**COMHAIRLE CHOIMHEARSNACHD SHLEITE**

**SLEAT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting of Sleat Community Council held at Tarskavaig Hall on 3rd September 2024

Members Present:

Rob Ware (RW)

Tim Shone (TS)

Hans Petri (HP)

 Duncan MacInnes (DM)

Kate Duffus (KD)

Mairead Macdougall (MM)

Janet MacDonald (JM)

**Welcome:** The interim chair, Janet MacDonald, welcomed residents to the meeting. Members introduced themselves and their office-bearer roles where applicable. JM advised that the proceedings would be recorded for the purpose of the minutes. No one wished to record the meeting and there were no declarations of interest.

**Apologies:** Andy Williamson

**In Attendance:** 28 Members of the public

**Matters arising from the meeting on 25th June**

RW summarised the key points of the AGM and the Ordinary Meeting the minutes have been circulated and on the website. He added that the SCC was in abeyance from October 2023 to April 2024 due to insufficient numbers of members to form a council. Following the March election a new council was convened on 4th April with a full complement of eight members. Most of the items from June are covered in tonight’s meeting. Minor amendments have been made to two points following public feedback. RW summarised the five action points from the June meeting.

The minutes for the AGM are shown here. [https://web-cdn.org/s/1219/file/meethttps://web-cdn.org/s/1219/file/meetings/minutes/2024/Approved-Minutes-AGM-250624.docx](https://web-cdn.org/s/1219/file/meethttps%3A/web-cdn.org/s/1219/file/meetings/minutes/2024/Approved-Minutes-AGM-250624.docx)

**Adoption of Minutes of Meeting on 25th June 2024**

The minutes of 25th June meeting were accepted, proposed by Tim Shone, seconded by Kate Duffus and carried with no objections

**1 Local Place Plan & Highland Development Plan**

JM introduced this topic saying that time has been lost this summer in developing the LPP for various reasons, but this would now proceed at pace going into autumn. She gave a brief overview of what a LPP is and the process to seek community views to help shape the future of Sleat in the coming years. The LPP overview can be seen at the link below.

<https://web-cdn.org/s/1219/file/Local-Place-Plan-2024/SleatLPP.Overview.pdf>

DM and KD outlined the series of community events that would take place over the coming weeks, these being drop-in sessions at Armadale Stores, An Crùbh and several community cafes at Ardvasar Hall. Feedback at these sessions will be collated into a working document and will be complemented by a short online survey for completion by residents, businesses and organisations. This will be via the Survey Monkey portal and all results will be anonymised and no names or emails are required. Kate added that ‘it is a wish list but without a price list that goes with it’. DM added that the LPP is late and was originally an SCT project but with funding withdrawn this is now primarily led by SCC. It was believed that a deadline of September 2024 had been applied by HC for the full submission of plans, but this is not set in stone. Our aim is having completed the Sleat LPP by Christmas. The dates of sessions will be published imminently, and we encourage as many people as possible to share their views. A LPP Expression of Intent was lodged with Highland Council on 9th April. DM reminded that the LPP is about the bigger picture for Sleat and not about, for example, filling in potholes. This is about planning and development, housing to name but a few.

RW outlined that an LPP is the first stage in community aspirations that will form a foundation for the forthcoming Highland Development Plan due to be adopted in 2027 which, for the first time will be Highland wide and no longer three separate areas of Inner Moray Firth, Caithness & Sutherland and the West Highlands and Islands (WestPlan). Ian Hall asked if any consultations had been carried out yet on the Sleat LLP as he would like to contribute. RW recently posted a Facebook item on the new HDP. JM reminded that everyone in Sleat is a key stakeholder including businesses and organisations, the two estates and SMO.

**2 Skye and Raasay Area Committee 26th August**

RW outlined this is when the four elected members meet quarterly with agencies and other council officials. Topics generally include updates from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the Council's Roads Management Team, funding applications, housing, health and social care, and Police Scotland.

This meeting had presentations from the Chief Officer of the Skye and Lochalsh Council of Voluntary Organisations who updated on the Skye and Raasay Future master plan that was first launched in 2021. In addition, Simon Cousins, a director at SkyeConnect, the islands' Destination Management Organisation, who presented on the organisations work and projects and an update from the HC team for the Storr Project.

You can see the agenda for this meeting here. <https://bit.ly/4gyVvYC> and the YouTube video of the meeting here. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_qLg4tk3MMY&t=8143s>

For more detailed information on the topics please refer to the SCC Facebook post of 1st September.

DM made a point that it would be useful if the aligned elected member for Sleat would take more of an interest in the SCC and its work and had he attended tonight he would have met more constituents than in a year. JM said this is the subject of agenda item 4 below.

**3 Collaboration with south Skye community councils**

HP advised that he and AW had met with the Kyleakin & Kylerhea CC and a conversation with Broadford & Strath to speak about collaboration and areas of mutual interests including LPPs. He suggested future meetings would include chair, secretary and one other member. An initial date was agreed, and this will be held at Duisdale Hotel on 18th September. This was from an earlier suggestion in April where several community councils expressed the idea of an island wide cc collaboration. SCC members felt that it would be more beneficial in the first instance for the south Skye groups to meet and consider extending that later.

**3 Relationship with the Highland Council**

 RW said that title of this agenda item is defined as the relationship with Sleat’s aligned elected member, Councillor Ruraidh Stewart. The former SCC members had expressed disappointment at the lack of engagement from Councillor Stewart who has only attended 3 meetings in the 30 months since being elected. He attended the inaugural meeting of this community council on 4th April as official representative of Highland Council. Rob added that the role of the aligned member is to provide a contact for community councils which has, in members’ view, been seriously lacking. Another community council has written to other ccs including Sleat expressing concern at the lack of engagement from the same elected member. He advised that an SCC request for support from the Member on a roads issue had been ignored which resulted this in having to be escalated to senior officials of the Highland Council. JM said that we can accept that the Member has not fulfilled his responsibility in respect of SCC. RW said that former aligned members had shown significant engagement with our council even through the pandemic period.

DM suggested that a letter be sent to officials of Highland Council on the matter. This was seconded by Mairead Macdougall.

**4 Community Leadership Forum-Sleat**

Mairead Macdougall[[1]](#footnote-1) in written correspondence to SCC members earlier this summer had suggested that a community leadership forum for Sleat should be considered. As a result, RW added this an agenda item. MM said that it was important that SCC should not align itself with any group in Sleat. She suggested that other areas in Highland, notably north Sutherland, had formed a group with key stakeholders including landowners to seek best practice in community engagement. This also included community councils and development trusts to form a ‘leadership forum’. MM added this group had brought together people and organisations with different priorities. She proposed that for Sleat the key stakeholders would be SCC (for the whole of Sleat), SCT, CDI, SMO, FEI and CDLT as major employers, and the crofting community. MM said that this is at the very early stage in her thoughts and that she would prepare a paper to bring to a future meeting expanding on this concept. She suggested that in the meantime SCC should seek to engage with these stakeholders to establish their interest in such a project. JM said that she assumes that key stakeholders **are and will** engage with SCC via the current LPP development. She felt that the LPP would be the basis for a future group but at this time priority should be the current Local Plan. DM reminded that in 2013-2014 there was the short-lived Sleat Development Forum but that came and went as an exercise but with little tangible benefit. He added that he felt it not necessary at this time to consider a CLF but this may come out as a need once the LPP submission had been made although SCC is the over-arching community group across the area. DM said that we should wholly concentrate on the LPP must be priority now. HP agreed with DM.

**5 Community Partnerships**

DM spoke of the proposal that a ranger service for Tormore Community Forest had been discussed at Sleat Community Trust and that the Trust was seeking support for this. DM gave an update on how funding could be made available for a community forest ranger which was first discussed 12 months ago. He produced a paper for SCT but felt at this time the focus should be on Tormore. Such a role would encompass both managing TCF with Sleat Renewables and such issues as volunteering, paths, reforestation and peat restoration. If successful, Duncan said the role in the future could be developed to cover the wider area in Sleat. Members agreed SCC would support in principle a ranger service for Tormore.

Ardvasar Play Park. This was an SCT led project which has had funding to the value of £80k made available for the renewal of the area in March 2024. AW has been liaising with local parents and children together with officials from HC. No further update is known.

**6 Community News Update**

This has been published today to coincide with the SCC meeting.

<https://www.sleatcommunitycouncil.org.uk/news/community-news-update-3-sep-2024>

**7 AOCB**

MM had suggested to HP that the Mallaig Community Council could, at some point, be included in the local community council collaboration partnership. RW has, for many years, liaised with stakeholders in Mallaig when discussing the CalMac ferry service and it is known there is a strong feeling for greater cooperation between the south Skye and Mallaig communities. RW outlined a proposal for the formation of a Sound of Sleat Ferry Committee which would be a constituted group of around 10-12 members drawn from both communities. This would replace the obsolete Sleat Transport Forum and provide focused point for all things ferries and harbours and would include community council representation.

DM is concerned that there has been a great increase in emails between members in the run up to meetings and a way needs to be found of ensuring communications are disseminated effectively which includes meetings held at members’ homes or other locations. JM said all opinions need to be listened to.

**8 Public Discussion**

Ian Hall introduced himself and indicated that he would like to contribute to the LPP with a particular interest in active travel, walking, wheeling and biking. He updated on a current funding application to fill in some gaps on the old Sleat Road. The work that he is undertaking will be followed up in a presentation to a future community council meeting.

There was a short discussion on community engagement in Sleat.

**9 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held at An Crubh on Tuesday 8th October at the revised time of 1900. This change was agreed by all. Kate Duffus and Duncan MacInnes ask those present to share their views on the LPP now that the meeting was closed.

**ACTION ITEMS FROM MEETING 3/9/2024**
RW to write to Highland Council for agenda item 3

MM to produce an outline paper for the aspiration of a Sleat Community Leadership Forum

SCC to write a letter of support to SCC for a proposed community ranger service for Tormore

SCC to issue a letter of support for the new sports facilities at the South Skye Community Campus (presentation to be given at the 8th of October meeting)

1. Member Mairead Macdougall has asked that it be noted that at the beginning of her piece suggesting that a ‘community leadership forum’ be considered for Sleat and gave a context for that. The interim chair, Janet MacDonald felt that that context was irrelevant and as a result that has been removed from the record. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)