



HARRIS | FORUM

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Pursuing development through community connection

Title	Harris Forum Business Meeting Minutes		
Date	13/05/2025	Time	7.30pm
Venue	North Harris Trust Meeting Room		
Distribution	Harris Forum Member Organisations (MOs)		

Present	<p>Member Representatives: EVA KREILEDER (EK), HFDO – Minutes</p> <p>North Harris Community Council, NHCC: FRAN MILLAR (FM); Chair of the HF AGNES MORRISON (AM);</p> <p>Scalpay Community Council, SCC: SHAUN BLOOMFIELD (SB)</p> <p>South Harris Community Council, SHCC: -</p> <p>North Harris Trust, NHT: CALUM MACKAY (CM)</p> <p>West Harris Trust, WHT: NEIL MACDONALD, (NM) ANN PARRY, (AP)</p> <p>Harris Voluntary Service, HVS: -</p> <p>Harris Development Ltd., HDL: -</p> <p>Western Isles Community Care Forum, WICCF: PEGGY MACKAY (PMK)</p> <p>Scalpay Community Association, SCA: GORDON NESS (GN)</p> <p>Community Learning & Development, CLD: -</p> <p>Sport Harris: -</p> <p>Rionnagan Òga: KATHLEEN DUCE (KD)</p> <p>Leverhulme Community Hub: -</p> <p>Councillors: KENNY MACLEOD (KM, Cllr)</p>	<p>Agenda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome from Chair 2. Apologies 3. Procedures of Minutes 4. Approval of Minutes of Meeting 25th March 2025. 5. Matters Arising 6. HFDO contract 7. HFDO Update <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1 Local Place Plan 7.2 Coastal Community Fund 7.3 Support for the elderly 7.4 Building Sustainable Futures for Island Communities Event 8. Member Organisation Reports 9. West Harris Trust - Short overview of their projects 10. Housing Needs Assessment by Luke Fraser 11. Discussion session of the National Island Plan (22/05/2025 12.30 – 14.00), organised by the Scottish Island Federation 12. Councillor Report 13. Transport Update 14. AOCB 15. 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	MAIRI MACIVER (MM), Community Learning & Development GORDON MACDONALD (MD), SportHarris; DONNIE MACDONALD (DMD), SHCC; PAUL A. FINNEGAN (CIr) MARION NICHOLS (MN), Rionnagon Oga; CATRIONA MACLENNAN (CML), Leverhulme Community Hub BARBARA MACKAY (BM), Harris Voluntary Service ANGUS J MACLEOD (AJM), Harris Development Ltd. BRYAN MACDERMID (BMD), Scalpay Community Council		
3	Procedures of Minutes	After circulating the draft of the minutes, amendments can be done at the next HF meeting or send to the DO via email prior to the meeting. The DO collects all the suggested amendments which will be presented at the next HF meeting for approval.	All	
4	Previous Minutes 25th March 2025	In regard to Point 8 following amendments have been requested and agreed on: Following a visit to the Modular West factory On receiving information about Modular West, at the start of 2023 NHT investigated modular-build housing in more detail. The final funding package to build the modular houses totalled just over £800K and was made up: North Harris Trust 46% (~ £380,000) Rural Housing Fund 33% (£246,000 £270,000) SSE Renewables Hydro Community Fund 18% (£144,000 £150,000) Other 3% (funding amounts amended at the last HF meeting) Proposed KM, Seconded AM.		
5	Matters Arising	-		
6	HFDO contract	The named employer for the DO is Adhertas Trust who will cover management payroll and admin, all free of charge. Funds for DO's role has been secured from HIE for 5 months with the 7 months being sought from HIE application from Scottish Government. The DO role is match funded by the Crown Estate funding. To claim the funds from HIE, the original offer letter of the Crown Estate funding needs to be provided to proof match funding. MM is asked to send this document to GN.	MM	After return
7	HFDO Update	A written HFDO report was circulated prior to the meeting.		
7.1	Local Place Plan	For the LPP as a map, a base plan is required. With the help of AM, NHCC the access to the OS platform has been granted and the DO could start the work on the plan with one month delay. As soon as the first draft is ready the DO will get in touch with the various members. The 1 st edition of the LPP will be published and exhibited in various locations of Harris.		

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7.2	Coastal Community Fund	Application deadline was the 2 nd May noon. All members of the HF which haven't applied for the fund are asked to take part in the judging process. EK will send an email out to all those members to confirm their availability on the 27 th May at 14.00- 16.00 or 17.00 – 19.00.	EK	14/05/2025
7.3	Support for the elderly	A first information document for the elderly has been produced by the DO. HVS supports the document and took it along to the Harris Locality Planning Group. The group will support the document and will give some feedback as well as practical advice in relation to the distribution of the document. First draft is attached to the minutes.		
7.4	Building Sustainable Futures for Island Communities Event	Held on 1 st to 2 nd July in Stornoway. This is the first conference of its kind. It includes Scotland and Scottish Isles, and the NORA countries: Greenland, Iceland, Faroe Islands, and coastal Norway. The conference aims to address the shared challenges and opportunities of island communities across the North Atlantic. Organised by NORA in collaboration with Islands Book Trust		
8	Member Organisation Reports	No additional comments West Harris Trust submitted their update before the meeting which hasn't been circulated yet. Additional to the reports, each meeting a different member will present projects from within their organisation.		
9	West Harris Trust – Short overview of their projects	Housing project (See full summary attached) Over the past West Harris Trust, TIG and the planning department had a hunt around the area to find the most suitable spots for potential new houses. Four sites have been deemed suitable, and one is currently being prepared for a full planning application. The proposal will include six houses and one self-build plot. Currently the West Harris Trust is at the consultation stage. Q&A's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ownership of the site was raised, and suggestions have been made to be in close contact with the current owners and have a open communication with the public. Talla na Mara is from now on a community café The maximum capacity for an event with a sit-down meal of the venue is 80 people i.e. wedding function.		
10	Housing Needs Assessment by Luke Fraser	Luke Fraser is proposing a housing need analysis for Harris which would be a needs versus want analysis and also takes into account each village's population, access, requirements, distance to schools etc. The funding could be organised through the community councils, local land trusts and councillors as well as available funding streams. To be able to make a decision and to see the financial impact, EK has been asked to request an overview of costs including example reports.	EK	14/05/2025
11	Discussion session of the National Island Plan	The meeting about the new National Island Plan will be held on Thursday 22 nd May from 12.30 – 14.00. All members of the Harris Forum are requested to attend the event and provide their input.		
12	Councillor Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget is set; less pessimistic than it looked like at the beginning - Discussions within the Council about more benefits from the cheaper electricity which is produced on the island but not benefiting the locals. 		

Agenda Item	Summary and Action	Who?	When?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No response has been received about the anti-social behaviour strategy from the Community Councils. The lack of response showcases the need of better communication. - The Scottish Government stepped in with funding to realise the hospital and school project for Barra and Vatersay. - The Blar Buidhe Care home in Stornoway was shut down and some of the residents were relocated into the new Care home. But the Council is not allowed to employ nurses directly, so the new home is not a nursing care home as Blar Buidhe was. - The future of Leverburgh Care Home is uncertain. The church is in the process of making a decision if they continue or not. - Project Gigabit hasn't reached the island yet. There are still areas within the Western Isles with insufficient connections. The Council is looking into solutions. <p>Comment by GN: The blackout on Scalpay showcased that in case of a power cut no phone is working within the area and no emergency calls could have been made. This has been addressed by GN in a letter to the MP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Council is working with Shetland and Orkney for renewable solutions for the islands - A delegation of Scottish Government representatives is on the island in regard to the Island Growth Deal. <p>EK asked KM to request an overview of the status of the provided funds for each of the areas and each of the sectors they were promised in.</p> <p>For explanation reason the Islands Growth Deal Heads of Terms Agreement is attached to the minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A tourist levy discussion has been held within the council to consolidate their point of view. They reconfirmed to be for a "Point of entry". - There is support in place by the council for the effected Isle of Harris Distillery staff. 	KM	08/07/2025
13	<p>Transport Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An issue with the bow visor on MV Hebrides has been identified. As a result, they are currently only able to load and unload vehicles via the stern ramp. This requires some customers to reverse either on or off the vessel, which adds complexity to their operations. Due to these constraints, the current published timetable is no longer achievable. A new timetable will be published shortly to cover the time until the repairs are being done. 		
14	<p>AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSEN Powering Communities to Net Zero fund is open for application. EK will send the information via email. 	EK	14/05/2025
15	<p>DONM</p> <p>Next Business Meeting on 8th July 2025, 7:30pm, North Harris Trust meeting room.</p>		