



HARRIS | FORUM

*Progress / Partner / Protect
Adhartas / Cairdeas / Dion*

Pursuing development through community connection

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME - The name of the organisation shall be The Harris Forum and hereinafter referred to as “the Forum”.

2. PURPOSE - The purpose and objectives of the Forum shall be:
 - a. To discuss and promote social and economic matters which affect the whole of Harris;
 - b. To come to, an agreed, “whole of Harris” decision on specific topics and issues;
 - c. To support, where agreed, individual projects particularly those needing financial support for funding applications;
 - d. To support the Harris Ward Councillor(s) to act together with a whole of Harris support/direction;
 - e. To promote communication and cohesion between the various groups operating in the Harris Community;
 - f. To evaluate and measure the impact of our work on the individuals and groups in our community area;
 - g. To take ownership of the Harris Plan;
 - h. To agree which projects from the Harris Plan that the Development Officer(s) will work on;
 - i. To improve communication with the Harris community advising them of the work of the Forum, its Development Officer(s) and its Member Organisations. It will do this through, amongst other means, regular updates in the community magazine, online/social media, and other suitable communication channels with the aim of being the voice for Harris on relevant matters.

3. MEMBERSHIP - any fully constituted community group, or organisation, based in Harris, or working in Harris, and with a remit to provide social, economic, environmental, or cultural developments and improvements in Harris may apply, or be invited, to become a member of the Forum.

- a. Each Member Organisation will be entitled to have two representatives at every Business Meeting of the Forum;
- b. It will be for the Member Organisation to decide who their representatives will be;
- c. Representatives can only attend a Meeting on behalf of one Member Organisation (except when acting as a Proxy – see 6d below);
- d. Suggestions for organisations to become Member Organisations are to be advised to the Chair and brought to the next Business Meeting for the Member Organisations to vote on;
- e. The Harris Ward Councillors will be ex-Officio Members;
- f. Police Scotland will have a representative as an ex-Officio Member;
- g. The ex-Officio Members do not have a vote on any matters;
- h. Member Organisations may put forward specific persons/organisations to be co-opted on to the Forum who they feel would be useful to participate in discussions and provide information. Co-opted Members do not have any voting rights on any matters at Business Meetings;

4. OFFICERS OF THE HARRIS FORUM

- a. At the Annual General Meeting (“AGM”) the Member Organisations present will elect one person from the representatives of the Members Organisations to be appointed as Chair. They will hold this position for one year. An election of Officers will be held annually and the outgoing Chair will, if willing to stand, be eligible for re-election but only for a maximum of three terms before taking a break for at least one term;
- b. At the same AGM the Member Organisations will elect one person from the representatives of the Member Organisations to act as vice-Chair and one person from the same group to act as Secretary for one year. These persons can be re-elected if willing to stand;
- c. As the work of the Forum develops, the Member Organisations may elect such other Officers and create such roles as they feel will best aid the achievement of the purposes and objectives of the Forum. Elections for these roles will be as for the Chair, vice-Chair and Secretary.

5. MEETINGS

- a. Business Meetings of the Forum shall be held at least every two months either, in person, virtually using technology, or a combination of both.
- b. The Draft Minutes of the previous Business Meeting shall be circulated to Member Organisations within seven days of the Business Meeting finishing. This will allow Member Organisations to discuss issues and provide their representatives with the information to take to the next Business Meeting;

- c. Member Organisations may suggest guest speakers to address the Forum from time to time. These guest speakers will be the first item on the agenda after the Chair's welcome and before the rest of the items on the agenda;
- d. Items for the agenda for the next Business Meeting shall be with the Secretary in sufficient time prior to the agreed date of that Business Meeting to enable the agenda to be circulated to Member Organisations seven days prior to the meeting date;
- e. The quorum for a Business Meeting, Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting shall be 50% of the Member Organisations at the date of the relevant meeting;
- f. The AGM of The Harris Forum shall be held in November each year, or as soon as practical thereafter;
- g. The only business transacted at the AGM shall be reports from officers, the election or re-election of Officers, and any changes proposed to the Constitution;
- h. Notice of the AGM shall be intimated to all interested parties and Member Organisations at least twenty-one days before the proposed date along with the Minutes of the previous AGM. Any proposed constitutional changes, plus the nominations for the Officer roles, as well as the agenda, shall be included in this notice;
- i. Member Organisations representing 75% of the total Member Organisations can request an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held with at least twenty-one days' notice;
- j. Conflicts of Interest – Member Organisations shall declare an interest, financial or otherwise, in any matters on any Forum agenda that will be voted upon at the commencement of the Business Meeting or during a meeting as it progresses. Having declared the conflict of interest the Member Organisation shall be precluded from voting on the matter.

6. DECISION MAKING

- a. Decisions will be by majority with one representative of each Member Organisation entitled to vote;
- b. The majority for decisions at Business Meetings will be by simple majority of those present and entitled to vote;
- c. At the AGM, or an EGM, decisions will be approved by 50% of the Member Organisations present for electing the Officers and by 75% of the Member Organisations present for constitutional changes;
- d. Member Organisations that are not present at Business Meetings, the AGM or an EGM may appoint another Member Organisation representative who will be present at the relevant meeting to act as their proxy for any decisions taken. The proxy must be communicated to the Chair a minimum of twenty-four hours before the scheduled start of the relevant meeting and intimated by the Chair at the start of the meeting that those individuals are acting as proxy.

7. FINANCE/ASSETS - The Forum will not own any assets or properties of any description that would be in direct conflict or competition with a member organisation or other community group in Harris. The Forum may have a bank account and seek revenue/administration funding to support the Officer(s) and to enable the Forum to better reach its goals.

8. DEVELOPMENT OFFICER(S) – In the event that the Forum does not have a bank account and cannot practically employ staff as a legitimate entity on its own then the Forum shall enter into an agreement with a Member Organisation for them to provide the employer function for the Development Officer (“DO”) post funded through HIE, or an equivalent revenue funder. The DO role will be to take forward projects from the Harris Plan as directed by the Forum and to progress the objectives of the Forum. If a Member Organisation is the employer, they will have no input into the workload of the DO other than as a Member Organisation of the Forum. The Chair of the hiring Member Organisation shall have line management responsibility for the DO and will report to the Forum on any issues or concerns regarding the level of work being required of the DO.
 - a. Each Member Organisation, or other group, for whom the DO is taking forward a project as agreed with the Forum shall provide two of its members/officers who will be the direct links with the DO for that particular project. They will provide day-to-day contact with the DO;
 - b. Member Organisations, or other groups, will continue to have full responsibility for their projects and must not pass on all work and responsibility to the DO. The DO’s remit is to provide support and assistance to the Member Organisations or other groups;
 - c. No Member Organisation or other group shall approach the DO in relation to taking on new projects. This must be done via a Business Meeting of the Forum and agreed in the normal way;
 - d. In a situation which is time critical, decisions which have financial implications and fall between the dates of two Business Meetings, the line manager of the DO, following consultation with the Chair of the Forum, may make that decision. This must be ratified at the next Business Meeting with the line manager providing a full report to the Forum. In the event of the Chair of the Forum being the Chair of the hiring employer consultation will take place with the vice-Chair of the Forum;
 - e. If the line manager considers the DO’s workload has become too onerous, they may, in line with their employer/employee responsibilities decide to prioritise the workload until the time of the next Business Meeting.

The above Constitution with its revisions and amendments was adopted by the Member Organisations at the [Annual / Extraordinary] General Meeting of The Harris Forum held on xx of xxxx 2024.

The twelve Member Organisations at the date of the Meeting approving the change in Constitution were:

Community Learning & Development
Harris Development Limited
Harris Voluntary Service
Leverhulme Community Hub Limited
North Harris Community Council
North Harris Trust
Rionnagan Oga
Scalpay Community Council
Scalpay Community Association
South Harris Community Council
The West Harris Trust
Western Isles Community Care Forum