

# Mull Community Council Draft Meeting Minutes 07<sup>th</sup> February 2024

## Attendees

### *Community Council*

Billy McClymont	Jo Prior
Hannah Poulton	John Maughan
Mary-Jean Devon	Joe Reade
Daisy Williams	Tracy Mayo
Sandy Munro	Margo Wilkie
Mark Aston	

### *Councillors*

Willie Hume

### *Guests*

Moray Finch  
Steve Fisher

## 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

- Jim Lynch
- Andrew Kain
- Cameron MacLean

Members not in attendance

- Allan MacLean
- Angus Williams
- Amanda Hampsey
- Rupert Ormond

## Minutes of Meeting

### 2. Declarations of Interest

- None

### 3. Minutes of Last Meeting

- The minutes were approved.
- Proposed – John Maughan, Seconded – Mary-Jean Devon

### 4. Updates from Previous Minutes

- Margo Wilkie and Jo Prior are continuing to work on the set up of the email service.
- Tracy Mayo raised the Spend Consultation that is due to be fed back by 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Mary-Jean Devon was contacted about that and has further information.

### Police Report

- There was no police attendance at the meeting.

## 6. Matters Arising

- (i) Playpark
  - The playpark has received funding for £33k from Argyll and Bute. A further £7.5k-£10k funding will need to be raised.
  - As part of this, Argyll and Bute Council are looking to lay soft paths to give children with disabilities better access within the playpark.
- (ii) F.A.I.R (Fairness, Acceptance, Inclusion and Respect), Oban
  - Sue Barnard with regards to F.A.I.R., a new charity working to improve experiences of families with additional supports need children and young people, wants to hear from families from Mull to see how they can be supported.
  - F.A.I.R (Fairness, Acceptance, Inclusion and Respect) has launched a series of questionnaires so families can share experiences with them. The plan is that feedback from those surveys will help make positive changes, making sure children and young people aged up to 18 with additional support needs get equal access to activities and events in all aspects of community life.
  - The charity wants people to spread the word about the questionnaires so it can reach as many families, schools and parent council groups as possible.
  - To find out more about F.A.I.R go to its Facebook page or email [ask@faioli.co.uk](mailto:ask@faioli.co.uk) where you can also request digital or paper copies of the group's questionnaires.
- (iii) Boundary Changes
  - Cllr Hume was asked how the Argyll and Bute budget would be affected when Lochaber is incorporated into Argyll and Bute council scope. At present, the budget has not been issued and it is unclear what, if any, impact will be. This will be clarified once the budget has been seen.
- (iv) Ardura Hill Gritting
  - The issue was raised that there are now 10 pupils travelling on the school bus on the Ardura Hill route and this is not part of the formal gritting route.
  - It was agreed that this is unacceptable, and this affects the safety of our children's lives.
  - The policy states 12 children for a route to be on the gritting plan.
  - It was noted that this would not only affect Mull but would be a general issue across Argyll.
  - Cllr. Hume agreed to take forward a formal proposal to reduce the 12 children to 6 children for a limit. This was accepted although it was agreed that it should be 1 child's life not 6.
  - If this was not successful or we had not received an outcome in two months, it was agreed that a formal community petition would be raised.
- (v) Kilpatrick Area
  - The residents of Kilpatrick have raised concerns over three specific issues within the area – Water, Power Outages and Internet Services. One resident has raised concerns that more housing should not be considered in the Kilpatrick/Bunessan area until these issues have been addressed. An initial response has been sent from the Community Council and the following actions are being taken.
  - Water
    - Water pressure recordings show that the water pressure is regularly at or below 0.7 bar. Private residences have a target to be 1.5 bar or above. This service has worsened significantly since the last outage when parts of the infrastructure (pressure valves) were replaced.
    - This information has been provided to Scottish Water and they have agreed this deficit is unacceptable and the West Highland area manager is now looking at a design. A response is expected soon.
  - Power

- There have been several power outages affecting the network in the south of the island recently. There has not been a single cause, but multiple different issues causing these.
- There is a dual redundant system in place. Sometimes this does not automatically switch, and a manual reset may be required. If an engineer is called, the minimum call out is one hour, but may be more if it is identified as a hardware issue.
- SSEN are undertaking pole replacement across the island currently.
- **Broadband**
  - There are broadband issues across the island and there is a BT upgrade programme underway but the timescales for this have slipped.
  - There are other ways of obtaining improved broadband services which have a higher cost but there is a Scottish Broadband Voucher scheme available to help with costs. A link to the voucher scheme will be put on the Mull Community Council website for people to access.
- There are issues with cables that are running through trees. These are dealt with where they are on council / forestry land, but it was accepted that there are areas where it is the landowner's responsibility.

## 7. Sustainability

### (i) Education – Tracy Mayo

- **EIS (The Educational Institute of Scotland)**
  - The largest teaching union in Scotland has recently published a survey on violence and aggression in the classroom.
  - Over 72 % of branches stated that the amount of 'violence and Aggression' had grown in the last 4 years, compared to levels before the pandemic.
  - <https://www.eis.org.uk/latest-news/violencesurvey>
- **Argyll & Bute Council – Community Services Committee Meeting – December 2023**
  - The Community Services Committee meeting papers contain a report on Counselling in Argyll & Bute Schools. The report details the number of students in primary and secondary who are referred for support. It is a sobering read, anxiety both for primary and secondary pupils seems to be the key reason for referral.
  - The Counselling in Schools report is item 9 on the agenda. <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=548&Mid=15471>
  - The waiting list for ADHD and Autism diagnosis is approximately 2 years. It is our understanding that schools do not have to wait on a diagnosis to offer pupils support. Not all services have waiting lists.
  - There is a lot of pressure on services, young people/pupils, staff, and parents/carers. Councils, finances across Scotland we know are limited/stretched. Some of the details of the Council's budget may be released 08/02/24.
- **"Our Children, Their Future"**
  - The Council is refreshing its Education Vision & Strategy. The consultation is live on the Council's website.
  - <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/my-community/community-planning/consultations/consultation/our-children-their-future>
  - "The Global Pandemic changed things for everyone and in education we have had a strong focus on recovery.
  - With the recent publications, consultations including the National Discussion on education in Scotland, it is the right time to reflect on what education in Argyll means to us now and looking forward."
  - You can make an individual response by clicking on the link, it doesn't take long to complete the form.

- Parents/Carers had the opportunity to attend on-line group discussion sessions. Parents/Carers indicated they would like to see the documents re-written so children can understand them.
- An extension was requested as some stakeholders were not directly informed it was live. The closing date is now the 23 February.
- When checking Council papers for this meeting I noted that issues with the Council's Consultation process have been raised by other Argyll & Bute communities.
- **Parents/Carers**
  - A recent interview with the Executive Director of Connect (a charity that supports Parent Councils) it was indicated there needs to be a huge cultural shift in how parents/carers are engaged.
  - <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/parent-involvement-schools-engagement-scotland>

(ii) Ferries, Transport & Travel – Joe Reade

- **CalMac**
- There are two big policy developments for this year:
  - The ferries contract has been allocated directly to CalMac without any competition.
  - The strategy paper “Ports and Vessels Plan” has two key elements in it that need thought:
    - Fixed link feasibility paper does include Mull. There will be a consultation on this.
    - Fares review will see a shrinkage in RET (road equivalent travel)
      - There are a lot of changes coming.
      - This is likely to include RET for islanders only.
      - They are exploring the possibility of charging non islanders more, flexing rates across the day, size of vehicle charging will change.
- The future vessel cascade when the new ferries are brought into service will likely bring the Caledonian Isles into service on Mull. The reason being the Caledonian Isles is the lightest of the available ferries and the berthing loads at Craignure are becoming a problem with aging.
- The consultation for next Winter timetable has begun. Our opening position is that we require a 2 vessel service but there are no guarantees. The current working assumption is that the Glen Sannox will not be in service. If a single Loch Frisa only service is needed, focus will be on optimising it to improve the Iona links.
- With the current one ferry service, some slight timetable amendments were able to be made to improve train connections, but this was limited.
- The gaelic signage will be put on the Loch Frisa when she is in dry dock.
- Discussions have started with regards to the inclusion of a shelter for foot passengers at Oban.
- There is a lot of work underway on procurement. The problem is designs are being completed with no apparent control of operating costs. This will become a problem if not addressed. Future governments will look at the cost of ferry provisioning and this will become a threat to the service.

(iii) Energy, Climate and Environment

- The quarterly Scottish Water meeting is due to be held. Council Members are to say whether they would like to attend the next meeting or not.
- It was agreed that the Community Council should set up a similar quarterly meeting with an Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN).

(iv) Housing

- No updates this month

(v) Tourism

- No updates this month

vi) Health and Social Care

- Bowman Court
  - A very positive meeting was held face to face in January and no stone is being left unturned to make the services better. West Highland Housing are keen participants.
  - Currently looking at re-instating the hybrid model with long term tenancies, high dependency unit flats and respite care. Consideration is also being given to day care.
  - The care commission still need to review the plans.
  - There are currently 13 Mull people in care on the mainland now, some out of personal choice. 3 are in nursing care and the remainder are in residential care.
  - Staff representation was discussed, and staff are to be consulted on what they do daily.
  - Additional beds / change of use will require additional staff. These will be salaried jobs with set hours. Recruitment will not be easy, and staffing will be expensive.

vii) Community Council Engagement

- Membership
  - Steve Fisher joined the meeting tonight as a guest and potential new Community Council member.
- Democracy Matters
  - The democracy matters online event was held on 01/02/24 and was reasonably well attended.
  - Sandy Brunton facilitated the event assisted by several members of the Community Council. Positive feedback has been received on the session with the comment that this event made them think about democracy which they would not otherwise have done.
  - The 16 questions were difficult to understand were condensed down into 6 more focused questions that covered all the consultation questions for the event. This was not an easy ask for Community Councils and has required a lot of behind the scenes work and attendance at other sessions. A lot of other Community Councils have not/are not responding.
  - Mull Community Council have given this the right level of attention at the event has generated some interesting feedback. A summary is below, and the full report will be provided for all attendees, Community Council members and will be available on the website.
  - It is hoped to run a similar event for young people this month to feed into the consultation as well.
  - The Scottish Government have said that feedback will be provided but will be asked for if we do not receive it.
- **Democracy Matters – Mull Community Council Consultation Response Summary**
  - Mull Community Council initially found it difficult to getting people on board to discuss this but decided on a facilitated online meeting to go through. The session did have a good mix of attendees and provoked many healthy discussion and debates. There were some concerns raised within the process:
  - There was a difference in views – Some felt that by presenting questions to be answered in this way was leading you a certain way and therefore this was not a truly democratic process. Whereas others felt that giving examples of where democracy works well elsewhere would have been helpful.
  - Others felt it was difficult to engage because of the abstract nature of the exercise.
  - It was also recognised that this should not be a “one size fits all” outcome. We must recognise the differences across Scotland between the island and rural communities and the towns and cities that have many differing requirements.

- Culture is a vital element. The outcome of this needs to be a culture of listening and not just a bureaucratic process.
- Empowering the Island is key. There needs to be early engagement in all decision making processes and the Island must have a strong voice in this.
- One other concern raised, is that there is no incentive to become a Community Council member. It is seen as a poison chalice. How do you address this in the new democratic process? Also, the Community Council do not have a budget to be able to address anything nor to remunerate anyone. This must be addressed to achieve positive outcomes.
- The key points to note are:
  - A single body representing the whole Island (such as) should be set up and given powers to enact democratic action. There is a need for “direct power” to “empower” so the body is the decision-maker.
  - This Island Body must have first and foremost the trust of the residents of Mull and be working for the common good.
  - Young people are wanted to be part of the Island Body. Consideration needs to be given to how you train young people ready to take on civic responsibilities and make them want to be a part of the Island Body in future?
  - The Island Body needs to have the right powers and control over decisions and finances for a specific area – the whole of Mull or agreed sub-sets of Mull/sub-groups based on topic (e.g. Roads, Education) – and the right resources (people, technical, mechanical, etc.) to deliver.
  - There need to be mechanisms for engagement with the Island Community (e.g. Referendums) to ensure a majority consensus is established.
  - Good media and communication tools are required to ensure standards are met in communication and delivery of initiatives supported by a clearly defined Communication Plan to deliver timely communications to the whole island. Hybrid meetings are not felt to be effective – all face to face or digital are preferred.
  - The Island Body’s own budget must be ascribed to agreed activities and ringfenced.
  - There must be a genuine ‘seat at the table’ in terms of authority to deliver decisions and the ability to execute those decisions.
  - There must be a mechanism for avoiding conflict of interest between the Island Body and, e.g. the Local Council, and this must be clearly defined.
  - There also needs to be an agreed process for how “empowered” bodies meet and talk to each other. More of a presence from Scottish Parliament and our MP is desired.
  - The “elected” membership must include individuals from all demographic Island communities. This Island Body must demonstrate inclusivity across the whole Island. A fixed term of office needs to be put in place with an agreed rotation process to ensure continuity.
  - All representatives, as well as the Island Body itself, must be held accountable against a published charter.
  - Working age Islanders are a difficult group to engage because of their commitments and therefore a better way to engage and train this demographic without them compromising their commitments or income needs to be identified.
  - Building links into existing Island Bodies (such as Mull and Iona Community Trust, South West Mull and Iona Development Trust, the Waterfall Fund,

Tobermory Harbour Authority) and wider organisations could ensure that we build a strong Island Based democratic process that ensures that we make the most of what is available to our Island Community.

viii) Infrastructure

- No updates this month.

## 8. Argyll and Bute Council Issues

(i) Councillors' Reports

- Cllr. Hume noted that the weather has taken its toll on the roads with lying water and potholes and asked that residents report any issues on the Argyll and Bute Council website so that these can be addressed. Please include as many details as possible about the road and location and with photos if you can take them.
- Cllr. Hume also asked residents to report any issues with lighting via the Argyll and Bute Council website with the location, road and lamppost number.
- This is the link to the website: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/roads-and-maintenance/step-by-step/report-road-or-lighting-fault>
- The parking area along Tobermory Main Street will have a top coat of tar added once the weather improves. Cllr. Hume will investigate whether parking bay markings can be added to this area.

## 9. Public Questions

- An update was requested on the new Mull School Campus.
- Tracy Mayo provided the following update which was sent out as an alert to parents/carers from the Council on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023:

Good afternoon,

### **Mull Community Campus – where we are now?**

We developed the Council's successful bid, for Scottish Government LEIP funding, with the help of the schools and wider communities and want to build on that success by continuing appropriate engagement as we move closer to the design and delivery stages of the project.

Delivering a 21st Century 2-18 campus for our young people and school communities is an extremely exciting project. It is also a very complex one and there are many stages and steps to be taken between now and its anticipated opening (which is likely to be 2028 at the earliest).

We are doing a lot of work just now to put in place all the resources and preparatory arrangements needed for a project of this scale. We are looking to work closely with the other councils in the 'North' (Moray, Aberdeen City, Orkney and Shetland) who also had successful funding bids, to deliver efficiency in terms of design development, purchasing materials, economies of scale, contract labour and sharing best practices – whilst delivering something that is bespoke to the needs of our communities who will use the campus.

The campus requires considerable levels of public funding. The Scottish Government funding will only part fund this project – Argyll and Bute Council still requires to make a substantial financial commitment. Therefore, we are working with partners, including the Scottish Government and the Scottish Futures Trust to ensure effective processes for accountability, decision-making and support. At the same time the affordability, and wider financial context of the project are being reviewed, given the time which has elapsed since the submission of the bid, and will be considered by the Council early in 2024.

We very much appreciated the level of interest, and engagement when we were developing the funding bid, and as soon as we are in a position to move beyond these preliminary stages, we will be in touch about arrangements to come over and meet you all.

Kind Regards,  
The Mull Campus Team  
[Mull.Campus@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Mull.Campus@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

## 10. Any Other Business

### (i). Gantry 2 Project

- Moray Finch joined the meeting to provide an update on the Gantry 2 Project with actions taken since this was discussed at the December 2023 meeting.
- The project was initiated by an approach in February 2023 from Caignure Bay Community Group to MICT with an idea to address long standing safety, access and visual impact concerns in Caignure village by relocating Bayview Garage to a new site. Indeed, this was the top issue that residents wanted resolved in a community survey carried out by CBCG. The hope was to provide a site with sufficient land for parking the many vehicles associated with the business, thereby removing a source of complaint from residents and visitors alike.
- This initiative was supported by Mull Community Council in December 2023 and Moray thanked both groups for their interest and support during the numerous meetings that have taken place over the last year. Also, to Calum MacLachlainn whose experience and contributions to the meetings was invaluable.
- The project would have involved MICT purchasing land from Forestry and Land Scotland, adjacent to their existing Gantry site, which is where the self-storage containers and MESS furniture polytunnel is located. They hoped the project would include:
  - a long hoped for multipurpose building to help MESS deliver a range of climate and community wellbeing projects which might include a repair café, men's/women's shed, electrical recycling instead of landfill at Glengorm and an upcycling workshop and possibly space for groups like the Mull woodturners.
  - Business and storage units available for rent for which there is already a proven demand at Nonhebel Park which is 100% occupied (including the four units under construction)
  - Spare land for future development
- Since the December meeting:
  - An island based garage has complained about MICT's role in facilitating relocation of the garage, which could be to the detriment of their own business. Another garage has supported that view. After careful consideration, MICT accept that this is a valid point.
  - The outlook for capital funding for establishing the site has deteriorated due to cuts in Government budgets. This, along with the high cost expected for enabling and infrastructure work on the site is a major concern.
  - MICT have been approached by another business offering land nearby, land which is suitable for the MESS project and for the establishment of a small business park. This land would be available without incurring the high cost of the enabling and infrastructure work and we discovered that this previously had planning granted for industrial use.
  - The availability of an existing site nearby would also make securing public funding for enabling and infrastructure work difficult to secure.



- MICT have received advice from Forestry and Land Scotland that the land is designated as a Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site which will make planning consent more difficult to secure.
- MICT have received advice from the Argyll and Bute Council planning department which further suggests that planning consent would be difficult to achieve. This advice was originally requested in August 2023 and received in January 2024
- In discussion with the Craignure Bay Community Group and its advisors Moray is going to recommend to the board of Mull and Iona Community Trust that this project be shelved.

(ii) Community Council Member Resignation

- Billy McClymont has resigned as Convenor for the Mull Community Council due to his ongoing work commitments, but he will remain a member of the Community Council Committee.
- Billy McClymont recommended that the Community Council looked for a secretary, as this was felt to be a large gap with the Community Council commitments, as well as a new Convenor.
- The Community Council thanked Billy McClymont for all his work as Convenor and the support he has given to the community.

**Next Meeting**

- 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 19:00 at An Roth, via Zoom and Livestreamed

**Mull Community Council Contacts:**

	(Vacant)	Convenor		
	(Vacant)	Secretary		
Margo	Wilkie	Treasurer	margowilkie@hotmail.com	01688 302420
Mark	Aston		m.aston.mcc@btinternet.com	01681 700753
Mary-Jean	Devon		cailena18@icloud.com	01688 302083
Billy	McClymont		mullfuneralservices@yahoo.co.uk	01680 812435
Allan	MacLean		allan.maclean@yahoo.co.uk	
Cameron	MacLean		cameronmaclean81@yahoo.co.uk	07775 742579
John	Maughan		jrmaughan@btinternet.com	07810 093426
Tracy	Mayo		tracy.mayo@rocketmail.com	01688 400480
Sandy	Munro		sandy@munrobuiders.com	07760 557980
Rupert	Ormond		Rupert.ormond.mci@gmail.com	01680 300073
Hannah	Poulton		hannahdianepoulton@gmail.com	07809 114964
Jo	Prior		hello@cilmhoire.com	01688 400445
Joe	Reade		joe@islandbakery.scot	07766 241595
Angus	Williams		angus@tobermory-campsite.co.uk	01688 302615
Daisy	Williams		daisywilliams56@yahoo.com	07596 459259
Sharon	Worrall	Minutes	sworrall.minutes@btinternet.com	01688 400562