

Berneray Community Council
Minutes of Meeting 23rd June 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: Craig Jump and Keith McIntyre.

Apologies: Eilidh Carr (Committee Member), Andrew Ross, Cassandra MacLean and Lorian Pauli.

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

Minutes of 19th May 2025 read. Proposed by Donald MacLean and seconded by Sharon MacPherson.

Amendment to Matters Arising (c) on 19th May. Should read as follows:

Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan 3 – A letter was sent to Planning Department of CNES....

1. Matters Arising

- a) **Buy Out Questionnaire** – There was a positive amount of feedback received. This is being collated, and Andrew and Cassandra will update committee. No update on the Buy Out.
- b) **Signage** – Awaiting a new Seal View sign. The Harbour notice for the skip is being made up by Andy Carr. The Shop and Bistro have signage for the car park and extra signs for Reverse Parking in opposite car park.
- c) **Donations** – Loch Duart donation is on-going with John Paul Walker. Spoke to Cassy regarding MOWI.

Councillor Uisdean Robertson

Hebridean Airlines – The plane that was due to be sent to the Uists has been sent somewhere else and they are looking for a replacement. The commitment for £100,000 is only verbal and concerns were expressed on the effect of patient travel. Services have declined over the years.

Cal Mac Ferries – MV Hebrides has had a temporary fix for the visor and the timetable is not changing. There will be another inspection on the 2nd of next month. Continuing argument for 2 ferries to run Berneray -Leverburgh. The ferry is a boost to Berneray with arguments regarding no benefit to Leverburgh/Tarbet.

Visitor Levy – This has been put to one side for the moment. Talk about a 2-tier system but this remains unclear. Discussion followed 2-tier and how tourism is affected. Cal Mac not providing capacity at the moment and islanders have difficulty booking when leaving and returning to the island. Also difficulties with campervans and lorry block bookings.

Cemetries – Cllr Robertson to send email regarding archaeological report

Councillor Mustapha Hocine

Western Isles Health and Transport

Councillor Hocine discussed the issue of when Uist patients go to Stornoway and the difficulties they face with transport and accommodation. There will be a meeting on 23 June to try and get everyone together to discuss the issues with transport and accommodation. Various examples were given of operations being cancelled due to lack of beds.

Transport Scotland

Discussed flooding issues and risks involved. Looking at trunk roads/fixed links and agreement to meet and discuss this issue. This has to be confirmed.

Abattoir

No abattoir will be opening in Uist.

Habitat and Amenity Form

This is regarding Scolpaig, Space Port. There is no briefing yet. Looking for a company to run this and out to tender.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

a) Alison Dix sent a letter thanking the committee for the support regarding care home provision for her Mother. Councillor Hocine discussed situation with beds and lack of carers.

b) Loch Bhirusda – email from Andy Clayton/Steve Clark was read out. Keith McIntyre updated issue with fishing rights and corresponding with Derek MacKenzie. Berneray Historical Society had fishing rights, but this has lapsed. In 2014 documents sent to Society to renew rights. Unfortunately, this was not followed up and this information would have been good to know. Keith has asked estate to verify rights and is waiting for this to be verified. Estate also wants to know who will be running the loch. Would be good to secure fishing for Berneray and a new group is in the process of being formed.

c) Police Body Cams – Email read out to inform committee of use of body cams from 17 June 2025.

d) Walking and Cycling Routes – email shared with committee and consultation open until 31 August 2025.

e) Cal Mac – Block Bookings – email shared with committee regarding block bookings. There is consultation with customers to improve booking situation. Discussion followed and felt that haulage bookings/cancellation of lorries affected space available. Online bookings did not always match actual spaces available.

f) Wind Consultation – email made available to committee. Public meeting to be held 10 July 2025 in An Caladh, Stornoway. This meeting has been advertised through the media.

4. Treasurer's Report

Sharon MacPherson presented monthly report, May 2025 and copies made available to committee.

Berneray Historic Society received screen from Crown Estate money.

£15,000 allocated from Crown Estate. Discussion of VAT and benefits of registering. New De-fib at the Cottage and the old one given to the hall. Waiting for Alister Morrison to start work on the toilets and painter to give a quote.

5. Coastal Communities Fund

Allocation for this year, £15,000. Margaret MacLean (Chair) attended the meeting to discuss allocations. Next year will need to look at projects earlier.

6. A.O.C.B.

a) Old cemetery at Sandhill.

The gate is not working properly, responsibility of CNES to maintain.

b) Circular Walk Signs.

The signs are not in good condition. To be looked at.

c) East Beach

Problem with vans and dogs being let out and attacking sheep. People can be told to keep dogs under close control. Suggestion of a pamphlet with information points.

d) Ferrets

A big problem with ferrets and the killing of a large number of hens in Rushgarry. Keith McIntyre highlighted this problem and wanting community support and help to deal with this problem. Community Council to send an email to Patrick Hughes. Councillor Robertson to contact Colin Fraser.

7. Date of Next Meeting Monday, 4 August 2025, Berneray Community Hall, 7.30pm.

