

MULL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

7pm, 3rd March 2021, via zoom

Present: Billy McClymont, Andrena Duffin, Tracy Mayo, Adrian Stephens, John Maughan, Ian Campbell, Josh Liddle, Tom Nelson, Alistair MacCrone, Joe Prior, Angus Williams

In Attendance: Mary-Jean Devon, Moray Finch, Seonaidh MacKenzie, PC Kevin Bonar, PC Neil Thallon, Dr John Holiday, Jim Lynch, Morven Gibson, Andrew Holman, Kirsty Renton, Karen Nonhebel, Neil Hutton, Marion MacLean, Colin Morrison, Dawn Read, Iain Fraser, Tom Stiles

Apologies: Duncan Swinbanks, Pam MacColl, Mandy MacKerl

Minutes of previous meeting

Proposed: Andrena Duffin

Second: Josh Liddle

Matters Arising

- AD sent letter to Prime Minister with regards EU fishing laws and paperwork. The problem is currently being worked on.
- Gleaner have appointed Kangley Construction to look at problems on the road next to Gleaner yard.
- AD wrote to Pippa Milne to report that Jim Smith didn't attend the last meeting or respond to any correspondence.
- JP reported that the legislation regarding charges for self-catering accommodation has now been withdrawn and is to be redrafted.
- Large group of industry bodies which have pulled together to oppose proposed legislation.
- TM stated that the rally letter now needs to be approved and sent.
- All happy for letter to be sent.
- Toilets are going to be re-opened on the 1st of April with no additional costs to the community.
- AD enquired as to how best for community to contact police with non-urgent.
- P.C Kevin Bonar stated that the public should use 101 telephone number.

Police Report – P.C Kevin Bonar and P.C Neil Thallon

- **Total Calls** - 26 (Mull and Iona)
- **Beat 30 Mull North** - Total calls – 10 Calls of note – All routine calls Crimes recorded – 3
- **Beat 31 (Craignure and surrounding)** Total Calls – 0 Calls of note – All routine calls Crimes recorded – 0
- **Beat 33 (Salen and surrounding area)** Total calls – 8 Calls of note – All routine calls Crimes recorded – 1

- **Beat 34 (Ross of Mull & Iona)** Total calls – 8 Calls of note – All routine calls Crimes Recorded – 0
- No actions to update from previous meetings.

Planning, proposed mast in Glen Seilisdeir - Andrew Holman

- AH had sent e-mail surrounding an application for a new EE mast at the top of Glen Seilisdeir.
- AH feels that the location of the mast has not been well thought through and could be easily improved.
- Site that has been proposed is right next to the road which will impose on the view towards Gribun.
- AH has suggested that they speak Philip Yelder from SWMID to discuss potentially improving location.
- Unfortunately, the land owner does not have much say in where the mast is located.
- BM enquired as to what grounds have they given for this being the preferred site.
- The cost is likely to be low for installation as it is adjacent to the road and so access is simple.
- It on the edge of a national scenic area and is inside a geographical SSSI.
- MJD stated that if it is within a SSSI, it is against legislation.
- MJD will look further into matter.
- AH submitted a proposal which outlined the edge of the community forest as a preferred site.
- BM suggested that MCC hold meeting with AH and SWMID to discuss further.
- AH is aware of a similar application being rejected on Skye as EE had not carried out a thorough investigation into alternative sites.
- AD stated that it would impact strongly on local coach trip as the bus stops at the proposed location.
- MG stated that SWMID agree that EE need to revise their decision and look into other sites and SWMID are happy for it to be on the edge of the Tiroran community woodland.
- JM asked if the coverage would stretch to Gribun if it was moved further towards Tiroran.
- AH stated that Gribun has good coverage as it comes from Ulva.
- M-JD suggested that AH sends all correspondence and details to Jim Lynch and he can carry forward to planners what has been discussed tonight.
- The mast will be 13 meters in height.
- MCC to write in support of AH.

Funding problem for small businesses - Joe Prior

- JP would like to lobby to get funding up and running for self-catering business who have been financially impacted through COVID-19.
- Currently B&B's are not on the strategic framework plan which mean that they are not eligible for any funding.

- When strategic framework was introduced in December, the mainland went to level 4 and island was in level 3.
- As a result, businesses stayed open but did not get the trade they require.
- It was mid-February when an island equivalent fund was included on the strategic framework
- No funding available for island businesses.
- It took 2 months of lobbying to get island equivalent funding.
- There is potential for this to happen again if the tier system is changed and all businesses in hospitality trade will be impacted.
- TH suggested that JP write to Alison Clark from Tiree Community Council for discussion.
- JP looking to put together a group who will lobby in advance of these changes to ensure that Mull businesses are supported.
- AD stated that the Waterfall Hardship Fund is available for individuals who are in financial difficulty.

Update on Craignure development – Norman Hickson

- No further changes since the last meeting

CMILG Meeting

- JR stated that MFC feel that the OBC reports are inadequate for meaningful decision.
- Insufficient information to make decision on which pier design is best for Craignure.
- Currently the plans stand as incomplete and inadequate.
- BM stated that as it is unclear how they are going to proceed, it is very difficult to make a stand.
- M-JD stated that Melissa had circulated notes from the meeting but not official minutes.
- Next stage is to take forward to harbour board who will then lobby Scottish Transport.
- The website will now be used as a library of information.
- Question and Answer section of website to be updated.
- TM asked if A&BC admitted that their procedure was flawed.
- BM stated that there was no official acknowledgment.
- AS stated that MCC needs to keep pressuring Transport Scotland as they have leverage on the development and the vessels used.
- M-JD stated that CMAL also have significant leverage.
- M-JD to get copy of official minutes from CMILG.
- M-JD stated that the harbour board are holding a meeting tomorrow and there is currently nothing on the agenda surrounding Craignure.
- JL is a member of the harbour board and will raise matter on behalf of MCC.
- MJD requested that JL ask that NH is invited to attend the next few harbour board meetings as chair of CMILG.
- MJD requested that NH put a plan together for a community lead option and present it to harbour board at one of the meetings. NH in agreement.

- JR currently running crowd funder for an independent technical assessment of catamaran option and urged MCC members to donate.
- This assessment will be carried out by Strathclyde university.
- MFC are hoping that the results of this will allow for MCA to make a positive decision.
- Transport Scotland have previously stated that the reason that they will not consider this option is because it will not be passed by MCA. This technical assessment should allay these concerns.
- MF stated that Finance Minister, Kate Forbes, is showing interest on case.
- JR asked that MCC contribute to crowd funder as an indication of support.
- MJD stated that community councils are not permitted to invest any money on 3rd party organisations, but individual community councillors are free to donate as individuals.

Update on Cemetery Survey.

- AD circulated update surrounding the lack of space in cemeteries.
- If MCC send a letter in by tomorrow outlining views, our views will be considered.
- AD stated that the new carpark is being constructed on the edge of the cemetery.
- AD enquired as to whether works could be carried out to level cemetery at the same time.
- M-JD stated that this is not possible because works on the carpark have already been started.
- JH stated that there are similar situations arising on Tiree, where it has been suggested that family members are buried in Oban.
- JH further stated that the council are keen for volunteers to maintain cemeteries themselves
- TCC have opposed this as there are historic grave sites which should be maintained professionally.
- MJD urged that MCC respond quickly.
- Land was offered at Calgary Bay 5 years ago, but the council took such a long time to come to a decision, the offer was lost.
- MJD suggested that the item is added to the area committee meeting next week.
- It is of huge concern that families will not be able to bury their loved ones in their local area.
- JL stated that the initial consultation was too narrow and advised that another consultation is carried out and make it much wider.
- TN enquired as to whether the community should look for alternatives if the council are going to draw process out.
- It might be worth discussing possibility with MICT.
- MF stated that if there was a demand from community to look at it, MICT would do this.
- MF would have concern with regards the operational costs as it would need to be run as a community enterprise.
- JM enquired as to whether woodland would be available for a cemetery.
- CM stated that NWM are currently looking into securing area for woodland burial though it is a slow process.
- There is slightly less infrastructure involved with a woodland burial ground.

Tobermory High School – Tracy Mayo

- TM reported that a letter was sent to Tobermory High school parents on 18th February stating changes to curriculum and schooling days.
- Parents were asked to respond within a week.
- A nil response was to be taken in support for the changes.
- TM requested that this consultation is extended to primary school parents.
- A&BC have extended deadline for consultation till 5th March.
- It is felt that there was no real discussion or ample time for feedback to be given.
- Some of the highlighted concerns are as follows; Teachers could lose experience in teaching higher subjects, loss of good teacher student relationship, teaching staff numbers will be reduced and remaining teachers will be over stretched, it is not clear as to who will be mentoring the students and liaises with parents, who intervenes when there is a problem or technology fails.
- One of the main concerns for parents and students is the subject options process.
- Deadline for choosing options in Oban and Tiree was 23rd February. Tobermory students are still choosing and so subject may already be fully allocated and how will the schools align their time-tables.
- Parents are currently unsure what the timetable is like.
- To move forward, parents need assurance of the autonomy of Tobermory High School as so much is in the hands of Oban.
- TM stated that parents would like support from MCC
- Via the consultation, parents requested repairs to the school.
- Parents would like transparency for future plans for school including indication of time-scale
- Karen Nonhebel wrote to Louise Connor as a parent but also as school nurse, to outline concerns surrounding the infrastructure and poor state of the school building, the de-cant of children from Salen primary to THS, but also concerns over banding school together with Oban and Tiree in the absence of a Head Teacher.
- M-JD read letter to attendees.
- Neil Hutton stated that there 3 main areas of concern:
 1. Time tables and choice of subject availability
 2. The condition of the school.
 3. Concern that Tobermory might be down graded by A&BC, though there is no suggestion that this is the case.
- The de-cant from Salen Primary, and the lack of space in THS for an additional 71 children is also causing concern.
- M-JD stated that children have the right to learn in a healthy, safe environment and this is currently not the case.
- It is unclear as to why THS has had no major investment as it is a high attaining school.
- TM stated that she has requested a meeting with Louise Connor to discuss, but has not had a response.

- BM suggested that MCC request that an independent survey on the building be carried out, to give parents impartial feedback on the condition of the school and works needed to be carried out.
- DR stated that as there is no additional ground available to build or extend, the solution would be to build a new school, and a decision would need to be made as to where it would be built.
- TN suggested that the council is lobbied to acknowledge that the condition of the school is unacceptable.
- TN further stated that there is no essential need to de-cant Salen children to THS as there are other options available such as halls, churches etc.
- BM suggested that MCC push for another venue to be found.
- AW suggested requesting a risk assessment from A&BC outlining how they concluded that it is safe to increase the population by 70.
- Iain Fraser has been e-mailing A&BC about the state of the roof in the primary department and has requested a risk assessment which has not been given.
- AM suggested that there seems to have been a sustained period of A&BC stripping assets from THS.
- BM stated that MCC will push for a risk assessment.
- NH suggested that concerns over being amalgamated with Tiree and Oban might be allayed if a new Head Teacher was in post.
- TM stated that parents have represented that they would like confirmation that a new Head Teacher will be put in post and when that will be as there is concern that THS will lose its authority.
- TM further stated that concerns over time-tables could be resolved by A&BC holding a meeting during which all relevant information can be given.
- Marion MacLean stated that there is a planned parent council meeting for next week for matter to be discussed.
- Tom Stiles stated that parents are keen to see risk assessments which have been carried out surrounding de-cant.
- M-JD requested that any questions are forwarded to herself or Jim Lynch as to ask directly to the acting Head Teacher of THS would place him in a position of compromise.
- IC suggested that the same respect be shown to the Head Teacher in Salen.
- TM to write letter to A&BC outlining concern over: The poor state of the school building and the safety issues surrounding that. The proposed de-cant of Salen students to THS. The autonomy of THS. A&BC's future plans for THS and time-scales
- M-JD suggested that Wendy Brownlee and Louise Connor be invited to next meeting.
- AD to do invite
- JM suggested holding meeting with all PTA groups.

AOB

- TM contacted representative of A&BC to attend next meeting to discuss gritting. No response as of yet.
- AS stated that the Gaelic Translation meeting did not go ahead due to technical issues
- AD stated that there is an area of road near Bunessan which is crumbling into the sea

- AD contacted Iain Elwis and the matter is being looked into.

Action Points from this meeting

- JP to take forward funding campaign for small businesses.
- AD to consult with MG and AH about site of EE mast.
- AD to write letter about cemeteries.
- AD to invite Wendy Brownlee and Louise Connor to next meeting.
- TM to write letter about THS.

Date of next meeting

- 7th April 2021.