

## HARRIS | FORUM

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Pursuing development through community connection

Title	Harris Forum Business Meeting Minutes		
Date	02/09/2025	Time	7.30pm
Venue	North Harris Trust building Harris Forum Member Organisations (MOs)		
Distribution			

Present	Member Representatives:	Agenda:
	EVA KREILEDER (EK), HFDO – Minutes	1. Welcome from Chair
	North Harris Community Council, NHCC:	2. Apologies
	FRAN MILLER (FM); Chair of the HF	3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2025.
	Scalpay Community Council, SCC:	4. Matters Arising
	SHAUN BLOOMFIELD (SB)	5. Leverhulme Hub
	South Harris Community Council, SHCC:	6. SportHarris
	DONNIE MACDONALD (DMD)	7. HFDO Update
	North Harris Trust, NHT:	·
	KIRSTY MACKAY (KMY) CALUM MACKAY (CM)	8. Local Place Plan and the way forward
	West Harris Trust, WHT:	9. Housing Subgroup
	NEIL MACDONALD (NM)	7.1 Future
	Harris Voluntary Service, HVS:	7.2 Scottish Island Federation Housing Alliance
	TANIA MACLEOD (TM)	10. Member Organisation Reports
	Harris Development Ltd., HDL:	11. Councillor Report
	ANGUS J MACLEOD (AJM)	12. EGM? Structure of the HF
	Western Isles Community Care Forum, WICCF:	13. AOCB
	PEGGY MACKAY (PMK)	14. DONM
	Scalpay Community Association, SCA:	
	GORDON NESS (GN)	
	Community Learning & Development, CLD:	
	-	
	Sport Harris:	
	- 	
	Rionnagan Òga:	
	KATHLEEN DUCE (KD)	
	Leverhulme Community Hub:	
	- Councillors:	
	KENNY MACLEOD (KM, Clir)	

Age	nda Item	Summary and Action	Who?	When?
1	Welcome from the Chair	All MO representatives welcomed.		
2	Apologies for absence	AGNES MORRISON (AM), North Harris Community Council ANN PARRY (AP), West Harris Trust MAIRI MACIVER (MM), Community Learning & Development GORDON MACDONALD (GM), SportHarris; PAUL A. FINNEGAN (CIIr) CATRIONA MACLENNAN (CML), Leverhulme Community Hub		
3	Previous Minutes 28th July 2025	Proposed DMD, Seconded NM.		
4	Matters Arising	No matters arising		
5	Leverhulme Hub	An email will be sent to the Leverhulme Hub regarding their membership, with cc of the hub chair.  DMD will ask the Leverhulme Hub chair for their email address and forward it to the DO.  During the conversation, the role of the DO was explained to all member organisations again. The DO supports the groups with their projects but does not do the work for them.	DMD	04.09.2025 Contact details provided and email was sent on 04.09.2025
6	SportHarris	SportHarris sent its apologies for the last number of meetings. There is no chair of SportHarris at the moment, and GM stated in his apologies email, that it will hopefully be solved after the football season.		
7	HFDO Update	A written HFDO report was tabled and comments invited.  Beside the support of funding application, the DO worked intensely on the delivery of the Local Place Plan (LPP). The LPP was submitted to the council on the 27.08.2025.  The LPP must be taken into account by the council to produce their Local Development Plan for the Western Isles. The Council will publish all LPP on their website.  During the whole period of consultations (20.11.2024 - 17.08.2025) there have been 517 participants and unique website visitors.  The Harris Forum thanked EK for the fabulous job of producing such a great LPP for Harris.		
8	Local Place Plan and the way forward	EK compared the Harris Plan with the LPP's consultation outcomes. It seems that there is a lack of projects focusing on health, social care and childcare in Harris. There is a request for better childcare facilities and retirement homes on the island with sufficient staff provisions. PMK pointed out that this is primarily a national issue that requires government attention, and that the pay of carers is too low to be competitive. PMK also mentioned that the DYW is looking into youth engagement.  Further steps need to be discussed within the HF to address the topics mentioned in the LPP.  Meetings need to be organised with relevant parties, e.g. the NHS, SSEN, NatureScot and the police, as well as local groups such as community centres, sports centres and schools, to present the outcomes of the LPP to them.		

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		Some issues need to be addressed from the ground up. EK pointed out that some issues need to be brought to the attention of the Scottish Government. Currently, the Scottish Island Federation (SIF) is the only platform doing this successfully. There needs to be stronger representation of Harris Forum member organisations within the SIF.		
9	Housing Subgroup Meeting	It was a very useful meeting. The participants learned a great deal about the allocation policy of HHP, and all external partners were open to questions.  Unfortunately, no chair could be appointed at the last meeting, and the NHT's development officer pointed out that he does not intend to attend any further meetings.  KM emphasised that a member of the board from each member group needs to take part in each subgroup meeting.  KMY added that, if that were the case, the meetings would have to be held in the evening due to work commitments.  This wasn't possible in this case due to external bodies being invited to the meeting.  All subgroup meetings with only HF members present will be held in the evening to allow representatives from each MO to participate.  It was also pointed out that employees of MOs focusing on various topics are more than welcome to attend.  All of the subgroups need a chair to receive stronger support from the individual MOs.  In the case of the housing subgroup, the MO providing the chair would participate in the Scottish Island Federation Housing Alliance with the DO's support.		
10	Member Organisation Reports	Written reports from MOs were tabled and comments invited. The member report from the NHT wasn't circulated before the meeting but will be added to the next email to all MOs.		
11	Councillor Report	Things have been a wee bit quieter over the summer.  Housing:  - Lorraine Graham has been appointed to replace lain Watson who recently retired from the Comhairle Housing dept. There will be a report going to the September series of meetings on the new Housing Strategy document.  - Consultations re Scott Road housing have been progressing.  Transport:  - There is an important Consultation re the Sound of Harris and Sound of Barra Ferry services that he would urge everyone to complete – you don't have to be a passenger on either of these to be able to give views etc. They continue to push for a two-vessel provision on the Sound of Harris when the SVRP vessels come on stream. We are also pushing for three sailings a day on the triangle route once the new vessels arrive. Some are arguing against this because of infrastructure challenges but we need to also consider the improved availability that the three crossings will give to local residents - for whom the ferries are primarily aimed.  - Concerns have been raised with Transport Scotland about the huge impact the renewables work will have on ferry services for the next number of years. With The Loch Seaforth unable to cope with any		

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		additional freight it is likely that this will be pushed to the Uig-Tarbert route, again reducing capacity there and more pressure on the roads. They are pushing for a second vessel on the Stornoway-Ullapool route to take up the freight traffic.  A separate additional ferry for only SSEN freight is being discussed.  - Bus Contract: The next contract is due in October 2026 and is being reviewed just now. Any feedback, comments, suggestions please forward to me in the first place, and I can send on to the subgroup considering the Bus provision.		
		EK asked to include the comments as mentioned on the LPP. EK will send those comments regarding busses to KM, Cllr.	EK	04.09.2025  Done on the  04.09.2025
		Education: - Reports for both Sir E Scott and Leverhulme schools have been published.		
		Roads:  - He is hoping to have Murdo Macritchie from the Roads dept come down to look at a couple of roads issues next week (week commencing 8th Sept.) that have been raised in different parts of Harris. If you have anything you want KM, Cllr. to highlight with him, take him to etc, please let him know this week ending 07.09.2025.		
		The next round of Comhairle Committee meetings will take place at the end of the month and the full Council meets on 1 Oct.		
		There is a Maritime site consultation coming up and everyone is encouraged to take part.		
		Compensation scheme from the Scottish Government = Island Business Resilience Fund: Islands included are Arran, Benbecula, Berneray, Colonsay, Eriskay, Grimsay, North Uist, South Uist.  AJM asked why Harris wasn't included. DMD, Harris Transport Group is in the process of formulating a letter to the MP and MSP which will include this question.	DMD	End of the month
12	EGM? Structure of the HF	HIE required the signed contract between the Adhartas Trust and the DO. This was provided by the Adhartas Trust three months after the DO signed the contract. Additionally, the Adhartas Trust required a signed 'Host Employer Agreement', but this did not cover the line management role for the DO. Consequently, the HF would need to become the line manager and have the necessary insurances in place. HIE is requesting an agreement between the Adhartas Trust and the HF. Legally this could be provided with the confirmation email.		
		KM, Cllr. will investigate the Adhartas Trust's reaction to the suggested amendments to the "Host employer agreement" within the Council.	KM, Cllr.	21.09.2025
		GN will check with SCA what insurance cover the organisation has in place.  Previous procedure: The DO's line manager was the HF's chair as well as the HDL's chair.	GN	21.09.2025
		In order for the DO to be employed directly by the HF, a bank account must be set up. Opening a bank account was agreed upon in a previous meeting. EK will look through the minutes from previous years to find this agreement.	EK	04.09.2025

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		The HF requires a Treasurer.  The DO will work on a draft statement to present to each MO regarding the structural changes within the HF, and to find a treasurer among the MOs.	EK	11.11.2025
		The new structure of the Harris Forum, and the long-term employment of the DO under the HF, will be the main topics at the next HF meeting on 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2025.		
13	AOCB	a) Additional information from the Harris Transport Group, DMD:  New timetables are available on the Calmac website.  There have been new issues with the mezzanine deck on the Tarbert – Ui ferry.  Calmac is holding a consultation in Tarbert on the 24.09.2025  Next meeting of the Harris Transport Group is on the 9th October, where the CEO of Loganair has been invited to attend. If you have any issues that you would like to raise, please contact DMD or Rhoda Campbell.  b) Tuna fishing  Currently, there are five Catch & Release and one Catch & Land licences in operation from Leverburgh.  The Catch & Release licence is for statistical and research purposes only. The Catch & Land licence could serve as an additional tourist attraction, extending the tourist season further into the year.  c) Rotation of meeting locations  The HF meeting will rotate to different locations in Harris at each meeting, in order to cover all areas of the island.		
14	DONM	Next Business Meeting on NEW DATE: Tuesday 11th November 2025, 7:30pm, Talla na Mara.		