



HARRIS | FORUM

Progress / Partner / Protect

Adhartas / Cairdeas / Dion

Pursuing development through community connection

Title	Harris Forum Business Meeting Minutes		
Date	11/11/2025	Time	7.30pm
Venue	Talla Na Mara, West Harris		
Distribution	Harris Forum Member Organisations (MOs)		

Present	<p>Member Representatives: EVA KREILEDER (EK), HFDO – Minutes North Harris Community Council, NHCC: FRAN MILLER (FM); Chair of the HF AGNES MORRISON (AM) Scalpay Community Council, SCC: - South Harris Community Council, SHCC: DONNIE MACDONALD (DMD) EFFIE MACLEOD (EM) North Harris Trust, NHT: CALUM MACKAY (CM) West Harris Trust, WHT: NEIL MACDONALD (NM) ANN PARRY (AP) Harris Voluntary Service, HVS: BARBARA MACKAY (BM) Harris Development Ltd., HDL: ANGUS J MACLEOD (AJM) Western Isles Community Care Forum, WICCF: - Scalpay Community Association, SCA: GORDON NESS (GN) Community Learning & Development, CLD: - Sport Harris: - Rionnagan Òga: KATHLEEN DUCE (KD) Councillors: KENNY MACLEOD (KM, Cllr)</p>	<p>Agenda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Welcome from Chair2. Apologies3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting 2nd September 2025.4. Matters Arising5. Harris Forum structure6. AOCB7. DONM
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Agenda Item		Summary and Action	Who?	When?
1	Welcome from the Chair	All MO representatives welcomed.		
2	Apologies for absence	SHAUN BLOOMFIELD (SB), Scalpay Community Council BRYAN MACDERMID (BM), Scalpay Community Council KIRSTY MACKAY (KMY), North Harris Trust PEGGY MACKAY (PMK), Western Isles Community Care Forum MAIRI MACIVER (MM), Community Learning & Development GORDON MACDONALD (GM), Sportharris; PAUL A. FINNEGAN (Cllr)		
3	Previous Minutes 2 nd September 2025	Proposed KD, Seconded CM.		
4	Matters Arising	-		
5	Harris Forum structure	<p>The DO prepared a series of posters containing different questions for the Harris Forum members to answer. Each representative of the member organisations was asked to write their answers on Post-it notes and pin them to the relevant question.</p> <p>The questions were presented in blocks of three, starting with questions 1–3, followed by questions 4–6. After all answers had been read out loud by different members of the Forum in turn, each question was summarised. The detailed questions with examples are attached to the minutes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What works well within the Forum? 2. What doesn't work at all within the Forum? 3. Is there something that should change within the Forum? 4. What do you think is the Forum for? 5. What should be discussed at the Forum meetings? 6. Who should attend the Forum meetings? 7. How could a new structure look like? 8. The Harris Forum website should be used as a one stop information platform to share. Agree or disagree? <p>Summary of the responses to the questions: (The full answers to each question are attached to the minutes.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What works well within the Forum? Information exchange, organisation knowledge exchange, network, DO time and support 2. What doesn't work at all within the Forum? Lack of structure, attendance of meetings, responsibilities, ownership of Forum, communication 3. Is there something that should change within the Forum? Subgroups and structure 4. What do you think is the Forum for? Gathering information an exchange, ONE Harris, Assisting and supporting, working with the community 5. What should be discussed at the Forum meetings? Projects, funding, DO time 		

Agenda Item	Summary and Action	Who?	When?
	<p>6. Who should attend the Forum meetings? The majority said employees and representatives</p> <p>7. How could a new structure look like? There was a lengthy discussion about this topic with no outcome yet. Points raised were, Harris Forum as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subgroups with main focus on most pressing topics and they meet up regularly. The whole of the Forum meets up occasionally to update each other. - A connector between funders, council, government and the different projects, groups. A representation of Harris to external bodies - Tackling body of the issues regarding Transport, infrastructure, depopulation. - One lobbying voice with employees <p>However, it was also mentioned that it is already difficult to find enough volunteers for the organisations as they are.</p> <p>8. The Harris Forum website should be used as a one stop information platform to share. Agree or disagree? Following points have been brought up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community council (CC) meetings should be published in Dè Tha Dol with their main discussion points. - Minutes of CC meetings can be found on the council website. - A link should refer to the CC meeting minutes on the Harris Forum website. - Communication is key. - How do we communicate with the community? - It was asked how many people visit the Harris Forum website. <p>EK has been asked to look into this and provide an update. <i>During the Local Place Plan consultation period, 877 unique visitors accessed the Harris Forum website. Over the past year (13/11/2024 – 13/11/2025), the Harris Forum website received 1,122 unique visitors.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can we communicate more efficiently? - The idea was put forward of having a summary of the councillor's report on the Harris Forum website. <p>During the question rounds it was noted that nearly no one mentioned the Harris Plan. The question was raised how the perception of other islands is in relation to the Harris Forum. It was mentioned that it serves as an example for other areas like Barra, Parc and Lochs etc. Also highly regarded within the council especially regarding the Crown Estate fund. Every member of the Harris Forum has been asked to think about the topics and discussion points from this meeting to continue to discuss at the next Harris Forum meeting.</p>		
6	<p>AOCB</p> <p>a) Leverhulme hub has resigned as a member of the Harris Forum</p> <p>b) 11 of the 12 houses in Leverburgh are allocated. There is still one 3-bed house left.</p> <p>c) The time request for the DO for the Bays Community Centre has been granted.</p> <p>d) Everyone is asked to think about how we will go forward to come to a conclusion at the next HF meeting.</p>		
7	<p>DONM</p> <p>Next Business Meeting on 26th January 2026, 7:30pm, Leverburgh Free church</p>		

What works well within the Forum?

e.g. communication, discussions, knowledge exchange, nice chats, nice to meet the others, etc.

What doesn't work at all within the Forum?

e.g. communication, discussions, knowledge exchange, etc.

Is there something that should change within the Forum?

e.g. structure, meeting schedule, general set up, etc.

What do you think is the Forum for?

e.g. share knowledge, learn about other organisations projects, to meet u and have a chat etc.

What should be discussed at the Forum meetings?

e.g. projects, main focus topics, priorities within Harris, next steps within projects, etc.

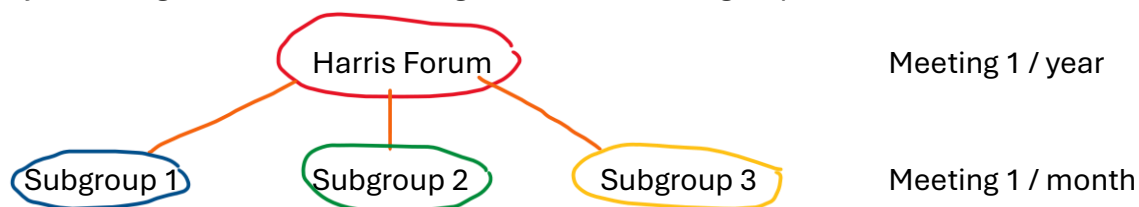
Who should attend the Forum meetings?

e.g. only board members, two representatives from each organisation and doesn't matter who it is, paid employee and one board member, etc.

How could a new structure look like?

e.g.

- Chat and exchange group (without agenda, only topic, just to exchange experiences)
- Driving force to push relevant projects forward (more proactive involvement of the members)
- One overall meeting group with different subgroups
 - > Subgroups with individual chairs reporting back to the whole Forum
 - > One overall meeting per year where everyone reports what happened throughout the year. In regular intervals meeting of the various subgroups.



The Harris Forum website should be used as a one stop information platform to share. Agree or disagree?

e.g. the latest minutes of the community council meetings, updates of the councillor reports etc.

1)

What works well within the Forum?

e.g. communication, discussions, knowledge exchange, nice chats, nice to meet the others, etc.

COMMUNICATION OF FUNDING SOURCES

works well?

> meeting up on a regular basis

COMMUNICATION OF EVENT INCL online

BUILDING INTER-ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

WORKS WELL

- Good, wide ranging discussion on various specific topics.
- Ensures fair & equitable spread of funding
- Equate opps for D.O. time for all groups
- Recognised wisdom as a good community wide body

SHARING

- HOW TO DO
- WHO IS WHO
- WHAT GROUPS AD.

Bringing community groups together

- x Some Knowledge Exchange.
- x Some benefit to smaller multi groups from D.O. time

Good to meet up + exchange

Mix of local community groups who provide a good knowledge of local needs

Exchanging of ideas

Coming to collective and well informed decisions

1. Opportunity for all community & volunteer groups to meet, share experience and appropriate Crown Estate funds.

Discussions - Informative.

+ exchanging project information.
- sharing knowledge.

+ D.W support to orgs.

SHARING OF FUTURE PLANNED ACTIVITIES / DEVELOPMENTS

Lots of information from D.O.

2)

What doesn't work at all within the Forum?

e.g. communication, discussions, knowledge exchange, etc.

Sporadic attendance at meetings

Doesn't work?

> sharing information sufficient enough

number of meetings

ATTENDANCE OF MEMBERS AT MEETINGS

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

* Not clear how some member organisations get benefit from the Forum
* Does the Forum actually achieve a great ~~deal~~ deal of itself?

communication

Dark employ as an D.O.

2. Blurred lines of management, Do management and local knowledge of HF function.

LACK OF OWNERSHIP WITHIN HF.

• COLLABORATION
• ? ALL TOO BIG

Doesn't Work Well

- NOT ENOUGH MEMBER ORGS WILKING TO TAKE SHARE OF TASKS & RESPONSIBILITIES.
- NOT EVERYONE WILKING TO TAKE A HARD LINE VIEW ON ISSUES.

It can be difficult to come to agreements

3)

Is there something that should change within the Forum?

e.g. structure, meeting schedule, general set up, etc.

structure.
+
policies.

What should change?

- > structure
- > more weight behind the one voice

CHANGE OF MEETING
SCHEDULES —
online options
Teams/Zoom

- REDUCE TRAVEL
TIME

- 3) SET HF AS 'CIC'
- COMMUNITY INTEREST COM-AN.
 - DIRECT EMPLOYMENT OF DOFFICER
 - Ability to raise funds.

requirement for sub groups

D.O
needs
line
manager

Would it be
better to
go back to
employees of
organisations
attending
meetings?

structure .
+
size.

CHANGE

MAY USE OF SUB-GROUPS
TO SPREAD THE LOAD.

3. Renewed
Structure and
focus.

4)

What do you think is the Forum for?

e.g. share knowledge, learn about other organisations projects, to meet u and have a chat etc.

support for local organisation,
—
sharing knowledge between groups.
—

Benefit the Harris community.

All groups working together to build a better future for our island.

Knowledge of funding sources to assist local projects and ensuring Harris gets its share.

ACTING FOR THE COMMUNITY

- 4
- Gathering one voice for Harris
- Representing Harris groups.

BUILDING NETWORK AND RELATIONSHIPS

- 4)
- exchange of experience
- knowledge
- process exchange like what is the best way to receive funding

Volunteers from Community Groups getting together to share knowledge + thoughts for the good of Harris

Umbrella organisation for Harris organisations to share information

What is it for?

- To provide a HARRIS voice for issues that impact the whole community.
- CONDUIT for DISPENSING FUNDING THROUGHOUT HARRIS

Not very clear what the Forum is for.

SHARING ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION & FUNDING INFO

LOOKING AT HARRIS AS A WHOLE AND WHAT ISSUES AFFECT ORGANISATIONS

Exchange of information & details of projects.

To provide a consensus of a Harris wide view on Harris wide issues

Should provide Harris-wide support for projects if necessary.

local representatives bringing projects to fruition to benefit all areas in Harris

5)

What should be discussed at the Forum meetings?

e.g. projects, main focus topics, priorities within Harris, next steps within projects, etc.

5)
Keep it the same as is.

- upcoming and present projects
- possible funding 'pots'

5)

- pressing topics within the community
- project experience
- priority projects worked on as a Harris wide project

Way forward
So, organisations to work more closely together - not reinventing the wheel

To gain a general knowledge of ongoing projects, and come to a consensus on Harris wide issues.

Concerns from the local communities + projects that will help + benefit Harris.

Harris wide issues that would benefit from wider community support

Discussed at Meetings

- Harris wide issues
- use of D.O. Time
- Harris Plan

Use of D.O. Time.
Projects -

HIGH LEVEL PRIORITY
PROJECTS / ACTIVITIES
AFFECTING HARRIS / ORGANISATION

STATUS UPDATES ON
PROJECTS / ACTIVITIES

5) Who should attend the Forum meetings?

e.g. only board members, two representatives from each organisation and doesn't matter who it is, paid employee and one board member, etc.

6. Reps who can speak for their org's
- but decisions are for the org's mgt.
- then fed into HF

reps from community groups

Employee reps from each organisation as they are the people who work actively for the organisations

Many of the member organisations do not have paid staff

Board members and paid employees where there are some.

2 Reps from each organisation - but not paid employee

Development officer(s)

c) employees of different organisations
+ a board member

ATTENDANCE

- 2 elected members from each member organisation
- D.O.
- Councillors

Should be open to the public.

Paid employees to attend.

ANYONE FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS