



# COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

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Minute of Meeting held in Council Offices,  
Sandwick Road, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, on  
Wednesday 2 October 2024 at 2.00pm.

### PRESENT

Mr Kenneth Macleod (Convener)	Mr Ranald Fraser
Mr Paul Steele (Leader)	Mr Norman Macdonald
Mr Duncan MacInnes, MBE, (Depute Leader)	Mr Donald Macsween
Mr Kenneth J Maclean	Mr Calum Maclean
Mr Iain A MacNeil	Mr Iain M Macaulay
Mr Iain M Macleod	Mr Malcolm K Macdonald
Ms Susan Thomson	Mr Gordon Murray
Mr Mustapha Hocine	Mr Rae Mackenzie
Mr Uisdean Robertson	Mr Angus McCormack
Mr Paul Finnegan	Dr Frances Murray
Mr Kenny M Macleod	Mr George Murray
Mr Robert Mackenzie	Mr Norrie Macdonald
Mr Angus Morrison	

### APOLOGIES

Mr John N Macleod	Mr Donald F Crichton
Mr John A Maciver	Mr Finlay M Stewart

### OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Malcolm Burr	Mrs Anne Murray
Mr Donald A Macleod	Mr Colin G Morrison
Mr Tim Langley	Mr Niall Houston
Mr Sandy Gomez	Mrs Shona Hadwen
Mr Jack Libby	Mrs Marina Macaulay
Mr Derek Mackay	

### Prayer

The Meeting was preceded in prayer by Mr Duncan MacInnes.

Tribute: Joanna Morrison,  
100<sup>th</sup> Birthday

The Convener referred to Joanna Morrison, from Portvoller, Point, who had celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday on Friday 19 July 2024.

The Convener, on behalf of the Comhairle, extended congratulations and best wishes to Ms Morrison.

Tribute: Mairi Crichton,  
100<sup>th</sup> Birthday

The Convener referred to Mrs Mairi Crichton, formerly of 2 Matheson Road, Stornoway, who had recently celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

The Convener, on behalf of the Comhairle, extended congratulations and best wishes to Mrs Crichton.

Tribute: Lewis Care at Home Service

The Convener referred to the Lewis Care at Home Service which had recently received a very positive report from the June 2024 Inspection by the Care Inspectorate. The Report had scored the Service as Very Good and Good in the two measured categories and the feedback from the inspectors acknowledged the quality of the staff team providing the care and the inspectors had observed staff supporting people with warmth, respect and kindness, spoke positively of the skills and knowledge of staff and noted the effective leadership of the management team.

The Convener, on behalf of the Comhairle, congratulated the Lewis Care at Home Service on this Award.

Tribute: Stornoway  
Primary School

The Convener referred to Stornoway Primary School, which had been awarded the Gold Sport Award from Sports Scotland, a recognition that celebrated their commitment to excellence in physical education and school sport. The Gold School Sport Award was a national award that acknowledged schools across Scotland that had demonstrated an outstanding commitment to providing high quality physical education and promoting sports participation among pupils.

The Comhairle, on behalf of the Comhairle, congratulated Stornoway Primary School on this Award.

Tribute: Donald  
Ban Macdonald,  
Piping Instructor

The Convener referred to Donald Ban Macdonald, Piping Instructor, who has been made a Local Hero and had been invited to attend the Scottish Parliament's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremony, which recognised Donald's significant contribution to Hebridean Music and Culture for over 20 years.

The Convener, on behalf of the Comhairle, congratulated Mr Macdonald on this Award.

Tribute: Duncan  
Macleod, Taigh  
Chearsabhadh

The Convener referred to Duncan Macleod, Taigh Chearsabhadh, who had won 1<sup>st</sup> Prize at the Audio Walk Awards in Berlin for his Machair soundwalk. Duncan, who is a Sound Artist, created Machair, an audio guide that explored the traditions and ecology of the Uist Machair in Benbecula.

The Convener, on behalf of the Comhairle, congratulated Mr Macleod, Taigh Chearsabhadh, on this Award.

Tribute: Royal  
Regiment of  
Scotland, Freedom  
of the Western Isles

The Convener referred to the Royal Regiment of Scotland, who had been awarded the Freedom of the Western Isles at a Ceremony in Stornoway on 7 September 2024.

The Convener, on behalf of the Comhairle, congratulated the Royal Regiment of Scotland on this Award.

Tribute: Ellie  
Denehy, Castlebay  
School

The Convener referred to Ellie Denehy, a former fifth year pupil at Castlebay Community School, who had won the Award for Outstanding Achievement at the 2024 Donald Stewart Trust Awards.

The Convener, on behalf of the Comhairle, congratulated Miss Denehy on this Award.

Tribute: Isla Scott,  
Sir E Scott School

The Convener referred to Isla Scott, Sir E Scott School, who had won the Award for Significant Contribution to Gaelic Development at the 2024 Donald Stewart Trust Awards.

The Convener, on behalf of the Comhairle, congratulated Miss Scott on this Award.

Tribute: Pendleton,  
USA

The Convener referred to community of Pendleton, twin town of Stornoway, who had been hit by Hurricane Helene.

The Convener, on behalf of the Comhairle, extended thoughts and prayers to the Pendleton community at this time.

**MINUTES**

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| Minute of Meeting of 19 June 2024 | 1 | The Minute of Meeting of 19 June 2024 was <b>approved</b> .   |
| Minute of Meeting of 18 July 2024 | 2 | The Minute of Meeting of 18 July 2024 was <b>approved, subject to the deletion of the word Minutes prior to Item 1.</b> |
| Declaration of Interest           | 3 | There were no declarations of interest.   |

**QUESTIONS**

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| Written Questions to the Convener and Chairmen of Committees | 4 | There were no written questions. |
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**GOVERNANCE**

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| Timetable of Committee/ Comhairle Meetings 2025 | 5 | With reference to item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 27 September 2023 the Chief Executive submitted a Report which sought formal approval for the proposed public and local holidays in 2025 along with the proposed programme of Committee and Comhairle meetings. The draft Year Planner was appended to the Report together with the suggested local and public holidays. |
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Mr Gordon Murray raised a Point of Order that in order to comply with Standing Order 7, Section 10, and the provisions of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, section 50(b) that there should be at least a gap of three clear days between the budget meetings for Service Committees, including the Policy and Resources Committee, and the Council meeting at which the budget for 2025/26 shall be approved.

The Convener asked the Chief Executive to respond to Mr Murray’s Point of Order. The Chief Executive responded as follows:

The Local Government Act requires that notice of the meeting and the notice of the business is given with a minimum of three clear days. It is up to elected members whether they wish to accept reports as urgent items and we have always, for the reason of convenience largely for our Uist and Barra Members, conclude all of our budget meetings over a two day period which allows the Service Committees to meet. It allows the Policy and Resources Committee to meet as a Service Committee, as well as a Budget Policy Committee , then the whole budget is set in the same day. That does, of course, require that the decision reports from those meetings are taken as urgent items but I would point out that the budget papers are made available to members and the public with at least three clear days’ notice. It is the decision reports which are taken as urgent items and they are ruled as urgent items, notice having been given of the meetings and the items to be considered in accordance with the 1973 Act, as amended.

The Convener indicated that he had nothing further to add to the Chief Executive’s comments.

The Chairman, seconded by Mr Paul Steele, moved approval of the following recommendation:

That the Comhairle approves the proposed timetable for Committee and Comhairle meetings and Public and Local Holidays for 2025 as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 to the Report.

Mr Gordon Murray, seconded by Mr Rae Mackenzie, moved the following amendment:

That the budget setting meeting of the Comhairle take place three clear days after the Policy and Resources Committee budget setting meeting.

The Comhairle then proceeded to vote on the matter.

The vote was taken by roll call as follows:

**MOTION**

Mr Kenneth Macleod  
Mr Paul Steele  
Mr Duncan MacInnes, MBE  
Mr Kenneth J Maclean  
Mr Iain A MacNeil  
Mr Iain M Macleod  
Ms Susan Thomson  
Mr Mustapha Hocine  
Mr Uisdean Robertson  
Mr Paul Finnegan  
Mr Kenny M Macleod  
Mr Robert Mackenzie  
Mr Angus Morrison  
Mr Ranald Fraser  
Mr Norman Macdonald  
Mr Donald Macsween  
Mr Iain M Macaulay  
Mr Malcolm K Macdonald  
Mr Angus McCormack  
Dr Frances Murray  
Mr George Murray  
Mr Norrie Macdonald

**AMENDMENT**

Mr Calum Maclean  
Mr Gordon Murray  
Mr Rae Mackenzie

The Motion, having received the majority of the votes cast, became the finding of the meeting.

Comhairle @50 6

The Chief Executive submitted a Report which sought approval for the establishment of a Comhairle @ 50 Member Officer Working Group to support the authority's plans to produce a publication and arrange a civic event to mark 50 years since the inception of the Comhairle in May 1975.

**It was agreed to:**

- (1) approve the establishment of a Comhairle @ 50 Member Officer Working Group;**
- (2) approve the two main proposed elements to mark 50 years of the Comhairle; and**
- (3) appoint the Convener, Leader, Mr Malcolm Macdonald, Mr Kenny M Macleod, Mr Donald F Crichton and Mr Kenneth J Maclean to the Comhairle @ 50 Member Officer Working Group.**

Integrated Board: Appointment of Members Joint of 7

With reference to item 4 of the Minute of Meeting of 1 May 2024 the Chief Executive submitted a Report which sought the appointment of a Member to the Western Isles Integration Joint Board (IJB) following the resignation of Cllr Kenneth J Maclean as a substantive Member. The Report stated that there was also a vacancy for a substitute Member and the Comhairle was invited to make appointments to both.

**It was agreed to appoint Mr Iain A MacNeil as a substantive Member of Cùram is Slàinte nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Integration Joint Board) and appoint Mr Kenny M Macleod as a substitute Member.**

Appointment of Board Member: Hebridean Housing Partnership 8 With reference to item 4 of the Minute of Meeting of 6 December 2023 the Chief Executive submitted a Report which sought the appointment of a Board Member to Hebridean Housing Partnership following the resignation of Cllr Finlay M Stewart.

**It was agreed to appoint Mr Duncan MacInnes MBE as a Board Member of the Hebridean Housing Partnership.**

Access to Entitlements – Public Awareness Campaign 9 The Chief Executive submitted a Report which sought authorisation to undertake public awareness to support eligible people in na h-Eileanan an Iar to receive entitled benefits. The Report stated that in order to receive the Pension Age Winter Heating Payment eligible pensioners in the Western Isles should ensure that they are registered for pension credits before the 19 December deadline.

**It was agreed that the Comhairle undertake a public awareness campaign in relation to available supports to address poverty, including the support and promotion of access for all eligible pensioners to register for pension credits.**

#### COMMITTEES

Committee Decision Reports 10 The following Committee Decision Reports were approved:

(a) Education, Sport and Children’s Services Committee – 24 September 2024

Arising out of consideration of the Education, Sport and Children’s Services Committee of 24 September 2024, the Convener referred to the decision in relation to item 5 of the Decision Report, where the Comhairle agreed to establish a Children’s Services Member Officer Working Group.

**It was agreed that the following members be appointed to the Children’s Services Member Officer Working Group:**

**Chair, Education, Sport and Children’s Services Committee**  
**Vice-Chair, Education, Sport and Children’s Services Committee**  
**Dr Frances Murray**  
**Mr Angus McCormack**  
**Mr Calum Maclean**  
**Mr Rae Mackenzie**

(b) Sustainable Development Committee – 24 September 2024

(c) Transportation and Infrastructure Committee – 25 September 2024

(d) Policy and Resources Committee – 25 September 2024

With reference to item 10(d) of the Decision Report of the Policy and Resources Committee of 25 September 2024, the Convener informed the Comhairle that there had been an error in the summary table within the original report. Members had been informed of the error and an updated Report had been uploaded to SharePoint and the Comhairle’s website.

(e) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 26 September 2024

**NOTICE OF MOTION**

Winter Payment	Fuel	11	The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Cllr Gordon Murray, seconded by Cllr Rae Mackenzie.
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The Comhairle wishes to add its voice to support all those who have opposed the recent cuts to the winter fuel payment and in taking this position, the Comhairle takes fully into account the severe weather experienced in our islands especially in the winter months, the extremely high levels of fuel poverty experienced by a large proportion of elderly Western Isles residents and the high number of pensioners in our area who will be adversely affected by this cut.

**The Comhairle approved the Notice of Motion.**

Patient Travel		12	The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Ms Susan Thomson, seconded by Dr Frances Murray:
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Patients have the right, enshrined in law to have the right to safe, effective, person-centred and sustainable care and treatment that is provided at the right time, in the right place, and by the most appropriate person. Patients have the right to be treated fairly and equally and not be discriminated against, whatever their health needs and wherever they live in Scotland.

Whilst recognising that work is ongoing, the Comhairle urges all parties concerned to take urgent action to collectively address the concerns of patients regarding transport to health appointments and to ensure these rights are met.

**The Comhairle approved the Notice of Motion.**