



# HARRIS | FORUM

*Progress | Partner | Protect  
Adhartas | Cairdeas | Dion*

*Pursuing development through community connection*

<b>Title</b>	Harris Forum Structure Meeting Minutes		
<b>Date</b>	08/07/2024	<b>Time</b>	7.30pm
<b>Venue</b>	Marriage Room, Old Primary School		
<b>Distribution</b>	Harris Forum Member Organisations (MOs)		

<b>Present</b>	<p>ANGUS J MACLEOD (AJM), HDL – Vice-Chair;          MICHAEL HUNTER (MH), NHT – Secretary;          GORDON NESS (GN), SCA;          AGNES MORRISON (AM), NHCC;          JULIETTE DESPORTES (JD), HVS;          TANIA MACLEOD (TM), HVS;          LINDA ARMSTRONG (LA), WHT;          KATHLEEN DUCE (KD), RO;          GORDON MACDONALD (MD), SH;          CALUM J MACKAY, NHT;          KENNY MACLEOD (KM), HDL.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Welcome and apologies</li> <li>2 Raison d'être of Forum/ HDL/ HVS and overlaps</li> <li>3 Weaknesses of the current Forum structure</li> <li>4 Strengths of a potential merger between Forum/ HDL/ HVS</li> <li>5 HFDO: payroll and line management</li> <li>6 AOCB</li> <li>7 Date of next structure meeting</li> </ol>
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Agenda Item		Summary and Action	Who?	When?
1	<b>Welcome from the Vice-Chair</b>	All MO representatives welcomed. This meeting agenda is different from a normal business meeting of the Harris Forum, as its purpose is to cover the structure of the organisation and to agree how employment responsibility and line management of the new HFDO should be undertaken.		
	<b>Apologies for absence</b>	PEGGY MACKAY (PMK), WICCF; MAIRI MACIVER (MM), CLD; DONNIE MACDONALD (DMD), SHCC.		
2	<b>Raison d'être of Forum/ HDL/ HVS and overlaps</b>	The Harris Forum Structure Document, produced by David Macdonald, the previous HFDO, and circulated on 08/07/2024 to all MOs, was used as the basis for the discussion. The various aims of HF/HDL/HVS were outlined. It was recognised that the most significant area of overlap for all three organisations is the development and coordination of projects for the benefit of the Harris Community as a whole.		
4	<b>Weaknesses of the current Forum structure</b>	The following HF weaknesses were identified: volunteer fatigue, poor community engagement and awareness, duplication of services, and funding challenges. These were weighed against the benefits of the HF through Crown Estate Coastal Community Fund allocation, recognition by CnES, HIE, and other external bodies, and the benefits of a space for community groups to talk together.		

Agenda Item		Summary and Action	Who?	When?
5	Strengths of a potential merger between HDL/ HVS Forum/	<p>A merger could bring together the best of all three organisations, improve financial and admin support, and improve community engagement and recognition. HDL expressed a severe need for staffing to manage their current and future projects, with much of their current work being undertaken by volunteers. Volunteer fatigue is significant for those few individuals who work with a number of organisations. However, as most community members do not wish to serve on committees, many feel unable to step down, with no one to pass responsibility to. Therefore, reducing the number of boards/committees, and their associated meetings, is seen as sensible. The general disconnect between community organisations and the community as a whole was recognised. Although consultation events are held regularly, it may be the perception of many community members that organisations don't listen. It was thought that more could be done to celebrate what has been done well and the achievements of various community organisations to improve engagement.</p> <p>Details of how a merger would look were explored. The structure document suggests that HVS would become the organisation into which the others would fold. It was highlighted that this would require constitutional changes, and extensive consultation and agreement from the HVS board and members. The question of existing HDL assets was raised, and a solution on how they could be incorporated into the proposed merged structure was not found. The conversation moved on to the merging of HF and HVS only, with HDL perhaps being left out of some aspects of the proposed merger.</p> <p>Staffing, and the funding of staff, was again raised as the core issue which needs to be addressed. The fact that various development officers are working on overlapping community projects with similar overarching aims can be challenging, and it was thought that this could be improved through changes to organisational structure. Issues were raised around the Harris Plan and the availability of HFDO time.</p> <p>The merging of HF/HDL/HVS will be discussed further by the HDL and HVS boards. Although it was generally agreed that the HF is not working as it is, there was some concern that a dissolution could cause transparency and bias issues if not managed correctly. There was also some suggestion that perhaps the HF should return to its origins as a place for discussion amongst key community organisations. A division of the structure into more community focused and more development focused areas was also mentioned.</p>		
6	HFDO: payroll and line management	<p>HDL clarified that they have undertaken HFDO employment responsibilities for many years, and are now withdrawing from that role. They do not feel supported by other MOs to continue. The possibility of HF taking employer responsibility and HVS undertaking payroll only was discussed. HVS undertaking payroll has already been agreed by the HVS board. However, it was agreed that it should be proposed to the HVS board that they undertake employer responsibility, in the same manner as HDL has done in the past. HFDO projects would be determined by the HF in the normal way in the meantime until a way forward on any proposed merger is discuss and agreed. The HVS board will meet on 25<sup>th</sup> July to discuss and come to a decision. AJM to provide a breakdown of HFDO related employer costings to JD ahead of the HVS board meeting.</p>	<p>JD</p> <p>AJM</p>	<p>25<sup>th</sup> July</p> <p>Before 25<sup>th</sup> July</p>
13	AOCB	<p>A point was raised on the £35k CEFR5 allocation by the HF to the HFDO role by TM. It was stressed that this decision does not look good within the local community, to the extent to which they are aware. (As TM is a new HVS board member and HF representative, she had not been party to discussions at precious meetings).</p>		
14	DONM	<p>7:30pm, Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July, Marriage Room, Old Primary School, Tarbert.</p>		