**Berneray Community Council**

**Minutes of Meeting 15 January 2024**

Present: Margaret MacLean, Donald MacLean, Eilidh Carr, Sharon MacPherson, Willie Fraser, Lorna MacKillop, Keith MacIntyre, Andrew Ross, Mustapha Hocine and Uisdean Robertson.

Apologies: Pamela Rodman

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

**Agenda**

1. **Andrew Ross gave an update on the Community Buy Out.**

He gave a background to the process which has been ongoing for a number of years. In Spring 2023 a new organisation was formed, Company Ltd Guarantee by Guarantee. A Democratic vote will be held in the future to elect new representatives to serve the community. Andrew stressed the importance of membership and stated that only members will get a vote. This helps to demonstrate a strong community and help future funding applications. Scottish Land Fund will help with 95% of money. The Valuation price is expected this month but there is a slight hold up. Hitchcock also getting valuation from Savills. Looking at £1-£1.2 million. After valuation to look at funding. Negotiations may need to be held – 6 months to reach agreement. Keith MacIntyre asked Andrew Ross re strategy for putting out membership forms and agreed to send out information sheet. Also asked re: Operational Plans, no details yet. Recommend look at Business Plan. Margaret MacLean thanked Andrew Ross for his input.

2**. Scottish Water/Loch Bhrusda. Update given by Keith MacIntrye.**

Keith has been looking into the long-term use of Loch Bhrusda. The water asset, pumping station and tanks are surplus to S.W. Would S.W. sell or give to the community and North Uist Angling may wish to be involved. Still waiting to access building by Loch which is locked before we can move on this. The Community Council is not able to take this over and has to be a company/organisation, The Development Group was mentioned. There are environmental issues and management is required. Keith asked permission to carry on with his investigations and stated that he had registered interest. Margaret thanked Keith for his input.

3. **Margaret MacLean welcomed Mustapha Hocine.** Mustapha reported that Budget meeting taking place in February. Education: The Chief Officer is coming to Uist on 25 January, 7.30pm, venue to be confirmed. Ward Funding: to be confirmed, last year £3,000. Crown Estate: to be confirmed. Criteria for funding published every year. Margaret thanked Mustapha for his input.

**Margaret MacLean welcomed Uisdean Robertson.** Uisdean reported on Transport issues. Discussed small vessel programme and the concerns regarding disruptions for passengers and businesses. Meeting with CMAL, Cal Mac and Transport Scotland to discuss timetables etc, 24 January in Lochmaddy Hall. Meeting 6 February 2024 regarding Clyde and Hebrides Ferries Contract. Online questionnaire by 8 March. Air services: out to tender Benbecula – Stornoway. Discussed no discount for hospital patients. Uisdean to meet with Mr Hislop to discuss travel issues. Loganair bringing back new timetable in May. Margaret thanked Uisdean for his input.

**Dates:**  24 January 2024 – CMAL, Cal Mac meeting – to discuss timetables – Venue Lochmaddy Hall Chief Education Officer – 25 January 2024 – Venue to be confirmed.

Transport Scotland – 6 February 2024 – Clyde and Hebrides Contract – Venue to be confirmed.

**4. Correspondence.**

A letter from Ms Barbara Hunter regarding costal erosion on Traigh Bheasdaire (East Beach) was read to the committee. A discussion followed regarding the issues raised and the options Barbara quoted in the letter. Keith MacIntyre agreed with the concerns as did the committee and it was decided that Keith, as a crofter would take this to the other crofters in that area. Keith, with the help of his son Casey who has specialised knowledge of the beach will report back to the committee. A letter will be sent to Barbara with the decision taken and a meeting can be organised.

**5. A.O.C.B.**

Complaint regarding Offlits and Drains. Email to be sent to Angus MacDonald that they need to be looked at.

Sharon MacPherson suggested we look at a way to have people approach the council with complaints and concerns. Discussion of Website and confusion of sites representing Berneray. To be looked into. Suggestion of a newsletter with information.

Donald MacLean asked if skip was safe and not being taken away. Councillors assured committee it was not but information regarding what is allowed in skips will be sent to committee. Skip Rota organised.

Toilets. Discussion on toilet block at Ardmaree, need to be refurbished. Margaret had sent photos to council. There is no electricity going into it. Mustapha to follow up. Toilet at Harbour belongs to BCC.

Mustapha highlighted issue with mobile phones in schools and concerns re bullying et. There is a consultation coming up soon.

Uisdean highlighted a consultation coming up re Inter Link Islands. Information to follow.

Islands Growth Deal – Keith MacIntyre asked councillors if Berneray would benefit from this, at the moment there is not. Projects are being affected with high cost eg The St Kilda Project. Is there money sitting there that can be used?

Levelling Up Fund - £20 million – Do not know where this is going yet.

Treasurer Link – Donald MacLean gave link to Sharon MacPherson.

Christmas Tree- Ask Casy for invoice.

**6. Date of Next Meeting: Monday 4 March 2024 @ 7.30pm**