Minute of Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Stornoway, on Wednesday 30 September 2015 at 5.00pm

PRESENT

Mr Norman A MacDonald (Convener)  Mr Norman M Macleod
Mr Angus Campbell (Leader)  Mrs Zena Stewart
Mr David Blaney  Mr Alasdair Macleod
Mr Ronald Mackinnon  Mr Charles Nicolson
Mr Donnie Steele  Mr Angus McCormack
Mr Andrew Walker  Mr Rae Mackenzie
Mr Uisdean Robertson  Mr Roddie Mackay
Mr Neil Beaton  Mr Iain Mackenzie
Mr Philip McLean  Mr Iain Macaulay
Mr Donald J Macrae  Mr Gordon Murray
Mr Donald N Macleod  Mrs Catriona Stewart
Mr Angus Morrison  Mr John A Maciver
                      Mr Donald Crichton
                      Mr Kenneth Macleod
                      Mr Alistair Macleannan

APOLOGIES

Mr Donald Manford  Catherine Macdonald
Mr John Mackay

Prayer

The meeting was preceded by prayer, led by Mr Charles Nicolson.

Tribute: Iain Morrison

The Convener paid tribute to former councillor Iain Morrison, who had passed away on 31 July 2015 after a brave and sustained fight against cancer.

He stated that Mr Morrison had become a councillor in 1999 and had been returned as Councillor for An Taoibh Siar agus Nis at every election since. In 2003, he had been elected as Vice-chairman of the Arts and Leisure Committee, where he was influential in encouraging youngsters to participate in sports at all levels. He had also been interested in the islands’ culture and it had given him great pleasure to see young people from the Western Isles participating in the creative arts and he had been particularly proud when they succeeded at national level.

He had followed in his father’s footsteps by building and expanding the bus company that his father had established, providing a service to Ness and the West Side of Lewis. One of his great pleasures had been in driving a bus load of senior citizens on trips to the mainland – he had a wonderful sense of humour and over the years he had played many a practical joke on his passengers who enjoyed it almost as much as he did!

In his younger days, he had been a keen footballer, and played as goalkeeper for Westside, Ness and United. In fact he may have been the only person to have played in two teams in the one night – in 1978 he played in the first half for Westside in the Eilean an Fhraoich Cup game and then played for Ness in the second half of their game which demonstrated his dedication, passion and commitment.

During his time in the Comhairle, he had taken an immense interest in the Island Games and from 2005 to 2013 he was the Chairman of the local Committee, giving his full support to the fund-raising campaigns to allow the Western Isles team to participate in the games. He gave great support and encouragement to all the athletes, reassuring and boosting their confidence to achieve their personal best.
When he started receiving treatment for his illness, he noticed that the mainland hospitals had equipment which island hospitals did not have. This equipment assisted in locating veins in patients where continued treatment has made finding veins difficult. He started a campaign to get the Acuvein equipment in each surgery in the Western Isles. At the time of his death, he had been close to achieving the target. As a testament to his popularity that this campaign continued.

On behalf of the Comhairle, the Convener extended sincere condolences to his widow, Annette, his mother Bella, his sisters Joan and Isabel, his brother Calum, and all those who mourned his death.

Tribute: David Blaney
On behalf of the Comhairle the Convener extended sincere condolences to Cllr David Blaney on the recent death of his father.

Tribute: Zena Stewart
The Convener referred to Cllr Zena Stewart’s husband, Mr Iain Stewart who had recently been in hospital on the mainland. He indicated that Mr Stewart had returned home and was making satisfactory progress.

On behalf of the Comhairle the Convener extended good wishes to Mr Stewart for his continued recovery.

Tribute: Malcolm MacFarlane
The Convener paid tribute to Mr Malcolm MacFarlane who had passed away on 11 September 2015. Mr MacFarlane had been the Councillor for the Goathill ward in Stornoway from 1986 to 1994 and for part of that time served as the Chair of the Housing Committee.

On behalf of the Comhairle the Convener extended sincere condolences to Mr MacFarlane’s family at this sad time.

Tribute: Màiri MacMillan
The Convener paid tribute to Mrs Màiri MacMillan OBE who had passed away recently. Mrs MacMillan had been a former Town Councillor and Councillor for the Goathill area from 1979 to 1986. She had also been Chair of NHS Western Isles for many years and was instrumental in helping to deliver Ospadal nan Eilean.

On behalf of the Comhairle, the Convener extended sincere condolences to Mrs MacMillan’s family at this sad time.

Tribute: Worlds Islands’ Islands Games
The Convener paid tribute to all the Western Isles athletes who had taken part in the NatWest Islands Games in Jersey over the summer. The team had won 19 medals, 7 gold, 6 silver and 6 bronze - taking ninth position in the Medals Charts, the first time beating Scotland’s other islands, with Kara Hanlon and Kathryn Offe breaking the games record in three swimming competitions.

On behalf of the Comhairle the Convener congratulated the Western Isles Team on their sporting success and for being such fantastic ambassadors for the Western Isles.

Tribute: St Kilda Swim
The Convener paid tribute to the team who had undertaken the first swim from Village Bay in St Kilda to Huishinish in Harris some 55-miles. A team of seven swimmers had taken turns to swim, supported by kayaks and a backup vessel. The team undertook this venture to raise funds for four charities: The Leanne Trust; Fishermen’s Mission; Yorkhill Children’s Charity and Aberlour Child Care Trust.

On behalf of the Comhairle the Convener congratulated the St. Kilda Swim Team on their amazing achievement.

Tribute: Macmillan Cancer Care – Isle of Lewis Committee
The Convener paid tribute to the Isle of Lewis Macmillan Cancer Care Committee, who had achieved the magnificent target of raising £1 million since its inception 40 years ago. This wonderful achievement had been recognised nationally when the Committee took the top award out of 460 committees throughout the United Kingdom.

On behalf of the Comhairle the Convener congratulated the Macmillan Cancer Care Isle of Lewis Committee on this achievement and extended all good wishes for its future fundraising ventures.
Tribute: Calum MacLeod  

The Convener paid tribute to Calum MacLeod (Cobby) from Carloway who had been named as Volunteer of the Year for Adult Football at the recent SFA Grass Roots Awards. Calum had spent many years working with football teams encouraging them to play to the highest possible level. He was a worthy recipient of the award.

On behalf of the Comhairle the Convener congratulated Mr Macleod on this recognition of his voluntary work.

MINUTES

(a) The Minute of Meeting of 24 June 2015 was approved.

(b) The Minute of Meeting of 19 August 2015 was approved.

There were no declarations of interest.

There were no written questions.

With reference to item 4 of the minute of meeting of 2 October 2014 the Chief Executive submitted a Report proposing the schedule of meetings and public holidays for 2016 on the basis of five series of meetings broadly following the pattern of 2015. It was proposed in the Report that there be a March rather than an April series to provide the Comhairle with more time to discuss budgets once figures were known in January 2016. It was noted that it would also be necessary to schedule a meeting of Audit and Scrutiny Committee before 27 September 2016 with delegated powers to approve the audited accounts.

The proposed Public and Local Holidays for 2016 were appended to the Report as Appendix 2.

It was agreed that

a) the proposed timetable for Committee and Comhairle meetings and Public and Local Holidays for 2016 as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 to the Report be approved;

b) the Chief Executive be authorised to arrange a Meeting of Audit and Scrutiny Committee not later than 27 September 2016 to approve the Comhairle’s Annual Accounts for 2015/16 and that this meeting be granted delegated powers of the Comhairle for this purpose; and

c) the Director of Education and Children’s Services be requested to review the proposed timing of the October School Holidays in 2016 in light of the timings of the Royal National Mod.

The Chief Executive submitted a Report advising the Comhairle of the resignation of Mr Alasdair Macleod as a Director of Western Isles Development Trust. The Report indicated that following amendments to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Western Isles Development Trust in 2014, the Comhairle had the right to appoint four Directors. It had been the Comhairle’s practice to appoint the Leader, Convener, Chair of Sustainable Development Committee and one other member as directors but there was no requirement so to do. The Report further indicated that the remaining Comhairle Directors, following Mr Macleod’s resignation, were Mr Angus Campbell, Mr Norman A MacDonald and Mr Iain Mackenzie.

It was agreed to appoint Mr Gordon Murray as a Director of Western Isles Development Trust following the resignation of Mr Alasdair Macleod.
The Chief Executive submitted a Report advising of a request to ensure Comhairle representation at the Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Gaelic. The Report indicated that the group met twice annually with the November Meeting coinciding with the final of the Gaelic Debate. The Convener was often asked to Chair some of the debates and was usually present at the final. For the spring Meeting it was proposed that the Comhairle could be represented by the Convener or an Officer or Member present in Edinburgh at the time.

It was agreed to approve the proposed arrangement to ensure that Comhairle nan Eilean Siar was represented at the Parliamentary Cross Party Group on Gaelic.

COMMITTEES

The Committee Decision Reports were approved except as indicated as below.

(a) Environment and Protective Services Committee – 22 September 2015
(b) Education and Children’s Services Committee – 22 September 2015
(c) Transportation and Infrastructure Committee – 23 September 2015
(d) Sustainable Development Committee – 23 September 2015
   
Mr Alasdair Macleod, seconded by Mr Donald Crichton, moved the Committee Decision Report of Sustainable Committee of 23 September 2015.

With reference to item 19 Mr Gordon Murray, seconded by Mr Rae Mackenzie, proposed the following amendment “that the following additional wording be included in recommendation 19 (1) “ on the basis that the business plan for Hebrides Energy be amended so that responsibility for base and tariff setting would transfer from the licence supplier to Hebrides Energy”

The motion received the majority of the votes cast and became the finding of the meeting.

(e) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 23 September 2015
(f) Policy and Resources Committee – 30 September 2015

NOTICE OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion.