyre asked Councillor Hocine to clarify the Planning Policy of the Council regarding the application for the campsite at 8 Rushgarry. The Policy of the Council would not allow the campsite to be situated where it is. Keith McIntyre stated that questions have been raised but no answers given. The impact upon residents from the campsite is causing great concern. Councillor Hocine is happy to take these questions forward to the Planning Department in Stornoway and will get back to Keith McIntyre.

Loriana Pauli discussed the Buy-Out questionnaire and expressed her anger as to why the document has not been circulated yet. Loriana asked the community council to put pressure on this questionnaire as to the length of time this is taking. The committee will speak to Andrew Ross and push this forward. Discussion followed regarding planning, vision for Berneray and the Buy-Out.

Police Scotland – P.C. Nicola Stanfield addressed the meeting.

P.C. Stanfield reported no incidents in Berneray and this was reassuring to hear.

P.C. Stanfield reported that there were no issues with hard drugs. Cannabis and Cocaine are on the island.

The prevalent crime is that of drink driving. She asked that the community should be aware and report anything regarding this issue.

3. Correspondence

- a) Email from Andrew Rodger regarding sea grass project – read at meeting.
- b) Loriana Pauli updated the RSPB Meeting – 5th March in Community Hall.

4. Treasurer's Report

Sharon MacPherson presented monthly report from 1st January – 24th February 2025.

Margaret MacLean (Chair) thanked Sharon for the report.

Islands Growth Deal – Looking for ideas to use this money.

Workshop on Wednesday to do with film, art, music and creative practice.

5. A.O.C.B

- a) Councillor Hocine discussed a public consultation on Western Isles Business Strategy – 25-30 year plan and looking for the public to contribute.
- b) 50th Year CNES Anniversary – a councillor asked for budget to be cut - this was overturned by council, £5,000 to be spent.

6. Date of Next Meeting Monday, 7th April 2025, Berneray Community Hall, 7.30pm.

