



MINUTES

Ness Community Council

Date: 14/01/25 |

In Attendance

David Green Muriel MacLeod Cairstiona Macleod Annie MacSween

Alison MacDonald Mary Duff Donna MacIver Cllr Donald MacSween

Apologies

Chair: David Green

Cllr Kenneth MacLeod

Cllr John Norman Macleod

Point 1. Welcome/Apologies for Absence

All seven members present and Councillor Donald MacSween. Apologies: Cllr Kenneth MacLeod and Cllr JN Macleod.

Point 2 Minutes of the Meeting of 12th November 2024

Correction was made to the minutes - Councillor Donald MacSween was noted as being both present and sending apologies. He was present. The Minutes were then approved, and updated regarding actions arising.

Point 3 Matters Arising

Responding to the request in for the Ness Community Council to financially contribute to Ness Junior Football Strips – training shorts and tops. Proposed sponsorship from the Breakwater, Cross Stores and Ness Glaze is underway. Alternative funding being available, it was decided that no NCC funding is necessary at this time.

The area of Crown Estate Funding was discussed – identified the role of NCC as being a supportive body, taking the opportunity to support other groups in Ness to secure funding through this route. David Green is to contact Alice Murray to check in with the system in place for alerting local groups.

Point 4 Finance Report

Cairstiona Macleod, Treasurer, shared the Ness Community Council Statement c£2.900, with £600 of the former challenge fund due in, so c£3,500, to be confirmed.

The expenses pending at this point are: 3 x £20 vouchers for The Breakwater

The vouchers are to be purchased to gift to Paddy, Alex and Kevin, to say thank you for their time and expertise regarding Christmas Lights for Lionel Primary School.

Point 5 Recent Correspondence

David Green and Muriel MacLeod have been corresponding with organisations in connection with Emergency Preparedness. All were invited to attend an online webinar on 15th January 2025 – the Rural and Island Poverty Alliance.

Point 6 Lionel School Swimming Pool

Muriel Macleod has had discussions with Simon Amos, of spòrsnis. It is noted that in 4 years, no progress has been made – nothing has happened. Councillor Donald MacSween emailed Comhairle nan Eilean Siar during the course of this meeting, directing his enquiry regarding the issues to the relevant department, and any response will be circulated with NCC. The NCC funding enabled a lifeguard to be trained in 2024.

Point 7 Community Survey

Muriel Macleod has now collated all the responses from the questions set in the Ness Community Council local survey, an extensive task for which we as a group are grateful for her having undertaken. Muriel MacLeod has split the data into categories and identified which organisations/departments should receive which updated information, in order to facilitate action being taken in response to the information being passed on.

One issue raised by correspondents to the survey was the concern regarding the bus service currently provided. It was noted that the last bus from Stornoway is a small vehicle which at times has to leave passengers behind. It was also noted that the removal of a 5:15pm bus has a negative knock-on effect on young people. Previously, teenagers could attend after school study and extra curricular clubs, from 3:45pm to 5pm. The removal of the 5:15pm bus has meant that young people have to occupy themselves for an hour in the town centre, where there are no amenities to cater for them – in winter this is highly prohibitive. The Nicolson Institute Building has rigid rules regarding FES conditions, which means they cannot remain in the school building after 5pm. The staff car park for example is locked and staff have to ensure cars are out of it when a tannoy is issued at 5:30pm to remind everyone to leave the building. This does not provide equity of opportunities, restricting young people far more than in previous generations. Councillor Donald MacSween noted that this is not information that has been identified in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, due to each area having a different focus, and details not being generally known.

Action Points for NCC from the collated Ness Community Council Survey categories:

4. CNES Bus issue – Councillor Donald MacSween
5. Publicise Local Businesses – collaborate with Fios – Donna MacIver
7. Collate information on Skilled Tradespeople – Cairstiona MacLeod

Point 8 Emergency Preparedness – Resilience

David Green shared details of the discussion paper from 11th December 2024, to continue to research the ways in which we as a Community Council can add value locally. David Green and Councillor Donald MacSween both attended the meeting, where 2 representatives from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and a range of uniformed members of the emergency services attended. They highlighted that 9 potential crises were identified at this meeting, and all of these have been experienced locally in recent years – marooned oil rig off the coast; road closures/ cyber-attack. Muriel MacLeod confirmed that grants are available, and there is also an excellent NHS Western Isles Website, as well as a Council Resilience website. Ness Community Council will ensure that the impetus is kept up, where community groups can usefully contribute.

Point 9 Any Other Competent Business

Donna MacIver asked if there is a possibility of organizing a “welcome To Ness” sign in the style of the one currently in place at Newmarket. The challenge connected to this was stated as being due to boundary lines being about to change, and surveying the community for support would be required, in order to help to choose a suitable location for this. All agreed that it would be an attractive addition.

The issue of Gas deliveries locally being impacted by a variety of external conditions was discussed. Deliveries have been happening far less often, and households and business are having far longer waits. The fact that the fuel tanks in Stornoway are being upgraded is partly to blame, alongside weather interrupting transport etc... Councillor Donald MacSween is going to see if evidence of a lack of deliveries can be made available.

The issue of grit during frozen conditions was raised – it was reported that the ice at spòrsnis caused a problem when small children were due to be collected from the door round the side. General concern was expressed regarding the gritting of the roads needing to be increased in terms of frequency/ quantity, whichever change would make us safer.

Actions Agreed

| No. | Action | By Whom | By When |
|-----|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Contact Alice Murray re CERF | David Green | 12 th February |
| 2 | Purchase gift vouchers x3 and give | Cairstiona Macleod | 11 th March |
| 3 | Actions agreed re Community Survey | Various – see Point 7, above | 11 th March |
| 4 | Community Preparedness actions to be carried forward | David Green | 11 th February and ongoing |
| 5 | Welcome to Ness sign to be considered | All | 11 th February meeting |
| 6. | Concerns about gas deliveries | Donald Macsween | ongoing |