

Mull Community Council Draft Meeting Minutes 04th October 2023

Attendees

Community Council

Billy McClymont	Jo Prior
Hannah Poulton	John Maughan
Mark Aston	Joe Reade
Allan MacLean	Tracy Mayo
Sandy Munro	Margo Wilkie

Councillors

Andrew Kain

Guests

Michael Hogg	Royal Mail
Ross Hutchison	Royal Mail
Salvatore Monachello	Royal Mail
Shelley MacCuish	Royal Mail
Frank Roberts	Oban Community Council
Tony Bennett	Crown Estate Scotland

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

- Jim Lynch
- Cameron MacLean
- Amanda Hampsey
- Rupert Ormond
- Angus Williams
- Daisy Williams
- Willie Hume

Members not in attendance were:

- Mary-Jean Devon
-

Minutes of Meeting

2. Declarations of Interest

- None

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

- The minutes were approved. Proposed – Mark Aston, Seconded – Jo Prior

4. Mull Community Council Business

- The Community Council welcomed one new member this month.

- Hannah Poulton has been co-opted to join the Community Council.
Proposed - John Maughan, Seconded - Allan MacLean

5. Police Report August 2023

- The meeting was attended by Neil Thallon.
- The report for August was provided by Dominic Grierson.
- There were 60 calls for service during August.
- Calls were mainly road traffic (including cattle straying in road) and persons related.

Police Data August 2023

	Calls	Crimes
Mull North	33	4
Craignure and Area	7	2
Salen and Area	5	0
Ross of Mull and Iona	14	1

6. Royal Mail Update

- The following attendees from Royal Mail joined the meeting to discuss the provision of services and current recruitment position:
 - Michael Hogg, Senior Public Affairs Manager
 - Ross Hutchison, Regional Operations Director
 - Salvatore Monachello, Lead Optimisation and Compliance Manager
 - Shelley MacCuish, Delivery Office Manager, Oban
- Mull Community Council also wanted to discuss the status of the Royal Mail sorting provision on the island and the associated health and safety of Royal Mail staff.
- Royal Mail introduced their attendees which included Corporate Head Office, Scottish Operations and Local Delivery management for Mull.
- RM gave a presentation which outlined the typical journey of a Royal Mail letter or Royal Mail parcel to and from the Isle of Mull. This highlighted the many dependant and connecting services, including ferry, road transport, air transport and occasionally train and the timelines needed to make all connections to deliver services to and from Mull efficiently.
- Over recent periods of ferry disruption, mail deliveries have most frequently been disrupted by lack of available van slots, or cancelled slots, on the ferries. Royal Mail have focussed on securing block bookings with CalMac moving forward, with a dedicated CalMac contact now assigned to managing and notifying Royal Mail of any ferry issues in advance. This is seen as a positive step forward by Royal Mail.
- Previously, vacancies, along with staff holidays and sickness, have been a major issue affecting postal deliveries on Mull. This is no longer the case; Royal Mail now have 31 staff working on Mull - one more than absolutely required - to ensure services are maintained to a measurable standard. Holiday and sickness cover is being actively monitored, with the open possibility of agency staff being drafted in if local post workers are at capacity. The point of not overloading local postal staff with extra responsibilities leading to stress was agreed by all.
- New vans have been allocated to the Island and this has been welcomed by postal staff and residents of Mull. Royal Mail requested that Mull Community Council help ensure roads are kept in good condition to help avoid undue wear on new vans. Mull Community Council requested feedback from local postal staff if road issues are identified to enable Mull Community Council to raise with Argyll and Bute Council.

- Royal Mail also requested contact details for local garage services to investigate if routine maintenance could be facilitated on-island rather than removing a van from service to the mainland.
Action: Mark Aston to provide the details of local garages to Royal Mail
- Royal Mail noted that their business model is shifting to accommodate the greater volume of parcels over letters. This led into discussion on the suitability of the current sorting offices in Tobermory and Bunessan. Mull Community Council highlighted that recent congestion in Ledaig car park, Tobermory led to staff being unable to access the sorting office leading to questions about whether the location of the office is suitable with increased tourist traffic through the area. Similar issues were highlighted with the size and use of the Bunessan sorting office in terms of sorting parcels over letters, in a small office which is up a step, a slope and then a flight of stairs. Royal Mail took the action to engage their estates office to investigate the suitability of Mull sorting offices considering changing emphasis on post.
- Further questions were raised on whether local post to/from locations on Mull could be sorted locally and delivered with minimum timescale (post currently going to mainland sorting offices for re-delivery back to Mull). Royal Mail noted this is difficult with the current logistics management of post.

7. Oban Municipal Harbour Update

- Frank Roberts, from Oban Community Council, joined the meeting to discuss the changes being made to the management of Oban Harbour.
- There has been development to establish a Municipal Harbour for the whole of Oban Bay, and the anchorages outside. This is not necessarily going to impact upon island communities but will involve the island communities who are served by ferries from Oban.
- For several years, there has been a voluntary group, the Oban Bay Management Group, which has overseen or coordinated developments such as monitoring accidents, near misses, how radio communication goes on. It's a body that gets everybody together and agrees on how certain things should be done.
- Currently that body has representation on it from the Council, Calmac, Northern Lighthouse Board, the Council for the Pier, and the fisheries community. Smaller users are represented through a user group with the representative on that body. The Harbour master attends and 1 or 2 attend on behalf of Oban Community Council. It was agreed that Oban Community Council would represent other community councils that might have an interest in or concerns or issues with how the Oban Bay Area is managed. This structure will change with the development of the Municipal Harbour.
- During this period of consultation, the structure is currently in a bit of flux. However, when they are finally structured, they should include input from the communities that are served by and have an interest in the Bay. The terms of reference of the user group are being updated currently and it is recommended that they are updated to include that the user group, through the Oban Community council representative, will represent the views of island communities who might be affected. This will establish that as a principle, so that as the future consultative bodies are formed, then the other community councils, such as Mull, will automatically be involved. It was agreed that Frank Roberts would send Billy McClymont the draft terms of reference for the current groups for reassurance that Mull Community Council will be involved with new Harbour Authority work.
- The formal way to instill that Mull interests are fully acknowledged and included in the management of the new harbor authority is that, when the HRO goes out to public consultation, Mull Community Council make very strong representation that Mull Community Council, together with the other islands communities who are served through Oban, want to have direct representation on the consultative groups.

8. Craignure Moorings Update

- Tony Bennett, Marine Officer, Crown Estate Scotland joined the meeting to discuss the issues over the moorings in Craignure Bay.
- Tony Bennett works as the Marine Officer for Crown Estate Scotland and amongst his responsibilities is the management of the seabed around Mull, which, on a day-to-day basis, covers agriculture, fish farms, mussels, jetties, extraction points and moorings, of which there's approximately 250 moorings around Mull. (Note: Marine Scotland is responsible for everything above the seabed.) The vast majority of those are managed by the Tobermory Harbour association, Ulva Ferry mooring association, another association for Salen and for Croig/Dervaig. These four they cover almost 200 moorings. Historically, there is also an association in Craignure.
- The issue facing Tony Bennett is that the Craignure association has not paid for any moorings since 2015 and the Craignure moorings are now the oldest debtor on the Crown Estate books. A mooring cost is £40 per annum.
- Tony's interaction with that association started in 2017 when he met with the then chair and a new agreement was reached and signed. This came about because the person who previously ran the association had passed away. The office bearers were struggling to get mooring owners to agree that they should be paying and licensing their moorings at that time.
- In 2019, the enforcement process was started and, as per the process, stickers were placed on all 14 mooring lines. There was no acknowledgement or response to these enforcement notices. Unfortunately, Covid stopped the process from moving forward and this is the first year that normal processes have resumed, and the enforcement process has re-started.
- Crown Estate Scotland have received complaints from Yachts that have been to the moorings this year, stating that they are not licensed, there's no tag on it and it looks in poor condition. This has now become a high priority for Crown Estate Scotland and needs to be resolved before the new season starts in 2024.
- Tony Bennett will put an article into Round and About and to send a Facebook post to Jo Prior who will publish it to the relevant Mull groups. This will target a message that says we are assuming since nobody's paid the fees as per the enforcement notices that these are all abandoned, and they will be removed unless the owner contacts Tony Bennett. This will help to work out what's in use and current and what is historically abandoned. Tony Bennett will also provide photos of any moored boats to Billy McClymont to see if the Community Council can help identify any boat owners.
- Once this has been established the Craignure Association can be re-introduced, if required, with current members (must be a minimum of 5/6 people for this to be a separate association) and the Crown Estate can work with Argyll and Bute Council to arrange the removal of redundant equipment.

9. Matters Arising

(i) Breadalbane Street

- The site meeting to review the wall / road conditions is planned for October 10th.

(ii) Tobermory Pitch Floodlights

- There is an ongoing issue with the floodlights being switched off, with no means for them to be manually switched on. This has generated many complaints to both Mull Community Council, on Mull Facebook Groups and direct to Argyll and Bute Council.
- Councillor Jim Lynch is looking into this as a high priority and the fault is to be looked at ASAP, but Mull Community Council have requested a more formal timeline because the evenings are getting shorter, and it is impacting on a significant number of clubs. Mull Community Council would like to thank Councillor Jim Lynch because there has been quite a bit of back

and forwards trying to find out various pieces of information and he has been actively keeping us updated.

- The issue is that the lighting is LED and is fed from the school with controls next to the pitch secured in the locked cabinet. The cabinet has been a subject of vandalism, presumably for forcing the lock, to be able to turn on the light. Following the health and safety inspection, the electricity was being turned off from the school to ensure that the switch next to the pitch could be isolated. The property team are due to onsite ASAP to design and put in place a fix to the electrical issues. Councillor Andrew Kane was assured that the actual lighting is fine, there just needs to be a safe method to switch on and off and to prevent future vandalism.

10. Sustainability

(i) Education – Tracy Mayo

- The education refresh consultation will commence in November.
- New Mull School Campus
 - There is unease being expressed within the community because the current buildings have the lowest rating in Argyll & Bute.
 - As a community there is a need to consider what is next and how much longer can the community wait for a decision before having to consider what plan B looks like.
 - Donald Cameron, MSP is writing to see if the Scottish Government can advise on a timeline for a decision.

(ii) Ferries, Transport & Travel – Joe Reade

- CalMac
 - The Islander Priority pilot for Mull, Coll and Tiree has been approved and has gone live with the winter timetable bookings. 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. This pilot will be monitored and adapted with experience.
 - The Winter timetable is now available for booking and is complex with the changes to the one / two boat timetables. Mull Community Council thanked the ferry committee for issuing the helpful coloured charts to aid locals with understanding the timetable.
 - The Winter timetable has half of the winter being covered by the Loch Frisa only. No-one thinks that this is good enough but with the current infrastructure and port upgrades, there are no other options. It is hoped that from next winter, with new ferries in the network, that Mull can get an improved service.
- Corran Ferry
 - The Corran Ferry is unlikely to be available for the Rally and plans are being put in place accordingly.
 - The formal update stated that it would be back in service in Mid-October, but no date has been given.

- West Coast Motors (WCM)
 - No updates this month

(iii) Energy, Climate and Environment

- No Updates this month

(iv) Housing

- Scottish Water (SW)
 - A very productive meeting was held with Scottish Water with three main points coming out.

- Point One is that Scottish Water is very interested and willing to engage with the local community and community organisations. They have also offered to come in and do some education with school children.
- Already the meeting has initiated direct communication between Nick Laurie and Scottish Water about the planning for mixed social housing, which is not currently on the radar as far as their modelling is concerned.
- Point Two is that anybody can get a free consult from Scottish Water. This is available on their website, via a pre-development assessment, which gives all Mull organisations or individuals looking to develop or change their properties the ability to consult with Scottish Water as to whether there are available supplies for water and how wastewater could be managed before entering into any planning applications. This was discussed in the meeting and there are examples where consultants are being employed and this costs more than £1,000 for each engagement rather than being free.
Action: Allan MacLean to send the details of his example of the consultation fees to Mark Aston so that he can discuss this directly with Scottish Water.
- The Third Point is it's an ongoing process. Scottish Water very much want to continue engagement with the Community Council. They see it as very valuable in supplementing what comes from the local development plan via Argyll and Bute Council. They also see it closing the loop as to understanding what stresses and strains Mull Community Council witness.
- It was just a coincidence that literally a day and half after this first large scale meeting, Bunessan saw the water off for more than a day with four bursts. So, being able to talk directly to Scottish Water to understand why that happened, what they're doing to counter it and how that's feeding into their maintenance modelling going forward again shows that they are very willing to engage.
- There is an issue associated with both the ferry and the Lord of the Glens where the contractor emptying the sewage from these boats has not been able to get access to the lagoons to empty the bowser and it's becoming quite problematic for them.
Action: Allan MacLean to ask the contractor to send an email to Mark Aston with the background and he will raise it with the Scottish Water area planner.
- Emergency Housing Summit
 - The Emergency Housing Summit is due to take place on November 27th which is looking at the strategy for dealing with the housing crisis. John Maughan has registered to attend. He was requested to raise the issue of why so many planned developments on Mull are not being built or are stalled. He is willing to raise any other issues on behalf of the Community Council.
Action: All to provide any feedback/input to John Maughan by the next meeting.

(v) Tourism

- No updates this month

vi) Health and Social Care

- Bowman Court
 - The planned meeting was cancelled so no further updates this month.

vii) Community Council Engagement

- Scottish Forum of Community Councils
 - Mull Community Council have received the terms of reference for an umbrella organisation for community councils which is Scotland wide.
 - A newsletter has been published and a lot of work is being undertaken to highlight what resources there are there for community councils and to make sure that when changes are going through that community councils are included in the conversation at the right time.

- It was agreed that Mull Community Council should join the next meeting and gain access to all the relevant resources.
- Democracy Matters
 - John Maughan and Tracy Mayo attended the Democracy Matters meeting. Community Councils have been asked to set up meetings to get the views of the public and provide feedback on what is wanted in their local areas by the end of January. £300 is provided to set up each of the meetings.
 - There are 16 questions to be answered so too many for one session, so the sessions need to be planned accordingly and funding applied for each meeting that is planned.
 - Consideration needs to be given to the audience of the sessions – businesses, citizens and young people.
 - Suggestion was given to consider attending the many Christmas Events and Markets and the Community Café and engage people attending these as this may provide additional feedback.

Action: John Maughan and Tracy Mayo to set up a small working group and zoom meeting to plan and organise the meetings.

viii) Infrastructure

- Baliscate
 - The planned site meeting will take place on October 10th to review the new supermarket and park and ride developments.
- Bunessan Pavement
 - Bunessan pavement does not cover the steep section of road, providing a safe place to walk for pedestrians. Mark Aston has provided photographs of the area. Billy McClymont and Andrew Kain will take this forward.
- Pennyghael Speed Limit
 - There has been a lot of regeneration around the Pennyghael area with the new Port Nan Gael campsite development and refurbishment of the Pennyghael Hotel (which is now called the Inn at Port Nan Gael) and the Community Centre. This has increased the levels of pedestrians on and crossing the roads around the area.
 - The residents have asked if Argyll and Bute Council would give consideration for a lower speed limit through that area for pedestrian safety.
 - There are criteria that needs to be met for lower speed limits.

Action: Andrew Kain to review the criteria to understand what would need to be undertaken to reduce the speed limit.

11. Argyll and Bute Council Issues

(i) Councillors' Reports

- Drilling Platform in Craignure
 - The drilling platform work was postponed on September 12th and will now take place in Spring 2024 due to a Scottish Government requirement for a licence for the groundworks.

12. Public Questions

- None raised

13. Any Other Business

- Community Council Minutes
 - A request has been made by a member of the community to change the date of the meeting to ensure that final rather than draft minutes are included in the Round and About Magazine.

- This was debated in the meeting with no obvious solutions and all members were asked to consider any options that would address this issue.
- Ross of Mull Memorial Monument
 - The monument needs some repair work (re-pointing).
Action: Andrew Kain to investigate if funds are available from Argyll and Bute Council for this work.

Next Meeting

- 1st November 2023 19:00 at An Roth, via Zoom and Livestreamed

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