

South Harris Community Council Meeting 5/11/2024 at 7.30pm in South Free Church Hall

Present – Donnie MacDonald – Chair; Lucy Duff – Vice-Chair; Stephen MacKinnon – Secretary; Marion Morrison – Treasurer; Julian Saurin; Bob Chaffer; Patricia Martin; Etta Olley; Eva – Harris Forum Development Officer, Cllr Kenny MacLeod

1. Apologies – Cllr Paul Finnegan; Caroline Chaffer; Effie MacLeod
2. Minutes of last meeting 3rd September 2024 – Julian proposed, and Lucy seconded
3. Matters Arising – None
4. Nursery –
 - No change from previous meeting, 3 days a week still operating.
 - Parents have requested meeting with Director of Education but no response so far.
 - Letter from Parent Council to Director of Education has had no official reply. Parent Council say there has been no re-advertisement of position since the summer.
 - Cllr Finnegan email in advance of meeting – Education Department continue to keep trying to get staff. As has been said many times, this is an island wide issue.
 - Suggestion from Parent Council to have Apprentice position to not have requirement for fluent Gaelic has not been carried forward.
 - Question of whether Council is answering letters in appropriate time. Is there a minimum number of days to answer an enquiry?
 - **Cllr MacLeod will email Director of Education to chase up reply to letter.**
5. Playpark –
 - Linda, Lucy, Donnie wants to meet to write letter to CNES Technical Services/Education Departments following up on previous reply.
 - Cllr Finnegan email in advance of meeting - Education Department have made their position clear. He has asked the Director to check how many non-working playparks there are on the list, so comparisons can be made with Leverburgh. The report will come to the November series and Education will write it. He suspects it will be put to full council so all councillors can vote.
 - Tuesday 26th November Education Meeting. Cllr MacLeod will be speaking in favour of Leverburgh. Donnie will also be in attendance.
 - **Cllr MacLeod to be provided by all relevant information in advance of meeting by Lucy.**

- Eva from Harris Forum – Agreed at Harris Forum that she will have time support Playpark project. **Lucy to arrange meeting between Eva, Lucy, Owen, Catriona, Linda, Donnie etc.**

6. Housing Project -

- Groundworks seem to almost complete. Houses seem to be quickly going up.
- Speed of lorries on west side has slowed down but still too fast going past the Crescent – **Donnie to visit contractor.**
- Breakdown of housing bedroom - 2 x 1 bedrooms, 4 x 2 bedrooms, 6 x 3 bedrooms.
- Double tracking of road around access is being carried out.

7. Visitor Levy –

- CNES plan to implement
- Will be percentage of accommodation, everyone staying in accommodation will have to pay – will be down to providers to collect.
- No business representative or local community representative on CNES committee. Forum to be formed as part of a legal requirement. Suggestion that SHCC should be getting involved.
- Cllr MacLeod – general support among CNES but issue will be collection. There may be an easier way of collecting. Also, the issue of where money is collected and how it should be used to assist the area in question – i.e. Harris money collected, spent in Harris.
- Act only stipulates for overnight accommodation rather than being able to levy on air or ferry fair.
- SHCC agreed to nominate Patricia Martin.
- **Cllr MacLeod to make enquiries and find out how membership of forum may be obtained.**

8. CNES Planning – Implications for Community Council –

- 50% discount for community groups submitting through Community Council. Recent guidance from CNES sees CC as the applicant under the law and are responsible for planning approval and conditions are adhered to. In the past this process has been used for smaller things like paths etc.
- Concern that more recent multimillion-pound applications would see CC responsible for ensuring adherence.
- Planning is still advising community groups to use CCs for 50% discount. They advised Cllr MacLeod that CCs should assess on a case-by-case basis.
- Every community council has liability insurance that CNES pay. Cllr MacLeod asking for legal advice on whether that would cover this scenario.
- SHCC feel that it is an awful position to be putting volunteer Community Councillors in the position of having liability.

- **Cllr MacLeod writing to planning and legal department at CNES to get legal position and the insurance cover position on liability.**
9. South Harris Agricultural Show Society Request –
- Looking for backing with funding. Committee is now a registered charity and are looking for funding for a toilet trailer. Looking to add to the Harris Plan.
 - Any organisation can write to Eva, Harris Forum, to ask to be put on Harris Plan. **Lucy to get in touch.**
10. Shackleton Tragedy Reunion –
- Plans to mark the 35th anniversary within the South Harris community. Katie Ann MacKinnon, Deputy Lord Lieutenant keen to work with South Harris Community Council.
 - Sub-group to work on plans – Donnie and Marion.
 - Plans will likely include a church service, buffet, walk up to site.
11. A.O.C.B –
- Rodel toilets closed for season. £300 taken in donations, some of which spent on expenses. Boxes still required to be fitted – **Bob and Julian have offered to put up over the winter.**
 - Northton road works – Cllr MacLeod's understanding is plant will come up from Uist after finishing and with a few days dry weather. **Cllr MacLeod will chase up.**

Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 14th January at 7.30pm. Will have to meet re local place plan.