

# Stornoway Community Council

Minute of Meeting held in the Failte Centre, Bayhead Street, Stornoway  
on Thu 24 Apr 2025 at 7:00 pm

<b>Present</b>	Robert Doig (Chair) Josh Gibbens (Treasurer, Acting Secretary for this meeting) Morag Smith Cllr Duncan Macinnes Cllr Gordon Murray	Kenneth Burns (Vice Chair) Betty Jappy Ian Minty Cameron Thompson Cllr Angus McCormack
<b>By Zoom</b>	Mike Macleod (Secretary)	Janet Macdonald
<b>In Attendance</b>	Kirsten Macinnes (Community Development Worker)	
	5 members of the public attended in person.	
<b>Apologies</b>	1 Cllr Frances Murray Sharon Reid	Kaleigh Macleod
<b>Minute of Meeting of 27 March 2025</b>	2	This was adopted, proposed by Cameron Thompson and seconded by Josh Gibbens.
<b>Matters Arising</b>	3	<p>Item 5 – Kenneth Street Traffic/Parking in Town – We have asked the MP and MSP to contact the small Co-op and support our suggestion. We have not written specifically to the Stornoway Area Forum as there is a complication, in that a formal announcement was made by the Post Office that Stornoway Crown Post Office will close in October. We have suggested to the MP that if Stornoway Post Office has to be run as a franchise with a retail offering, then the small Co-op might be a good option for this. The MP will pursue this enquiry. The MSP, Cllrs Duncan Macinnes &amp; Iain Macaulay have been copied into the correspondence.</p> <p>Item 6 – AOCB – Parking on Macrae Place - We have written to HHP. Mike Macleod reported on a reply received today. HHP stated that the Macrae Place parking area is in fact an adopted road, and therefore it is the responsibility of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to renew the markings. However HHP is willing to get their handyman to do the work, provided CNES supply the paint, and will contact CNES directly themselves.</p>
<b>Minute of Meeting of 10 April 2025</b>	4	This was adopted, proposed by Cameron Thompson and seconded by Betty Jappy.
<b>Matters Arising</b>	5	A short report was read aloud, providing an update on a procedural error that had occurred during the 10 April meeting: After the meeting, we had submitted our response to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Planning Department and issued a press release on 14 April, all this was done in good faith. It was later discovered that the process for the vote was contradictory to Standing Orders and included the vote of a member who was not present at the meeting. Accordingly the vote taken to approve the planning response was void. We then withdrew the response to CNES Planning and withdrew the press release of 14 April.

**Matters Arising  
(Contd.)**

- 5 A full explanation was provided to Murdo Maclean (journalist) as to the procedural irregularity that had occurred, with contributions from Robert Doig, Kenneth Burns, Ian Minty and Josh Gibbens. Murdo Maclean made the Community Council aware that you cannot withdraw a press release, but you can make a clarification.

The 10 April meeting had been chaired by Kenneth Burns as Robert Doig was absent. Josh Gibbens read aloud the following email explaining how the procedural error had occurred: "Normally what happens is the Chairperson always votes last in the event of a tie as I understand it. Please bear in mind I did not attend the meeting so I have pieced together from emails and speaking to people on the phone. If there are any errors those who attended can correct me.

Iain Minty voted against the submission. Betty Jappy abstained. Mike Macleod voted to support the submission. Cameron Thompson voted to support the submission. Kenneth Burns as Chairperson voted last which tied the vote 2-2. What should then have happened if the standing orders had been followed was that nothing was submitted and the status quo is maintained. The expectation from my experience is that the Chairperson will always vote for the status quo when using a deciding vote.

However after the Chairperson had voted, Mike Macleod informed the meeting that Morag Smith had also supported the submission, which meant that it was three in favour and two against. For the reasons already discussed, Morag's vote should not have been counted. I think this is where the confusion has come from."

Kenneth Burns in response to Cllr Gordon Murray clarified that the Chairperson does have a second casting vote.

Cllr Gordon Murray asked whether we could "ask for an extension as it is a major development". Robert Doig clarified that we could, but was concerned that it was potentially a slippery wicket if we were granted a dispensation.

Kenenth Burns said "Me and Mike are beside ourselves. It is a hard lesson. We have both apologised to the Community Council." It is not the end of the line for this project. Finally he said "It is useful that so many people who would not normally attend did."

Cllr Angus McCormack provided some comments that the cost to infill part of the harbour would be £5 million. Stornoway Port Authority had raised objections as it would "cause backwash" if Bayhead was filled in. He also explained that there are two tanks under Bayhead playground to collect tidal water.

Kenneth Burns in response said "The Caledonian Hotel has the last natural shoreline and we must protect it."

**Closure of  
Stornoway Crown  
Post Office**

- 6 Taking account of the update about the Post Office Closure, Ian Minty stated: "We should deplore the fact an important amenity could be closed. If we are not going to do anything, what is the point of a Community Council?"

Kenneth Burns suggested collaborating with other communities and said: "I would like to see an example of a successful campaign."

**Closure of  
Stornoway Crown  
Post Office (contd.)**

- 6 Cllr Gordon Murray asked whether we had invited the Post Office to a meeting and that he had found them to be receptive when he had previously helped save the Post Office facility at the Trading Post. Josh Gibbens replied that we had sent a letter previously and had received a generic reply. But to the best of his knowledge we had not invited them to a meeting.

Kenneth Burns said there are a number of issues and that "some people think this is a little backwater".

Ian Minty proposed and Kenneth Burns seconded the following motion: "The Community Council deplores the decision to close the Post Office in Francis Street and the lack of information as to an alternative location." This was passed by a unanimous vote of those present in person and by Zoom.

*\*\*\* Cllr Gordon Murray left the meeting at 19:54.*

Charlie Nicolson said that "we need a united front" to save the Post Office and asked for the support of the Comhairle. In response, Cllr Duncan Macinnes said it will be discussed at the Stornoway Area Forum.

**AGM  
Arrangements**

- 7 Morag Smith suggested that we hold a separate ordinary meeting and an AGM. Subject to confirmation of the notice required, the dates agreed were 22 May for an ordinary meeting at a location to be agreed and 29 May for the AGM.

**AOCB**

- 8 Hebridean Hum – Josh Gibbens introduced the topic of the "Hebridean Hum" – he had previously circulated information on this to members. A member of the public explained that this had come to the attention of a lot of people, and it was particularly intrusive in the last couple of weeks. It became more prominent in February this year.

She said there were potential physical and mental health issues related to the hum. She wished to clarify it was not "aliens or smart meters as some people had claimed". She explained that a local was trying to find the source, and that sound can travel a long distance.

*\*\*\* Ian Minty left the meeting at 20:12.*

Charlie Nicolson said he heard a similar noise a year and a half ago, and the source appeared to be two diesel generators at Tesco. He had spoken to Planning about whether they had planning permission, but because of the cyber attack CNES were unable to confirm.

Morag Smith had heard it herself since 22 February. Kenneth Burns suggested contacting Environmental Health. The member of the public made the point that they want to raise awareness of this issue.

*\*\*\* Cllr Angus McCormack left the meeting at 20:24.*

It was agreed that either Josh or Mike will write a letter to Environmental Health.

**AOCB (Contd.)**

- 8 The member of the public said that she had been told that Environmental Health do not have the resources to deal with it – they have limited equipment. Morag Smith said "It is important that we acknowledge it exists." Charlie Nicolson said "It creates a sleep disturbance."

Christmas Lights – Charlie Nicolson made the Community Council aware that on 25 November these will be turned on. He also suggested we invite a representative of the Traders Association to a meeting and create a link with them.

Bollards in Pedestrian Precinct – Betty Jappy wanted an update on this. Cllr Duncan Macinnes reported that the Traders Association did not want them, but they had been outvoted at the most recent Stornoway Area Forum meeting. He concluded by saying "the bollards are coming".

Former British Legion Building – Betty Jappy asked who owned this. It is believed that the estate of DR Macleod own it. Morag Smith believed that the building is in good condition internally. Cameron Thompson queried whether the building could be seized. Charli Nicolson said it could not be demolished because of the art deco exterior.

**Close**

- 9 The Chair thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 20:38.