

Berneray Community Council
Minutes of Meeting 19th May 2025
Berneray Community Hall, 7.30pm

Present: Margaret MacLean (Chair), Donald MacLean (Vice Chair), Sharon Mac Pherson (Treasurer), Lorna MacKillop (Clerk), Billy Fraser, Councillor Uisdean Robertson and Councillor Mustapha Hocine.

Members of Public: Robert Steedman, Neil Cameron, Simone Dick, Derek Dick, Ethne Rosedale, Michael Rosedale, Janet MacLeod and Andrew Rodger.

Apologies: Eilidh Carr (Committee Member), Andrew Ross, Cassandra MacLean and Keith McIntyre.

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

Minutes of 7th April 2025 read. Proposed by Cllr Hocine and seconded by Donald MacLean.

1. Matters Arising

- a) **Buy Out Questionnaire** – Deadline extended to 19th May. The questionnaire was not received by everyone hence extension. There is an on-line version available. Andrew Ross and Cassandra MacLean to collate and will report back to the committee.
- b) **Post Office** – The community council wrote to the Post Office expressing concerns about the effect the closure of the P.O. would have on the residents. They replied and an advert was posted online with a closing date of 25th May. A link for the application was on the community council website.
- c) **Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan 3** – A letter was sent inviting them to our next meeting to share more information regarding this. A letter was received back stating that they are unable to commit staff to attend any meetings. A link to a resource page for Local Place Plans and any queries to be made to planning at CNES.
- d) **Harbour/seal signage** – A template is being for Seal View. Andy Carr is now going to make up the signage for the skip at the harbour.
- e) **Income Generation Strategy** – The document by Anthony McCord to go to The Vision of Berneray and be incorporated into the Buy Out which will go to Andrew Ross and Cassandra MacLean.

2. Councillors' Reports

Councillor Uisdean Robertson

Hebridean Airlines – The issue of the bigger plane, nothing in black and white has been received from the Scottish Government. The commitment for £100,000 is only verbal and concerns were expressed on the effect of patient travel. More pressure to be put on Neil Gray. Services have declined over the years.

Cal Mac Ferries – Not good news regarding ferries. The MV Hebrides has an issue with the bow visor and services have affected Tarbert services. Isle of Mull has a restriction of 46. Isle of Lewis should be back in service on Wednesday. Hebrides may have to go to Stornoway for repair. No idea of replacement yet. Loch Portain to go away for a week with the Loch Bhrusda to take over. There is an argument for a double crew but no commitment to that yet.

Visitor Levy – The majority of people are against this. CNES had argued for a port of entry levy. The Scottish Government is consulting and nothing till 2027.

Western Winds – Encouraging meeting with Gillian Martin to discuss erosion.

Trunk Road through Uist – Discussion on developing spinal road in trunk road. Difference is that the trunk road is the responsibility of Bear Scotland.

Cemeteries – quotes are in for archaeological work for the extensions to Berneray and Kilmuir cemeteries.

Councillor Mustapha Hocine

Levy Fund – Community Partnership Fund, 20M is this fund. Looking for ideas/projects up to 3M – roads and services/infrastructure. There will be one team in Lewis and Harris and one team in Uist and Barra.

Crown Estate - £240,000 applied for. Money will be tight this year. Projects to be completed within communities and applied for. Berneray to receive £15,000. A meeting will be arranged in the future.

Education – Problems within schools regarding shortage of nursery places.

Chief Social Worker and Service Manager to be appointed soon.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

a) **Post Office** – Letter had been discussed in Matters Arising. Premises need to be found and a suggestion of maybe Taigh Chearsabhagh being involved.

b) **Police Scotland** – Email received from A/Chief Inspector Mr Ross McCartney who is the new Local Area Commander for the Western Isles. He would like to meet with the community council regularly and we will reply positively.

c) **Local Place Plans poster** – poster with contact details for help and guidance.

d) **Third Sector, Funding Q&A Drop In** – how community can access funding, Tues 27 May, 13.30 – 15.30.

4. Treasurer's Report

Sharon MacPherson presented monthly report from 1st – 30th April 2025.

The new de-fib to go to the Historic and the old one to the Community Hall. Hope to have another training course soon. Anyone can use the de-fib, instructions are clear.

ASCO expressed that they would like to make a donation as they make use of the harbour. Also worth asking Loch Duart re their payment. Historic Society had received their donation towards the TV.

There was a suggestion of having washing machine facilities in the harbour toilet.

The annual accounts were made available and have been sent to Stornoway.

5. A.O.C.B.

a) **Health Services Meeting** – Margaret MacLean attended meeting. The 1st meeting was closed and the 2nd hour lasted only 20 minutes. Disappointing meeting with lack of communication. Regarding Health services J Bailey said she understood the difficulties but could not promise anything more.

Fiona Hislop was at another meeting in South Uist. Great concern was expressed regarding the state of services in the Uists.

b) **Patient participation Group** – Eilidh Carr (Committee Member) attended the meeting. Councillor Mustafa Hocine gave feedback. It was the first meeting, and they have agreed to meet every 3 months.

c) **Mary MacLean PO Retirement** – The night went well with over 70 people attending. Mary was given an envelope that residents had contributed to, approximately £670.

d) **Sign for shop car park** – Concerns were raised regarding the safety of people, and it was suggested that a “slow sign” be put up as accidents could happen. Also, that vehicles reverse into the car park not headfirst. A speed sign was also suggested to reduce the risk of accidents. Suggestions were made – use of mirrors, 20mph sign, for the sake of children. Margaret MacLean to speak to Ruairaidh and Abbi Nicholson regarding signage. Councillor Uisdean Robertson to speak to Angus MacDonald regarding “Slow” sign.

e) **Resident of the Community, Ms Alison Dix** – Alison has asked the community council for support in regard to her Mother who is being moved to Barra Care Home. Her Mother, Rita Dix is in hospital at the moment and being sent to Barra is distressing and upsetting for the family. Community Council to write to Nick Fayers and Malcolm Burr.

There was a suggestion that the clinic in Church Road could be used more to maybe provide this kind of service to residents.

- f) **Scottish Government Islands Team, Island Plan** -Meeting Wed 21st May, 7pm.
- g) **Sea Grass Project** – Andrew Rodger had put in an application last September, unfortunately they did not get funding but got money to do further research and survey work over the summer. Hopefully in the next few weeks he will video research and next Autumn will be able to report more. Sea grass is an important plant. Andrew is hoping to organise a meeting with more information and a community boat trip.
- h) **Robert Steedman – Campsite** – Bob raised concerns regarding the campsite at 8 Rushgarry. Planners had put 10 conditions in to approve planning, and he was asking for a debate regarding planning permission. None of the conditions have been met and the number of vans exceeds what should be permitted. Berneray Sands not being used as a campsite as it is a croft. The number of vans permitted is 5. This is not within the remit of the community council and concerns should now be brought up with the planning department of CNES.
- i) **Janet MacLeod** - Janet brought up concerns regarding movement of sheep and dogs. Asking if there is a specific area for dogs and is there a way to know where sheep are being moved to. Donald MacLean explained that Borge hill is used for sheep. The law regarding dogs is that the dog has to be under close control and owners cannot be asked to put them on a lead.

6. Date of Next Meeting Monday, 23 June 2025, Berneray Community Hall, 7.30pm.

