

MULL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 1 June 2022 via Zoom and livestreamed on Facebook

Present: Adrian Stephens, Billy McClymont, Cameron MacLean, George Burns, Jo Prior, John Maughan, Moira Westland, Pam MacColl, Tom Nelson (Convenor).

In Attendance: Jo Reade, Moray Finch, Tracy Mayo, Cllr Kain

1. **Apologies:** Alasdair McCrone, Angus Williams. (Cllr. Hume had also hoped to attend the meeting but technical difficulties prevented this).
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
3. **Minutes of the Last Meeting:** Approved (proposed Jo Prior, seconded Cameron MacLean).
4. **Matters Arising**

Correspondence with A&BC

George Burns reported that no reply had as yet been received from Jim Smith, A&BC's Head of Roads & Infrastructure, to letters sent in January about the timetable for Tobermory car park development and in February about public seating/shelter at Fionnphort, despite a reminder being sent in May. John Maughan reported that, similarly, no reply had been received from Jim Smith about a subsequent letter sent about gaelic road signage although, separately, he had been informed by A&BC that an order has been placed for signage.

It considered unacceptable that there should have been no reply to these letters. even if this was to provide a reason why the information requested might be unavailable for the time being. Cllr. Kain requested further details of the correspondence in order that he could take up the matter.

Eas Brae Trees

A reply is still awaited from FLS to the letter from Tom Nelson and Tom will pursue this further.

Royal Mail

George reported on the concerns about pressures on delivery staff. Although the concerns had not been raised by RM staff, members of the community had noted the pressures and raised the matter. The office of the RM Chairman and Chief Executive had replied to MCC's letter, reporting that recruitment is underway to fill vacancies although some disruption can be expected while this remains underway. Their reply also provided assurance that the staffing requirement for all RM stations had recently been re-assessed to ensure that

workloads remained fair and equitable for staff, although no further detail had been provided on this point. The issue raised by MCC about whether mail might be put on an earlier ferry had also been passed to local delivery managers.

George added that, separately, he understood that a Delivery Manager had been appointed based in Tobermory, although it was unclear whether this was a temporary or permanent arrangement.

5. Sustainability Issues

Education

(1) Tom Nelson reported that that A&BC had still not clarified what action would be taken in respect of the empty teacher's flat in Tobermory which had been allowed to fall into disrepair. Numerous representations about this urgent matter had now been made by the Community Council, the Parent Council and MICT. It was noted that Cllr. Kain is actively pursuing the matter.

(2) Wendy Brownlie, A&BC's Head of Education Services, had replied to a letter from MCC about teacher recruitment relocation expenses : Expenses might be reimbursed, but only if a vacancy had to be advertised at least 3 times, the only exception being posts that were known to be difficult to fill. No other allowances were available to meet the high costs of relocating to, or living on, islands. It was felt, however, that more clarity was required about the A&BC allowances and policy, about whether an ICIA had been undertaken and about why allowances seemed to be available to assist recruitment for some Scottish islands but not others. George Burns will pursue the matter, in discussion with Tracy Mayo.

(3) As previously agreed, a letter has been sent to newly elected A&BC Councillors for Ward 4, reinforcing MCC's response to the school leadership consultation.

(4) Tracy Mayo, Co-Chair of the THS Parent Council, read out an update from the Head of THS who had been unable to attend this meeting. It noted:

- The commitment of those pupils undertaking SQA examinations this year;
- the start of a new timetable on 6 June
- arrangements being made to support the transition of pupils leaving THS this year and those entering high school for the first time this year;
- that all those leaving were leaving for positive destinations in education or work;
- that HMI would be conducting a Covid-recovery support visit in June.

Tracy added her thanks to MCC for their support of the Parent Council and expressed her best wishes to the whole community as they approached the summer break.

Health & Social Care

Fiona Davies and Morven McPhillips of the HSCP will attend the MCC July meeting to discuss, in particular, staffing and service levels at Bowman Court and MICH.

Separately NHS Highland is considering MCC's representations about financial support for

people attending hospital treatment on the mainland.

Ferry, Transport & Travel

Joe Reade reported on the overwhelming public support (95%) for introduction of a ferry booking system similar to that in Samsø which would provide some surety for islanders. The result had been sent to the Transport Minister and would be published shortly.

It was also noted the MV Loch Frisa would shortly enter service.

Tourism

(1) Jo Prior reported that she was experiencing similar difficulties in getting replies from A&BC about the new holiday letting requirements. It was previously noted that A&BC had no plans in place in to meet the legislation, although this was required by October.

(2) Adrian Stephens raised concerns about the concentration of, and pressure arising from, tourist visits to Tobermory and Iona; he suggested that action might be taken to promote alternative tourist destinations on the island, perhaps involving young people in telling their stories and enthusiasm for other places. It was agreed that Margaret Matthew from VMI would be invited to an MCC meeting.

Housing

Tom Nelson reported that the housing needs survey commissioned by MICT had determined an urgent housing need for at least 260 existing and incoming staff in the public and private sectors. MICT is liaising with HIE to commission an economic impact assessment of the shortfall and with A&BC about securing funding through the Rural Growth Deal for key worker accommodation.

It was recommended that anyone with housing need apply to HomeArgyll for social housing: www.homeargyll.co.uk. Helen MacDonald at MICT is also willing to provide advice.

Moray Finch reported that A&BC has a council-owned house at Fionnphort which may become available for sale or rent. He has been in touch with A&BC to recommend it be made available on terms preferential to the community. Billy McClymont recommended that MCC support MICT's position and this was agreed.

6. Planning

John Maughan drew attention to a planning application that had been submitted to A&BC involving building a property on croft land, but which had not been recognised as such due to shortfalls in the croft registers. No action was required of the Community Council at this stage, but concern was expressed that the two official croft land registers were unlikely at this stage to record all croft land.

Billy McClymont noted that home building on croft land could be of community benefit, where it enabled families to keep homes on the island. It was noted that this would be

welcome where it enabled families to maintain working crofts; the concern was about croft land being converted over time to second homes.

7. Police Report

	Calls	Crimes Recorded
Mull North	30	6
Craignure & area	10	0
Salen & area	11	1
Ross of Mull & Iona	5	2

Crimes of note included housebreaking (1) and theft, and the police had attention to continuing reported incidents of fraud/attempted fraud. Arrangements will be made to refresh the MCC website with fraud prevention/protection advice.

8. Councillors' Reports

Cllr. Kain provided information about his roles and responsibilities within A&BC in addition to his role in representing Ward 4 (Oban, Lorn & the Isles) alongside Cllr. Hume and other Ward 4 Councillors. This included:

- Membership of the Community Services, Environmental Development & Infrastructure, Policy & Resources, Planning and OLI committees;
- Policy lead for Roads & Transport
- Harbour Board Chair.

He set out his intent to represent ward and island interests in particular and to ensure that AB&C Councillors and officers were aware of the GDP contribution made by islands, as well as supporting implementation of the government's Islands Plan. He noted that there were considerable resources constraints but that he wished A&BC to look at opportunities rather than cost cutting.

It was noted that Cllr. Hume had hoped to attend the MCC meeting but that technical issues had prevented this. Adrian Stephens will contact Cllr. Hume to resolve this.

9. Any Other Businesses

(1) George Burns reported that Stage 2 of A&BC's review of Community Councils would remain open for consultation until 15 July. The only proposal currently made at this stage involved a change to documentation which had the effect of reminding Community Councils of their obligation to canvass opinion as widely as possible, while recognising that their primary accountability was to the electorate and to people resident in their area but who might be too young to vote. It remained open, however, for anyone to make any other representations about Community Councils.

(2) Attention was drawn to the Scottish Salmon Company pre-formal application consultation events about their proposal for a new fish farm at Little Colonsay which will be held on 9 June (on-line) and 14 June (at An Roth). George Burns noted that fish farm proposals tended to be controversial and that it would be helpful for as many people as possible to engage with SSC about their proposals and to let the Community Council know their views.

(3) Jo Prior and John Maughan expressed concerns about the volume of people parking on road edges near to otter holts and the problems this posed for otters and for other people. Moira Westland and Pam MacColl made suggestions about what holiday accommodation providers CalMac and other might do to help provide public advice. It was agreed that the police, wardens and the Mull Otter Group should be invited to the next meeting to discuss what more could be done.

(4) Billy McClymont reported that A&BC had a number of overtaking signs available and had asked for recommendations about where these might be sited.

(5) Billy reported that a former member of the Community Council had expressed interest in rejoining and that he would ascertain whether she wished to be co-opted at the present time or stand for election in the Autumn. Members discussed the possibility of co-opting or otherwise having additional membership, especially young people and Tracy Mayo agree to raise this with THS students.

It was agreed that the Community Council should take steps to publicise the Autumn Community Council elections in addition to A&BC's publicity.

10. Public Questions: None.

Date of the Next Meeting

Wednesday 6 July at 7.00pm at An Roth and also via Zoom, and livestreamed on Facebook. Members of the public are welcome to attend in person at An Roth as well joining the meeting virtually.

Use the following link to join the meeting via Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84395913935?pwd=a3lleXcrVmFyR0cyUFRoOG5hbC9LUT09> or view the meeting on Facebook on the Mull Community Council page. A recording of the meeting will remain available on Facebook after the meeting.

Dates of meetings, agendas, minutes and a wide range of community information are on the Mull Community Council website.