

Comhairle Coimhearsnachd Mhuile

MULL COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Coinneamh na Comhairle 6mh Cèitean 2026

Meeting of the Council 6th May 2026

Minutes / Geàrr-chunntas

Minutes of the meeting held in person and on-line on Wednesday 6th May 2026

Attendees

James MacLennan
Sharon Worrall
Billy McClymont
Norma McInnes
Susan Ringwood
Cllr William Hume
Cllr Andrew Kain
Cllr Keiron Green

Guests

Tracy Mayo, Mull Campus Working Group
Margaret Matthews, Visit Mull and Iona
Joe Reade, Mull Ferry Committee
Emily Greenhalgh, Mull Campus Working Group
Kate Skinner, Co-Op
Finlay MacDonald, Iona CCWG

Fiona Brunton
Claire Graham

Rob Claxton-Ingham
Terry Hegarty

and other members of the public online

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from John Maughan, Steve Fisher, Rupert Ormond and John-Louis Lantiera Laura.

2. Declarations of interest

None to declare

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 1st April were approved. Proposed by SW, seconded NMcl.

4. Argyll & Bute Councillor's report

Cllr AK outlined that A&B Council try to do their best for the whole population without prejudice. He stated gave an overview of his opinion of the current global situation and the effect this will have on council services. He stated that councils 'borrow' from rate and taxpayers to provide services and the Scottish Government does not cover any shortfall. He said that costs continue to increase and public expectations need to be constrained. He also gave a view that the political scene will change.

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Cllr WH gave a brief report on activity. The work on the Iona public toilets has been completed and work continues on the breakwater which will improve access to the pier in all weathers. The road widening at Fishnish has been completed, improving the situation there when traffic is heavy, such as during the Rally. The planning approval decision for the proposed new Co-Op in Tobermory has been delayed for a month at the request of the council's officers. The Mull Campus was an item at a full Council meeting in April. The decision was taken to resume the project and a full case will be presented at a later date.

5. Police report

SR shared key points from the report provided by the police. 28 calls were made during the month of March, and one crime was recorded - an attempted house break-in. All police and police support staff began wearing body cameras on April 21st. A successful and well attended scam awareness session was held in Dervaig. The planned session Mull Safe and Sound in Craignure has been postponed. Sessions for Tobermory and Pennyghael are awaiting confirmed dates.

6. Co-Op

Kate Skinner, Member Activator for the Co-Op gave a brief history of the Co-Op movement and explained her role. Living in Islay, she is the bridge between members, stores and the communities she supports across Argyll and Bute. The Co-Op's principles are delivered through its social value strategy and include well-being, peace of mind and social inclusion.

KS drew attention to the Co-Op's AGM to be held on May 16th and encouraged members to vote and make their voices heard. Voting can be done on-line by May 11th. She highlighted two motions on the AGM agenda that could be of interest to members. Firstly, a commitment to provide a 'members essential basket' of good to always be at a low cost and likely matched to Aldi or equivalent; and secondly, a commitment to stock more local produce in stores.

Questions followed. KS confirmed that the price of goods is the same in all stores, as the higher costs of delivery to more remote areas is shared across the business. This was not previously the case but is now.

7. MachairWind

Margaret Matthews of Visit Mull and Iona spoke on behalf of a working group comprising Iona Community Council; South-West Mull and Iona Development; Visit Mull and Iona and other Argyll islands about the MachairWind proposal to develop an industrial scale wind farm 13 miles off the coast of the Ross. The concerns of the working group are that despite nearly two years of interaction with the development, it has been difficult to obtain a clear picture of the project. There is particular concern that the benefits and impacts have not been laid out and the potential detriments have been minimised. ICC have produced a comprehensive brief to seek to provide this missing information so that residents can be fully informed and draw their own conclusions.

A key feature of concern was the impact on the land and seascapes, with the turbines being visible from a wide range of Mull and Iona's iconic viewpoints. The electricity produced will come ashore in Scotland be sent to Wales. The company is Spanish owned, and profits go to shareholders. Both Scotland and Wales are already producing more electricity than is currently used and producers get paid to turn off turbines.

MM stated that while there is support for renewable energy sources, the question is whether this project is needed in this place and at this time. The Iona CC working group are requesting MCC to assist with raising awareness to Mull Residents of the project and the concerns, distributing the ICC briefing about the project alongside Machair Wind project information and timelines to garner further views. Of the responses to a recent Iona survey, 91% of Iona residents have been polled as opposing the project (from a response rate of 60%).

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Discussion followed. MCC members stated the MachairWind have held two rounds of consultations and addressed the MCC. Details of this have been published and circulated, and this is the first negative feedback the MCC have received. Other concerns were raised about impact on seabirds and marine life, and that the turbines will each have a red light on them. The limited nature of any financial benefit to communities was raised with current proposals for only £500,000 to be distributed over 25 years for the whole region covered. Community benefits from the power produced can't be determined until the project has been approved. The wider benefits to Scotland were also considered to be largely unknown, or very limited. It was suggested that a Survey Monkey could be produced by the ICC working group to gather views. Information could be displayed in local shops and community spaces to increase awareness.

ACTION It was agreed that Margaret Matthews would send the ICC briefing so that MCC could consider how to publicise the project and ICC brief (SW)

8. Community Survey

SR spoke about the initial results analysed from the community survey MICT and MCC had recently conducted. Comments and suggestions had been grouped by theme and location and then assigned to MICT, MCC or the appropriate responsible authority for action. This information will inform MICT's next strategic plan and the MCC's plans too.

9. Health and Social Care: No report

10. Planning: No report

11. Transport

JR gave a report from the Mull Ferry Committee and highlighted two items. The MV Hebrides is still broken, and so the MV Arran will continue to be deployed in place of the MV Isle of Mull. He then spoke about the Craignure Pier and the need for it to be designated as the ferry pier so that lifeline island services could be prioritised. Argyll and Bute Council's policies do not currently permit this, meaning that commercial vessels can reserve to berth when the pier is needed for ferries. This is not a common event but has led to Mull having a single boat service at times because no berth was available. JR stated the Argyll and Bute Council do not apply this policy consistently, but his attempts to have it reviewed by the Council have been rejected. To mitigate this, he has contacted the Hebridean Cruises company who have made bookings to use the pier, and they have been very understanding and willing to use alternative overnight berths. JR asked if members were supportive of Craignure being designated as a ferry pier and this was agreed unanimously.

Discussion and questions followed. Cllr AK stated that the current council policy does not need amending as it already contains sufficient flexibility and the decision rests with the pier master.

ACTION Cllr WH agreed to write to Cllr Moreland, Chair of the Argyll and Bute Harbour Board to raise the concerns discussed.

SW stated that the public consultation on the Fionnphort ferry terminal has opened, and consultation meetings are scheduled for 21st May, 10am- 8pm at Fionnphort and 22nd May, 9.15am- 4.14pm in Iona. Notices have been displayed locally.

12. Education

SW reported that the examination season is underway. It has gone very smoothly so far at both Tobermory and Oban.

Tracy Mayo on behalf of MCWG highlighted two recent Community meetings, a Community Conversation session held in Creich Hall and a briefing with Katie Boyle on the Human Rights of the Child

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held in Tobermory. The Mull Campus Working Group asked that since Argyll and Bute Council will no longer permit information to be shared with parents/carers through the school email system for people to help share as information as widely as possible. Thanks were expressed to Professor Katie Boyle for leading the discussion on the UNCRC and children's rights and to all who attended the meetings. The meeting was in Creich Hall and was well attended. This meeting was led by community members, not the MCWG. TM attended, and asked for feedback from the meeting as she feels it important the community have their own voice:

Within the Tobermory session, several concerns were raised:

- the state of the road from Tobermory to Craignure
- the impact on Tobermory if the school moved
- That children don't need family support and can have a great time in Oban
- It is only 20 more minutes up the road to go to Tobermory High School
- the fire service having to travel frequently up and down the road to a new school in Craignure (as often with new schools as the building beds in there are more call outs) and access to water
- Travel time for the children and staff
- concern about the impact on Gaelic medium
- loss of culture/pipe band.

Professor Katie Boyle highlighted that just because something happened in the past, it is not legal justification for it to continue. There is a Progressive realisation of rights and one impact assessment isn't enough.

There is now to be a statutory consultation, the timeline of which is as follows:

What happens next?

August – October 2026	A statutory <i>Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010</i> consultation will seek views on the proposed relocation of the existing campus to the preferred Tobermory location
September 2026	Public consultation meeting
December 2026	The outline business case and report will be presented to councillors at a special council meeting.
2027 (subject to approval)	Detailed design, costings, planning, and the final business case.
2028 (subject to approval)	Construction phase begins.

The MCWG have established the next steps they intend to call for and/or take.

1. Seek assurance that, Lead Councillor, Jim Lynch/Administration Councillors have directly engaged with Scottish Government on the community's behalf/confirmation there are no alternatives and proof of it
2. Stop and restart the process – do it properly
3. Press for the roundtable meeting including Human Rights experts
4. Press for data for island children to be recorded so it can inform policy
5. Refuse as a community to participate in the Statutory Consultation – stand as a community
6. Press for a Barra solution
7. Further legal action
8. Open letter & press for all rights to be respected we can't stick our heads in the sand

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Questions which the MCWG will consider are:

- How do you define community – the Mull Community?
- How do you SAFELY measure benefits & costs – in the absence of so much data?
- How can the wider community be engaged when so many are being excluded from the Statutory Consultation process?

The case of the new Barra & Vatersay campus was highlighted to Councillor Kain. The local Council have opted out of the LEIP funding, and the Scottish Government will now be funding most of that campus. Professor Katie Boyle indicated that if you don't ask then you don't get and if the Scottish Government does have the funding to support a resolution for Mull such as a split site, then there are certain steps/tests the Scottish Government, and our Council need to take – so assurance is needed as a community that there is no other alternative

At a meeting with Jenni Minto, MSP on Tuesday 28th April MCWG asked Jenni to ask that the Scottish Government commit to undertaking a review if the LEIP funding structure to ensure that it:

1. Properly reflects the additional challenges faced by island authorities.
2. Meets the statutory requirements of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018, and
3. Fully upholds children's rights as incorporated through the UNCRC.

Ms Minto MSP wrote to the Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills, Jenny Gilruth on this matter.

Discussion and questions followed. Concern was expressed that the schooling lost by Mull pupils unable to get to Oban for ferry reasons etc. is still not being formally recorded, although data from parents suggests it amounts to 30 days a year per child. Cllr KG as Policy Lead for Education was asked directly if he had confidence that Argyll and Bute had provided sufficient information and followed all due process. He stated that his view was the Council has done so and had gone beyond the necessary consultation frameworks. He stated that it was not possible to disaggregate data on pupil attendance to provide the figures requested for Mull pupils and that other pupils face similar disruption to their schooling. He was asked directly for the opportunity to hold a round table meeting to enable open conversations to be held. Cllr KG was asked directly if the Council's legal advice on their responsibilities under Human Rights of the Child would be published. He stated that all decisions are as advised and full details are published in council's procedural papers.

ACTION it was agreed that MCC would sign the open letter of support for MCWG's position.

NMCI reported on the Community Conversation on the Mull Campus held at Creich Hall and confirmed that the letter of support for MCWG be accepted.

13. Telecoms: No report

14. Emergency planning and resilience

SW reported that the Warm Centre in Dervaig is progressing. Funding is available from SSE, with application deadlines of 21st May and 23rd June. SW and JM had a very productive meeting with SSE Resilience manager. Funding is available to provide hot food at £30/person/day during power outages that meet specified OFGEM criteria. Category 1 events are eligible after 24 hours, and Category 2 events after 48 hours. Businesses and providers can claim directly from SSE for providing food. The SSE contact is willing to talk to the wider Resilience Group.

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The Household Advice leaflet is going to be produced now, although it will not contain information about opening times of Warm Centres etc, as that is not yet determined. It was felt that the advice sheet needed to be available as soon as possible.

Mobile communication resilience issues are not yet resolved as BT and Openreach have not engaged as effectively as required.

15. Notice Boards

SW reported that the Waterfall fund has provided money to replace Community Notice Boards across Mull, and SW asked for suggestions for sites to be sent to her.

16. Action Register

SW highlighted two long standing unresolved items from the register.

ACTION NMcl agree to write the Argyll and Bute Council about the recycling facilities at Fionnphort

ACTION Cllr Kane agreed to seek information about the Breadalbane Street repairs.

17. AOB and Matters Arising

SR reported that she has escalated the issues about delayed postal deliveries to Royal Mail HQ, as local responses have not materialised. There was discussion about the need to also raise the issue of working conditions for postal delivery staff who are covering staff shortages among other issues.

BMCC Asked if the issue of the Car Park at Salen public toilets could be raised, as people attending funerals for example were having difficulty in parking.

ACTION SR to write to Cllr WH.

18. Public questions : None were raised

19. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be the AGM on Wednesday 3rd June, at 7pm, followed by the business meeting in person at An Roth and online. All are welcome to attend by either means.

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