



Mull Community Council Minutes of Meeting 3rd September 2025

Held on-line, via Zoom only, on Wednesday 3rd September 2025 at 7.00 pm.

Attendees

Community Council

John Maughan
James MacLennan
Sharon Worrall
Rupert Ormond
Ben Donovan
Billy McClymont
Susan Ringwood

Guests

Cllr Amanda Hampsey
Cameron Maclean (Mull Rally)
Colin Harkness (Mull Rally)
Gordon Milne (Mull Rally)
Tracy Mayo (Mull Campus Working Group)
Joe Reade (Ferry Committee)
Iain Ralston (Mull Ulva & Iona Sports Association)
John Holliday (Tiree Community Council)
At least 6 other attendees were present

1. Apologies and Introductions

Apologies were received from: Cllr Willie Hume, Steve Fisher, Michelle Devlin, the Police, and also Cllr Jim Lynch who sent a written report.

2. Elections

Ben Donovan was elected as a co-opted member (proposed by JM, seconded by SW).

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting of 6th August 2025 were approved subject to the amendment of item 9 para (iii) to read: *SW reminded members that this was school exams results day and informed them that there had been an increased level of attainment by pupils overall in Scotland. Further breakdowns will be shared as they become available. It was noted that the Head of Tobermory High School congratulated all students on their performance. She also described a recent work party at Tobermory Primary School at which a new garden area had been created.* (Proposed by SW, seconded by SR).

5. Mull Rally

Mull Rally organisers provided a further update on plans for this year's rally in light of the long-term closure of the B8035 (Loch na Keal to Loch Scridain) road at Gribun Rocks, following a further rock fall at Gribun Rocks. The organisers had produced a revised programme for the rally. This had been approved in principle by Argyll & Bute

officers and the revised routes were being advertised locally including on the back page of the September issue of Round & About. The opportunity had been taken to correct an error in the previously advertised timing of closure of the Glenn Road. The Rally's Governing Body was expected to support these changes. Permission had been obtained from the Forestry Authority to again use the forestry road for vehicles queuing to get to the Fishnish - Lochaline ferry at the end of the Rally, and CalMac had agreed to extend the timetable of that ferry into the evening.

6. Police Report

In the absence of any police officers SR reported that during July there had been 14 calls and 4 crimes. The latter included a bicycle stolen in Tobermory, in relation to which the police wished to remind residents that bicycles can now be marked using a UV ink Security Marker / Property Marking Pen. The police had confirmed they were willing to participate in a further Scam Awareness Workshop which Pennyghael Community Hall had agreed to host. SR reported that the police had also agreed to undertake further vehicle speed checks as time allowed.

7. Mull Ulva & Iona Sports Association

Iain Ralston was welcomed to speak about the newly formed Mull Ulva & Iona Sports Association, which had been formed recently with the participation of 25 separate sports clubs. A main purpose is to proactively support fundraising so as to enable island athletes to attend off-island events and to facilitate visits to Mull by off-island teams. The Sports Association also want Mull and neighbouring islands to participate in the multi-sports biennial International Islands Games that will next be held in the Faroe Islands in 2027. An application was being made to the International Islands Games Association for recognition and funding was being sought to allow a team to travel to the Games.

Action: The Secretary was asked to write a letter indicating the Community Council's support.

8. Education

i) SW reported on recent developments:

The Argyll and Bute Council Community Services Committee was held on 28th August 2025. You can view the meeting on this website link: <https://argyll-bute.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>. Key points to note are:

- Education Service Strategic Plan - The service performance for 2024-25 and priorities for 2024-26 were agreed by the committee.
- School Examination Results - Performance within A&B was higher across several measures in National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels. Seven of the ten A&B Schools improved their pass rates at National 5 and Higher, with five also improving their Advanced Higher pass rates.
- Developing The Young Workforce seeks to ensure young people develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the world of work by connecting young people and their schools with employers and by supporting the development of an employability curriculum in schools. 2024-25 saw an increased engagement with young people and employers.
- Argyll Community Learning and Development continues to make significant improvements, with positive outcomes for young people and adult learners in A&B. Community Learning will continue to develop its links with Secondary Schools to broaden the curriculum and maximise attainment and achievement for young people.
- A&B continue to make good progress delivering the Gaelic Language Plan

SQA / Qualifications Scotland

- A learner booklet, Your National Qualifications, will be made available online providing information on the rules for creating and submitting coursework.
- The 2026 exam timetable is due to be published soon.
- A Prospectus for Change - Corporate Plan is the blueprint for Scotland's new qualifications body, which marks the start of a year-long transition from SQA to Qualifications Scotland. Further information can be found at <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5662.html>.

Mull School Engagement - The Community Council are planning engagement visits to all the Mull schools to introduce the Community Council and to discuss engagement on an ongoing basis with the staff and the pupils. Visits are currently being planned for both Lochdonhead and Ulva Primary Schools. Dates are waited for other schools.

- ii) Tracy Mayo (Mull Campus Working Group) described further developments with the planned Mull Campus:
- The Working Group had met (on 18th August) with Jenny Minto MSP. MSPs cannot become involved in legal proceedings but the meeting provided an opportunity to discuss options.
 - On 22nd August Argyll & Bute Council issued a Press Release, indicating their intention to defend the Judicial Review (JR), and implying that the delay caused by the JR was putting the project at risk (<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2025/aug/judicial-review-risk-tobermory-campus-affordability>). The group issued a response stating that the Working Group was dismayed that the Council appeared to be attempting to pressurise the community into accepting the Tobermory plan and emailed the council leader seeking a meeting, but no response was received
 - An Education Update (No.14) was also released - monthly updates have been suspended but the team still welcome comment by email to tobermory.campus@argyll-bute.gov.uk
 - A key Argyll & Bute Community Services meeting took place on 28th August at which it was agreed to pause work on the new campus project until the JR was complete. Minutes are available and can be accessed via the Wise 4All (W4A) website
 - It had been learnt that Argyll & Bute Council decisions were being taken by a “political sounding board” of three senior councillors
 - Cllr Amanda Hampsey had spoken forcefully at the above meeting about the need to respect the views of Mull residents and for Councillors to have access to the information they need to make informed decisions. She did not wish to politicise the matter at the meeting but was left with no choice as the whip was applied to the SNP group. A letter of support for her was suggested to help secure the release of key information. She was thanked by the Working Group for her contribution
 - Tracy Mayo had attended a meeting of the Scottish Islands Federation which featured a report on depopulation
 - Isle of Mull residents are encouraged to access the W4A website (<https://wise4all.co.uk/>), on which Mark Strevens was thanked for his work

9. Transport

A. Speed Limits

- i) Discussion continued over concerns at the speed of some vehicles driving through some settlements. It was accepted that the previous account of log lorries exceeding the 30mph speed limit through Salen had been in error. The log lorries are fitted with tachographs and speed governors and do not run at night. The chair apologised for previously referring to information received that had been proven incorrect.
- ii) The need to reinstate double-white lines on the main road past Java and to pursue street lighting at Pennyghael were noted. The radar sign in Salen needed to be fixed/replaced. Craignure traffic management should be considered as part of the pier redevelopment. At Dervaig, speeding is an issue from the 30mph sign on the Glen Road through to the junction, passing by the school.

Action: The secretary was asked to write to local A&B Councillors requesting their support for the implementation of 20 mph zones in the central part of Salen, Craignure and Dervaig.

B. Ferries: Joe Reade (Ferry Committee)

- i) JR reviewed the unfairness of the decision of the Scottish Government to exclude Mull, Iona, Islay, Coll and Tiree from the £4.4 million fund intended to compensate island businesses for the consequences of curtailed ferry services.
- ii) The scheme had chosen 20% cancellations over the three-year period as the determining metric, but it was the loss of capacity and the reduction in timetabled ferries that had impacted these islands, not the proportion of cancellations. The loss of capacity had been significantly greater than 20%, because of the repeated lack of availability of the *Isle of Mull*, much the largest vessel serving Mull.
- iii) Further, percentage cancellations had been calculated against final timetables, after they had been amended to allow for the unavailability of the *Isle of Mull*.
- iv) JR had written to Mairi Gougeon (Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands) about the circumstances, but her reply had been unhelpful and appeared to ignore the implications of the Islands Act. It was agreed that he should write a further letter to be supported by all the Community Councils concerned.
- v) It was confirmed that the *Isle of Mull* was planned to leave service in 2026, after which it was anticipated MV Caledonian Isles (the “*Cally Isles*”) would take over the Oban – Craignure route sometime in 2026. However, this would be a degradation of service, since the *Cally Isles* could not carry as many vehicles, could not make use of

the passenger access gangways at either Oban or Craignure, and would offer slower levels of service impacting on transport links.

vi) The winter sailings between Oban and Craignure would be predominantly provided by the *MV Loch Frisa* operating alone. This may be improved depending on when the next new vessel enters service.

C. Buses

i) BMcC had been in further contact with West Coast Motors (WCM), concerning complaints that the Tobermory – Craignure bus had not been calling at Fishnish, apparently when either the bus was full, or the bus could not get down the road to Fishnish because of ferry traffic backing up beyond the two-way section.

ii) WCM were addressing the problem and had agreed that the drivers would alert CalMac (so they could advise passengers) whenever they were unable to get to the Fishnish terminal.

10. Planning

i) The application for dwellings on the croft at Pottie is still under consideration.

ii) SW drew attention to a planning application for a new Linkspan at berth 1 of the ferry terminal in Oban. It was pointed out that work on the berth had the capacity to disrupt ferry services to Mull.

Action: Members were advised to consider this planning application and highlight any concerns to SF.

ii) RO noted that two of the current Mull applications were for camping pods.

11. Housing & Utilities

i) Septic Tank Emptying – SR reported that Scottish Water had advised her that the septic tanks of all the people who had been in touch with us had now been emptied, but JM reported that there were customers of other contractors waiting for their tanks to be emptied. It was understood that one contractor was negotiating with that Scottish Water to agree windows when they could discharge bowzers to the treatment works. The Loch Frisa is now being emptied in Oban which is having a slight impact on the timetable.

ii) Public Toilet Disabled Facilities – RO drew attention to the Changing Places Scheme which had funding available for the installation of public toilets for the disabled. Any business or community venue who would like to add disabled facilities can apply for funding here:

<https://inspiringscotland.org.uk/fund/changing-places-toilets-fund/>

12. Health & Social Care

BMcC reported that a meeting of the health & social care group had again been cancelled, pending appointment of a new council officer. Cllr. Dougie McFayden has replaced Cllr. Amanda Hampsey on the group.

Action: Cllr. Amanda Hampsey was requested to find out if the post has been filled and provide an update.

13. Recreation & Countryside

Access issues. SR reported that in relation to the deer fenced area at Torosay a contractor had now been appointed and plans approved to install self-closing gates at agreed points in the fencing to the standard required by the Argyll & Bute access officer.

Action: SR was asked to follow up with the A&B Access Officer

14. Historic Sites

JM described that an on-line meeting had been held of the Historic Sites Working Group (attended by Nicholas Maclean, Alastair Whyte and three members) to discuss the proposal to improve signage on and to historic sites on the island. They had drawn up a tentative list of priority sites, and discussed the form of the proposed project. One option was for simple metal signs to be erected on or at sites to include QR codes directing visitors to information on the web.

15. Argyll & Bute Councillors Report

Cllr Amanda Hampsey.

- i) Cllr Hampsey described how she had been taken aback at the way in which the leadership of Argyll & Bute had been attempting to drive through their preferred option for the new Mull school campus. She stated that education should not be a political issue and that parents should be able to decide for themselves what was best for their children. In response she had proposed a motion demanding more transparency from the leadership.
 - ii) Cllr Hampsey commented that the next confrontation would concern the proposed Visitor Levy which was due to be considered by Argyll & Bute in the near future. She considered the lack of “island exemptions” in the current proposals particularly unacceptable.
 - iii) Cllr Hampsey offered to assist with promoting any necessary 20 mph speed limits. She believed that the roads department had identified several candidate sites for 20 mph limits on the mainland, but not considered Mull.
- Action: The Secretary was asked to collate where the speed limits need to be implemented and to share this information with Cllr Amanda Hampsey.

16. Other Business

- i) SR had noted from the Mull Facebook page that there had again been disrupted postal deliveries. She had written to the Royal Mail manager in Oban, but not as yet received a response.
 - ii) JM raised concern that the Slaughterhouse had not been able to get clarification as to whether or not they will be able to dispose of their waste via the amenity site once the island’s landfill facility is closed. A response appeared delayed because the Head of Waste management was no longer in post. Cllr. Hampsey offered to assist in obtaining a response from the Council.
- Action: JM offered to put Flora Corbett in contact with Cllr. Amanda Hampsey to progress this issue.
- iii) In response to concern that the toilets by the Lochaline ferry terminal were currently closed. Better signage is required to highlight the closure. It was proposed that a Portaloo be made available, particularly during the Rally weekend when usage was likely to be heavy.
- Action: JM / SF were asked to write to Lochaline Community Council/Highland Council with regards to the signage and Portaloo placement.
- iv) A group Salen residents were planning to put in place new seasonal festive lights. They have contacted Argyll & Bute Council regarding the provision and approval of power outlets on the lampposts but had not received a reply. Cllr Hampsey informed the meeting that there was an approved list of contractors, and she could assist by identifying suitable ones.
- Action: It was agreed JM should put the Salen residents in touch with Cllr Amanda Hampsey to progress.
- v) The issue of flooding along the south side of the road through the central part of Craignure was discussed. The gullies functioned slowly if at all and were thought to be blocked by road chips and tar resulting from previous road works. There was no alternative to digging up and replacing the existing gullies and drains.
- Action: It was agreed JM / SF should put Craignure Spar in contact with Cllr Amanda Hampsey to progress.
- vi) Rachel French the MICT employed ecologist had advised that while Himalayan Balsam is an invasive non-native species (INNS), it was not notifiable. Japanese Knotweed was however notifiable and sites where it had become established should be reported and the plant not allowed to spread. Himalayan Balsam can be controlled by regular stinging provided this is done before seed dispersal.
 - vii) SF had asked to have it mentioned that contrary to expectation some southern parts of the island will not be connected to full-fibre broadband under the R100 scheme. It was agreed he should investigate further.
 - viii) SW mentioned that numerous vehicles had been reported as ignoring the signs closing the road past Gribun Rocks. Driving through the closed section was illegal. It was noted that this was having a high impact on residents, farmers and school children in particular. The Community Council would write to A&BC to ask that the road be opened as soon as possible.
- Action: Cllr Amanda Hampsey will chase A&BC and provide their latest update so that it can be published by SW on the Facebook page to advise drivers whether the road is still closed.
- ix) There are some outstanding Messenger messages to be reviewed by JM.

There were no Public Questions. The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for 7 pm on Wednesday 1st October 2025, to be held on-line and in person at An Roth, Craignure.

Members Details

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