

# NORTH HARRIS TRUST

## MINUTE OF MEETING

**TITLE** : The North Harris Trust

**DATE** : 06:05:2024

**TIME** : 7.30pm

**VENUE** : Tigh an Urrais and Zoom

Present: Michael Hunter, Calum MacKay, Barbara MacKay, D J Morrison, Diana MacLennan, Robert MacKinnon, Paul Russ, Fañch Bihan Gallic, Phil Butterfield, David Wake, Tim Langley, Ian Strachan, Kirsty MacKay, Lena Morrison, Stuart King, Catriona Marshall, Kate Lewis

Item	Summary and Action	Who?	When?
1. <b>Welcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Calum welcomed Stuart King to his first Directors meeting and introduced him to the Board. Stuart is representing the Kyles area as a Director.</li><li>Calum expressed his thanks to Tim Langley for his time and contribution to the Trust over the past 13 years. Tim is resigning as a Director for the Tarbert area.</li></ul>		
2. <b>Apologies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>None</li></ul>		
3. <b>Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Minutes were approved by D J Morrison and seconded by Paul Russ.</li><li>No matters arising.</li></ul>		
4. <b>Conflicts of Interest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No conflicts of interest.</li></ul>		
5. <b>Board Appointments/ Confirmations</b>	<p><b>Chair and Vice Chair</b> Calum stated after last year's AGM that it would be his last term as Chairperson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Chair – Kirsty MacKay, proposed by Lena Morrison and seconded by Catriona Marshall</li><li>Vice Chair – Calum MacKay, proposed by D J Morrison and seconded by Lena Morrison</li></ul> <p><b>Sub Committees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Estates – D J Morrison and Robert MacKinnon</li><li>Finance – Paul Russ and Kate Lewis (short term)</li><li>Housing – Kate Lewis, Phil Butterfield and Barbara MacKay</li><li>HR – Stuart King and Kirsty MacKay</li></ul>		

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	<p><b>Trading Co Representatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barbara MacKay, Lena Morrison and Paul Russ</li> </ul> <p><b>Harris Forum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Michael Hunter, Calum MacKay</li> </ul> <p><b>HDL Keyworker Project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kate Lewis, Phil Butterfield, Lena Morrison and Barbara MacKay, by rotation.</li> </ul> <p>Steven Morrison was proposed as a nominated director for the Tarbert area. The Board agreed this proposal and SM will be invited to the next meeting.</p>		
<p><b>6. Staff Reports and Matters Arising</b></p>	<p><b>Manager's Report – Michael Hunter (MH)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insignis summary of accounts was circulated previously to Directors.</li> <li>The Finance Subgroup will meet before the next meeting.</li> <li>The Harris Forum will meet on 20<sup>th</sup> May.</li> <li>MH informed that the HHP Scott Road Housing Project is currently running behind schedule.</li> <li>£1000 has been transferred to Tarbert in Bloom but they have requested a further £2000 of funding towards the project. The Board felt more clarity was required before committing funding and asked that representatives from Tarbert in Bloom be invited to attend the next meeting.</li> <li>A Section 5(3) Agreement was agreed with SCA and the croft tenant for the Scalpay football pitch.</li> </ul> <p><b>Development Officer Report – David Wake (DW)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Depot was closed regularly in April due to the lack of skip turnover..</li> <li>No agreement has been reached to enable access to the watermain for the Tarbert Growing Project. An IBC container is currently being used but a permanent solution is required. It was suggested to investigate the positioning of a stop tap inside the premises and possibly running a hose to the polycrub.</li> <li>There have been issues with the parking meter at the Huisinis Campervan Site due to intermittent 4G signal. It is hoped that this will be remedied with the proposed upgrade of the current communications mast at Cnoc Mor.</li> <li>The poor state of the road surface between Govig and Hushinish was mentioned. DW will report to CnES.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ranger – Fañch Bihan-Gallic (FBG)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bord na Gaidhlig have agreed to extend funding of the Ranger post until September 2024 and NatureScot have continued funding for the year.</li> <li>FBG had an interesting day at Loch Reasort with passengers from a cruise ship who had booked the Ranger Service for the day. It is hoped that more ships will visit in the coming years and use the Ranger Service at a £10 per head charge. FBG suggested charging a landing fee if passengers visit without using the service. BMK suggested contacting Orkney and Shetland as they have experience with dealing with cruise ship visitors.</li> <li>There are two work placement students from SES working with FBG this week.</li> </ul>	<p>MH</p> <p>DW</p> <p>DW</p>	<p>Before next meeting</p> <p>Before next meeting</p> <p>ASAP</p>

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	<p><b>Estate Worker – Ian Strachan (IS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IS has been working on gunnera spraying across the estate.</li> <li>The Tarbert Growing Project is going well with growers working together.</li> <li>KL thanked IS for helping out with materials and labour for the Miabhag nam Beann growing group.</li> <li>It was mentioned that there is an open day soon at a croft with a polycrub in Ranish. IS was interested in attending.</li> </ul>		
7.	<p><b>Bye-laws Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order to have a fairer representation on the Board, it was felt that the Bye-laws should be revised. It was suggested that rather than have an entirely geographic representation it might be worth considering having one area representative for each area and five general Directors. The Board felt that, in principle, this was a good idea and possible permutations will be explored and discussed at the next meeting.</li> </ul>		
7.	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An email has been received from the tenant of (██████████) requesting to sell a site on his croft where the township fank is located. The grazings clerk for the area contacted KL asking that the Trust support their objections to the (fank ██████████ being sold as ██████████). The grazings clerk had previously written to the Crofting Commission asking that the tenant be investigated for breach of duty, but the case was closed without action in June 2022. The Board felt that NHT should be supporting the township as the tenant is an absentee and has previously sold a site on the croft. He has also been trying to sell the tenancy of the croft for a number of years. The Estate Subcommittee will discuss further with the township and will consider asking the CC to reopen the investigation into a breach of duty.</li> <li>KL informed the Board that there are ongoing issues with human waste at the track up to the Eagle Observatory. Options for toilet provision were discussed and signage will be erected in the first instance. Charging for parking was suggested as a way of income which could be used to provide toilets. It was also suggested to contact Amhuinnsuidhe Castle Estate to ask whether they were willing to contribute to the cost.</li> <li>Peatland Action had contacted MH to ask whether NHT and the crofters might be interested in a Peatland Restoration Project on the estate. The Board felt that this was not something they wished to engage in currently.</li> </ul>	MH & Estate Subgroup	
8.	<p><b>DONM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 @ 7.30pm. Tigh an Urrais and Zoom</li> </ul>		
9.	<p><b>HR Subcommittee Report</b></p> <p>(Staff left the meeting for this agenda item)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations arising from the annual staff appraisal process were tabled.</li> <li>It was agreed to contract a facilities management company for NHT rental properties.</li> <li>A living wage and cost-of-living pay increase was approved.</li> <li>The HR Subcommittee will review and report on staff job descriptions and role responsibilities at the next Board meeting.</li> <li>MH will explore apprenticeship and funding options with a view to employing a new office-based member of staff.</li> </ul>	HR Subgroup MH	Before next meeting ASAP