

Mull Community Council Meeting Minutes 06th September 2023

Attendees

Community Council

Billy McClymont	Jo Prior
Rupert Ormond	John Maughan
Mary-Jean Devon	Cameron MacLean
Joe Reade	Tracy Mayo
Sandy Munro	Margo Wilkie

Councillors

Andrew Kain	Amanda Hampsey
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Willie Hume

Guests

Gordon Milne

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Jim Lynch
Mark Aston
Hannah Poulton

Members not in attendance were:

Angus Williams
Daisy Williams
Allan MacLean

Minutes of Meeting

2. Declarations of Interest

- None

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

- There were two corrections to the draft minutes. Updated minutes have been issued.
 - Rupert Ormond had provided apologies.
 - The email address for Margo Wilkie was incorrect and has been updated.
- The minutes were approved. Proposed - Jo Prior, Seconded - Tracy Mayo

4. Mull Community Council Business

- The Community Council welcomed one new member this month.
 - Sandy Munro has been co-opted to join the Community Council.
Proposed - Mary-Jean Devon, Seconded – Tracy Mayo
- There are further prospective new members expected to attend the next meeting.

5. Police Report August 2023

- Due to a police incident, there was no update provided at the meeting this month. Details will be included once the monthly report is available.

6. Rally Update

- Gordon Milne joined the meeting to provide an update on the Mull Rally due to take place in October.
- The plans for the rally are now in full swing and the entry list is nearly full.
- Plans are in place to utilise the access road for queueing traffic on Sunday and Monday.
- The mailing to all households will take place late September.
- Signage will be put out and where appropriate more solid signs will be in place.
- There are concerns about the Gribun to Benmore closure on Friday in that climbers will be returning to their cars and not realising that the road is closed. Signage will be placed specifically around the car parking area to make the road closure timings clear.
- Calmac will be providing an extra sailing from Craignure on Sunday morning and are looking at other options.
- The Corran Ferry may not be back in service in time for the rally. There is concern that this will impact on the Marshalls and Spectators. The lack of Marshalls would have a serious impact on the running of the rally.
- Thanks were given to the rally team who attended Salen Show to talk to farmers and landowners. This will be repeated next year and hopefully expanded to other shows with rally cars on show as well.

7. Matters Arising

(i) Highfield Forestry / Scottish Forestry

- Awaiting the drop-in session to take place.

(ii) Royal Mail

- Royal Mail are planning to have local management to attend the October Community Council meeting. They will start to provide quarterly updates on recruitment, service performance and feedback on items upon which they would like help from the Community Council.
Action: Mark Aston (via Jo Prior) to prepare and send a list of questions from Community Council for Royal Mail to address at the meeting
- Further recruitment has taken place and another new starter has joined the Ross of Mull this month.
- A replacement post box for Calgary has been requested.

(iii) Tobermory-Aros Speed Restriction and Pavement

- No updates this month

(iv) Breadalbane Street

- Billy McClymont met with the owners of Dunard House. They are keen to engage and are looking for a resolution.
- Part of the ground investigation has been completed and the remaining investigations should be completed in September.
- The money is still ringfenced in A&B Council budgets to complete the necessary works on the road, pathways, traffic lights, drainage and the wall.
Action: Andrew Kain to organise a site meeting to include A&B Council Representatives, Community Council Representatives and the Owner.

(v) Eas Brae Tree Survey

- No updates this month

(vi) Fionnphort Recycling Point

- Amanda Hampsey has chased up the current position with regards to the recycling point.

Action: Amanda Hampsey will forward the response as soon as it is available.

(vii) Prison Brae Resurfacing

- No updates this month

(viii) Verge Cutting

- With regards to the two cutting tractors cutting separately on two routes, this is not feasible. There is one service vehicle which provides the transportation and remains on site to provide the necessary sharpening, foils, greasing and has all the tools available to service the vehicles throughout each day of use.
- Sightlines are being looked at as a priority.

8. Sustainability

(i) Education – Tracy Mayo

- The Community Services Committee meeting was held on Thursday 24th August.
 - Argyll & Bute Council is to revise its Education Vision & Strategy – Our Children, Their Future. This is to take account of the many changes that have occurred since it was first launched. Parent Council representatives will attend a meeting on the 13th September at which this will be discussed. Parent/Carer input will be required.
 - A report proposing several measures to address the growing and increasingly complex needs of our children and young people was also considered at the meeting. The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) have documented the importance of 'Alternative Curricula' or modes of provision for learners with complex needs. Measures include the establishment of more Learning Centres, one of which would be on Mull.
 - To read more on these and other education items, please click on the link, Community Services, below:

[Community Services](#)

- Results - Nat 5 authority meeting
 - Head Teachers and council officials are to hold talks on the declining National 5 A-C pass rate in Argyll & Bute.
 - The Authority has maintained a 100 % pass rate in Nat 4 (an internally assessed qualification) for 8 years.
 - The SQA has published the results for each Local Authority and a further report is expected from the SQA in September.
- Recordings of the meetings can be watched section by section through the Council's relatively new webcast facility, you can watch live as well.
- Jenni Minto, MSP, has provided an update with regards to the new Mull School Campus. Options for the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) are still under consideration and there is no definitive timeframe at present.
- More than 100 schools and public buildings in the United Kingdom are facing closure because of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC), a type of concrete used extensively throughout the country and in many others between the 1950s and 1990s. There is only one school identified in the area so far, John Logie Baird Primary, Helensburgh, and parents have been notified.

(ii) Ferries, Transport & Travel – Joe Reade

- CalMac
 - A meeting has been held to discuss the disruption framework (how to redeploy vessels in event of a failure). This is a very difficult framework and a "one size fits all" formula will not as every scenario will be different.
 - Calmac are still making their plans for the winter overhaul schedule and planning for the UIG closure. This is delaying the issue of the Winter timetable and is now

expected to be issued in early October. At this stage, it looks like Mull will operate for half of the winter with the Loch Frisa running only.

- Calmac are putting in place plans to manage ferry queues and to sell tickets at Lochaline, Iona and Kilchoan. Job Vacancies have been advertised and it is anticipated that queue management will be in place at Lochaline prior to the Rally taking place.
- Changes are being considered to allow medical personnel (patient transfer, GPs, nurses, etc) to be made a priority in ferry queues to ensure that they can get to their destination asap.

Action: Joe Reade and Amanda Hampsey to discuss

- The Medical Protocol is still in place. Additional communication on this is being undertaken within Calmac. Calmac will now pay for a taxi directly if they cannot get you on a ferry. Calmac did previously pay for a taxi but you had to pay it yourself and then claim it back. They will now pay the taxi company direct, the benefit being that you don't have to subsidise the cost and wait to get paid back. People must ring Gourock to instigate the medical protocol.
 - During the recent Loch Frisa breakdown, accommodation vouchers were being given out in Oban. A Mull Resident, who had not booked a return ticket as they did not know when they were returning, could not get a voucher, despite being away from home. Additionally, all those travelling to Lochaline as an alternative route of travel could not use their Oban ticket at Lochaline and had to purchase new tickets for travel. This was causing long delays on the ferry due to the volume of traffic. In these circumstances it is felt that the Oban tickets should be accepted. Unfortunately, the new booking system does not allow for this.
Action: Joe Reade to raise these scenarios with Calmac
 - The Islander Priority pilot for Mull, Coll and Tiree will start alongside the winter timetable. For Mull, 10% of every sailing will be left unsold and will then be released 72 hours prior to the sailing time. This will enable any last minute trips / appointments to be booked. The % and timescales are different for Coll and Tiree (12.5% and 7 days prior). This pilot will be monitored and adapted with experience.
- Corran Ferry
 - The Corran Ferry is anticipated to be operational at the end of October, however, there is no confirmed date. The Ferry Committee are trying to find out when it will be known what the confirmed date will be as this will be problematic for the rally.
 - Transport Minister Visit to Mull
 - The Transport Minister discussions focused on the help for the economic disruption to businesses with the ferry failures. It appears that compensation is not going to be give but a package for Marketing will be provided to help address the drop in bookings for this year and for next year. The focus for the marketing will be that we are open for business.
 - Discussions also covered the commitment to replace the Isle of Mull ferry. Early business case work is underway but there is no budget identified/set aside yet.
 - Drilling Platform in Craignure
 - The drilling platform will be put in place and testing will be undertaken to support the plans for the new pier. This is due to happen on 7th September.
 - West Coast Motors (WCM)
 - Initial email introduction completed with John Murray, Area Manager and Graham Bryce, Operations Manager on Mull. Due to annual leave, the initial meeting has been delayed but the meeting will be proposed asap.

- The request for the WCM winter timetable to note connections with the Calmac timetable and highlight where bus and ferry services do not coincide has been sent. This will be followed up at the meeting.

(iii) Energy, Climate and Environment

- No Updates this month

(iv) Housing

- Scottish Water (SW)
 - Initial review meeting held with Mark Hunter, General Manager Development & Operational Services, to review questions raised in Mark Aston letter. Good discussion resulted with SW very pleased and willing to engage with the Community Council to help fill gaps in their knowledge about water use on Mull. Modelling, planning and capacity management were briefly discussed, and a separate meeting will be held for a group discussion with Mark and other area managers with representatives of MCC, MICT, SWMID and other interested parties; to be scheduled after 11th September. Mark Aston has issued a Doodle Poll to fix the date based on availability of all.

(v) Tourism

- Short Term Let Licencing
 - The date for all short term let businesses to respond is 1st October. If you have not applied, your business will be illegal, and you should not be taking guests in. Even if you do not have everything in place, put in your application and pay your fee to be compliant. You can add to your application post responding.
 - All your paperwork must remain up to date as spot check are being undertaken.
- Visitor Levy
 - The consultation for the introduction of a visitor levy across the whole of Scotland is currently open with responses due by 15th September.
 - All Authorities have the option to choose whether to have a levy or not and can choose the % levy to be applied. The visitor levy would be included in business costs.
 - There are questions in the consultation about the effect on businesses.
 - The main issue for Mull is that the levy applied on Mull will not stay on Mull and is not being invested in items such as toilet facilities.
 - The costs to implement this are significant. Current estimates are:
 - £190-500k to implement in each area
 - £1-5k for each business administration to set-up and £850-1k per annum to manage.
 - Returns are expected to be required quarterly.
 - Financial penalties will be applied if businesses fail to implement / manage the levy.
 - Policing of it will be very costly.
 - At present it is unclear whether it will be a per person, per room / camper or per property approach to the levy.
 - Day visitors, wild campers and cruise ships are currently excluded which is approximately 50% of the business on Mull.
 - No impact has been included on other uninhabited islands that get visitors such as Staffa.
 - Argyll and Bute Council have filed their response. They have ensured that there is joined up thinking between A&B and Highland areas. They have proposed a fixed rate and not % based levy.

Action: Jo Prior will put up links that enable the community to respond to the consultation.

vi) Health and Social Care

- Bowman Court
 - The proposed care home development at Craignure project meeting with MICT and the Council has highlighted the need for understanding Bowman Court better and what Bowman Court provides / could provide prior to the care home moving forward.
 - The meeting with the Executive Committee has identified that a full review of Bowman Court is needed. The change of personnel over the years has lost the understanding of progressive care and the associated focus of Bowman Court. This will go right back to basics, looking at the definition, how to brand it, how to make it enticing, how to understand what care you can get there and to ensure that it is used appropriately and that the right people are getting homes.
 - Mull does need and want a care home, so it is important that we get this right. If there is not a care home on Mull (or in Argyll and Bute, the nearest ones are likely to be Glasgow/ Helensburgh or further away and this is not good as we would be sending loved ones far from home.
 - There has been a shift in the Council regarding homes and care at home. Recently a private home was taken into council ownership to ensure that care remained local. Is this an option for Mull to move away from the Housing Association? Everything is being considered.
 - Staff at Bowman Court need to be looked after as well. They do a fantastic job but are being let down.
 - Amanda Hampsey is very supportive of this project, pushing forward the care on Mull, both in a home and at home, and happy to attend the meetings.
 - The Community raised nearly £1m to keep a care home on Mull and the Housing Association ownership means that they are bound by other regulations. Amanda Hampsey and Mary-Jean will look at the option of Bowman Court becoming a community asset.
 - The allocation policy for Bowman Court needs to be looked at as it is not just being looked at for care residents. Currently, under the housing association ownership, people are getting homes who do not need care.
- Dentistry
 - The two options for the placement of an additional dentistry chair have been looked at. The costs to implement the full dentistry set-up and the space requirements for the equipment have ruled out both options.
 - This issue has now been raised with Jenni Minto, MSP, but it is anticipated that due to the high cost of provision that there will be no further action taken.

vii) Community Council Engagement

- No updates this month

viii) Infrastructure

- New Supermarket Development
 - A way forward with the boundary and ownerships has been identified and a planning application is expected to be submitted soon.
- Park And Ride
 - No money has been set aside for this and its funding will now need to be re-applied for.

Action: Andrew Kain to arrange for a site meeting at Baliscate to look at both the Park and Ride and the Supermarket development.

9. Argyll and Bute Council Issues

(i) Councillors' Reports

- Trees with wires going through have been identified, both BT and Electricity. Where this is the case, it is the service supplier responsibility to cut back the trees.
- High Tides are expected on the 27th September. The slipway in Tobermory will be sandbagged by the 25th September. If heavy rains or storms occur at the same time, then there may still be flooding. More engineering is required to reduce this in future and discussions are ongoing.
- There is a 40 day consultation on the Municipal Harbour in Oban. This will impact upon islands served by Oban Harbour and the Community Councils will be involved.
- Road work has now finished, and the focus will now be placed on outstanding pothole and lighting reports.
- Fountainhead Road has not had any money set aside for the necessary work to be undertaken there.

Action: Andrew Kain to investigate this work and plan appropriately

10. Planning

- Mark Aston has looked at a Buinessan plan to see whether there is an issue to be addressed. On detailed review, the application of concern does not, at the present time, appear to present any problem for future planning for residential properties. However, use of the 'parent' approved planning application for a permanent dwelling house will be revisited when built to ensure use has not migrated to short-term let use without further planning consent. No further action needed at present.

11. Public Questions

- None raised

12. Any Other Business

- Community Council Website
 - The Community Council website has now been brought up to date. Agreement has been made to update monthly. If any Community Council members have News items to publish on the website, please forward to Sharon Worrall.
- Chemotherapy and Immunotherapy
 - Oban Times had reported that chemotherapy would be ending at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban. The Community Council have had a meeting with the Hospital and have confirmed that the chemotherapy and immunotherapy services at are continuing at Oban Hospital and in fact are growing.
 - The change is that the Oncologist will not be attending the hospital but will instead be offering the "near me" at home phone consultations to save patients travelling to their office or the hospital.
- Carers
 - Three people have raised issues this month with regards to people being unable to leave hospital as they could not put in place the appropriate care plans. Is there a shortage of carers. This is to be considered at a future meeting.
- Floodlights
 - The floodlights were switched off and the box was locked which impacted on hockey, shinty and football training / matches.
 - The lights have now been set up and will stay on until 9pm.
- Ownership of Pitches
 - There is a question over the ownership of the pitches in Tobermory. It is understood that they are a community asset and managed by ForArgyll but a question was raised whether one of them is on the Council Asset Register. This is to be clarified.

- Action:** Mary-Jean to clarify whether both pitches were transferred to be community assets.
- A User Group is being set up and all group / team leaders and nominated members will be given a key.
 - Ledaig Car Park
 - The Cruise Ship (1400 passengers) caused chaos in and around the Car Park with all the tour and standard buses waiting for passengers.
 - It resulted in no parking for the postmen/women to come and sort their mail as they could not park and use their vans.
 - Cars could not move around the parked buses nor access parking spaces or the petrol pumps.
 - Buses and visiting Tour Coaches could not move around the parking area.
 - People could not walk around safely, nor could they enter/ leave the Trek shop / post office safely.
 - This is just an example of the issues faced by both locals and tourists throughout the season. The lack of pavement and the bottleneck access past the post office and shop for traffic are dangerous and a liability for Argyll and Bute Council.
 - A suggestion was made that the Eas Brae area may make a good alternative, although costly with the required tree work, for the bus and coach parking freeing up additional car parking.
 - **Action:** Andrew Kain to arrange a site meeting to review the entranceway, bus and parking situation
 - **Action:** Mark Aston (via Jo Prior) to discuss the Tobermory sorting office situation with Royal Mail at the next meeting.
 - Tobermory Cemetery
 - It has been noticed that Motorhomes have now started parking in the Tobermory Cemetery car park in a similar way to the issue experienced on Harris. To address this, a request has been made to Jim Lynch for the gates to be locked at night-time with just the pedestrian gate being left open for people to visit loved one's graves.
 - BT Switch to Internet Based Telephony
 - SWMID has highlighted that BT aim to switch all copper landlines over to VOIP (internet-based telephony) in 2025, which is obviously a cause for concern for areas with poor bandwidth connection and poses questions of what happens in a power-cut. There are arguments for and against the change; notably, it may encourage BT to accelerate plans to install fibre broadband everywhere on Mull (benefit), but there is also a concern that whilst BT are legally obliged not to change over to VOIP if they cannot guarantee suitable bandwidth (as with copper wire ADSL we have on the Ross), they do need to ensure that appropriate alternative contact facilities are available if they still choose to switch without fibre broadband installed.
 - There is a petition to try to halt this changeover date if island residents are uncomfortable with the proposed change - <https://chnng.it/hwwZZ9HySN>

Next Meeting

- 4th October 2023 19:00 at An Roth, via Zoom and Livestreamed

Mull Community Council Contacts:

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Minutes