

**MINUTES of MEETING of MID ARGYLL PARTNERSHIP held in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on WEDNESDAY, 29 JULY 2015**

Present: Councillor Sandy Taylor (Chair)

Councillor Robin Currie Councillor Ann Horn
Councillor Donald MacMillan Councillor Douglas Philand

Attending: Shirley MacLeod, Area Governance Manager
Jane Fowler, Head of Improvement and HR, Argyll and Bute
Council
Antonia Baird, Community Development Officer, Argyll and Bute
Council
Sergeant David Ferguson, Police Scotland
Edward Laughton, Ardrishaig Community Council
Mary McCallum Sullivan, Ardrishaig Community Council
Adrian Davis, Inveraray Community Council
Betty Rhodick, Lochgilphead Community Council
Andy Bunton, Lochgilphead Community Council
Jim Malcolm, Dunadd Community Council
Maggie McLaren – DOCHAS Centre
Lynda Syed, Argyll Voluntary Action
Mary Smyth, Craignish Community Council
David Kent, South Knapdale Community Council
Rod Buchanan, ACHA

The Chair ruled and the Partnership agreed to take item 4, Election of Chair and Vice Chair, after item 10, Any other business.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies of absence were intimated on behalf of:

Kate MacAulay, NHS
Benedict Tustin, SEPA
Jim Frame, SEPA

2. MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON 29 APRIL 2015

The Minute of the Mid Argyll Partnership meeting held on 29 April 2015 was approved as a correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

The Chair advised that the feedback which had been received under Outcome 3, Education, Skills and Training Maximises Opportunities for All, at the previous meeting had been picked up at the ACPG and a discussion had been held regarding the opportunities available for school leavers. The Chair advised that he was confident that this topic would be picked up at a future date.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Chair invited nominations for the role of Chair. Councillor Horn proposed Councillor Sandy Taylor be appointed as Chair, this was seconded by Betty Rhodick.

As there were no other nominations, this became the decision of the Partnership.

The Chair invited nominations for the role of Vice Chair. Betty Rhodick proposed Andy Bunton be appointed as Vice Chair, this was seconded by Lynda Syed.

As there were no other nominations, this became the decision of the partnership.

Decision

To appoint Councillor Sandy Taylor to the role of Chair and Andy Bunton to the role of Vice Chair.

5. COUNCIL CONSULTATIONS AND WEBSITE POLICY UPDATE

The Head of Improvement and HR for the Council, presented a report which outlines the different approaches used by the Council when undertaking Public Consultations and highlights the steps being taken to build on the effectiveness of consultation exercises following a request received from the Mid Argyll Partnership.

The Head of Improvement and HR, Ms Fowler advised the partnership that the Council has undertaken a number of different approaches when conducting consultation and this can often depend on the type of consultation. She advised that there are statutory consultations that are required to be carried out in a specific way as well as best practice guidelines which the Council adheres to where possible. Ms Fowler advised the partnership that the Council try and use online methods for consultation as much as possible as research has showed that this is the best method to gain feedback from the public as they are able to do it themselves at a time which is suitable to them, however the Council does recognise that we do have an aging population within Argyll and Bute and not everyone within Argyll and Bute has access to or is able to use the internet. In order to address this, Ms Fowler advised that the Council uses Local Media and places hard copies of the consultations in buildings which are easily accessible to the public, such as libraries. The Head of Improvement and HR also advised that the Council has in place a Citizens Panel, they are used for feedback on general issues as well as specific issues.

The Head of Improvement and HR provided the Partnership with some examples of how public consultation can be used to change proposals and strategies to take into consideration the feedback received.

The Chair advised that as a Council, we view Community Councils as a major partner and advised that they play a major part in feeding back the views of the community to the Council, however noted that some public consultations are complex and hard to understand. The Chair advised it had been brought to his attention that Community Councils occasionally find the consultations complex and confusing and are therefore not always able to provide the feedback in which they would like.

Edward Laughton advised that often emails are missed and it can be difficult to find the consultation on the Council website, he advised that face to face contact with officers is always a preferred method and asked Ms Fowler if it would be possible to have Officers of the Council to attend Community Council meetings and explain the consultations. Mr Laughton also highlighted that it may be beneficial if Elected Members could come to Community Council meetings with items that they are looking for feedback on from the Community not just attend in order to solve the problems of the Community Council. Ms Fowler advised that ideally this would happen and Officers would visit Community Councils she advised that unfortunately this is not logistically possible due to the size of Argyll and Bute as well as the number of consultations that are run. Ms Fowler emphasised that although the Council is unable to provide Officers to attend Community Council meetings, the Council does have an obligation through best practice guidelines to ensure that consultations are accessible to the community. Ms Fowler advised that the Council could provide briefings for Elected Members on the public consultations that are ongoing, and then the Elected Member would be able to provide some information regarding the Consultation on behalf of the Council, they would also be able to provide the contact details of an Officer which the Community Council could contact if they were to require some further information. The Chair advised that this would be useful to Elected Members.

Betty Rhodick suggested that a “pop up” could be added onto the Council Website in order to draw the general public's attention to Public Consultations. The Partnership undertook a discussion on this and the accessibility of the Public Consultations page on the Council's website in general.

Jim Malcolm asked Ms Fowler if a demographic imbalance was an issue when gaining feedback from public consultations. Mr Malcolm highlighted an issue with young people who may not be adequately represented when a large amount of consultation is done through community groups. Ms Fowler advised that the Council do take this into consideration. She advised that the demographic is a major factor in considering the method to use in terms of public consultation. Ms Fowler advised that the Citizens Panel mirrors the population of Argyll and Bute Council, which does have an aging population therefore can be used as a check. Ms Fowler advised that when feedback on a consultation does require input specifically from young people they use the youth service and education to engage specifically with a younger demographic.

Lynda Syed advised that as a community group, when you provide a contribution to a consultation, you never learn what happens to this feedback or find out the views of others. The Partnership held a discussion on benefits of gaining feedback following public consultations. Ms Fowler noted the views of the Partnership.

Councillor Horn asked Ms Fowler if the process they use to engage with third sector partnerships given their lack of resources and other constraints in which they face.

Ms Fowler advised that the Council relies on the Third Sector Partnership to engage with Third sector groups within Argyll and Bute.

Rod Buchanan asked Ms Fowler how the Council recruits Young People onto the Citizens Panel as he advised that ACHA often has trouble gaining the views of young people. Ms Fowler advised that the Citizens Panel is outsourced to an external company however the Youth Service and Education Service are used to help engage with Young People, Ms Fowler advised Mr Buchanan that she could provide him with contact details for the Youth Service and Education departments of the Council which would be able to assist ACHA in engaging with young people.

The Area Governance Manager advised that the Area Governance Officer in her role as Community Council Liaison Officer forwards on to Community Councils any consultations she is made aware of. The Area Governance Manager agreed to discuss with the Head of Improvement and HR a more effective method of flagging public consultations to Community Councils.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services, dated 29 July 2015, submitted)

6. OUTCOME 1: THE ECONOMY IS DIVERSE AND THRIVING

The Chair advised that unfortunately there had been no Officers available to provide information on this item and due to the workshop that the Partnership had previously had, suggested that we defer this item until the next meeting of the Partnership at which time we can invite an Officer along to discuss this item and how it fits into the SOA. The Chair advised that by the next meeting the ACPG would have met as well as the CPP Management Committee and therefore the Area Governance Manager would be in a better position to report back to the Partnership.

Edward Laughton advised that Ardrishaig, along with other communities had developed Community Trusts which are there to drive forward ideas and to put them into place by secure funding and backing. Mr Laughton suggested that it might be beneficial if we could invite representatives of these trust to the next meeting of the Partnership to be involved in the discussions particularly under this item. The Partnership agreed that it would be beneficial to invite representations from these trusts. The Area Governance Manager agreed that she would take this action forward and would ask the Members of the Partnerships for recommendations as to who should be invited to the next meeting.

Decision

The Partnership agreed to defer the discussion of this item until the next meeting and agreed that Community Trusts should be invited.

7. OUTCOME 5: PEOPLE LIVE ACTIVE, HEALTHIER AND INDEPENDENT LIVES

(a) ARGYLL AND BUTE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP OUTLINE STRATEGIC PLAN

Councillor Dougie Philand provided an outline of the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership.

Councillor Philand advised that the legislation that brings health and social care together is under the Public Bodies Joint Working Scotland Act. He advised under the legislation there were two models to choose from and reported that Argyll and Bute had decided to adopt a body corporate model. Councillor Philand advised that the model follows a shadow board system which has been established and will go live in April 2016. He reported that the Joint Integration Board was required to create a scheme of delegations which was approved by the Scottish Government in June 2015. He advised that on the board, there are 8 voting members, four from NHS and four from the Council who are Councillor Horn, Councillor Devon, Councillor Robertson and himself. He advised that other officers and community representatives sit on the board however do not have voting rights, he advised however that the hope is that all members of the board will make the decisions and not just the voting members. Councillor Philand advised that a strategic plan for the next three years is required to be in place under the legislation before the board becomes operational in April 2016. Councillor Philand advised that it is the view of the board to involve the public from an early stage and therefore they have issued the consultation, which was included as part of the Agenda pack for this meeting. He advised that the feedback received from this consultation will be used to form the strategy document which will then go out for further consultation before it is agreed.

The Partnership held a discussion on the update provided on the Health and Social Care Integration and the benefits it may bring to the area and the services which are available to local people.

The Partnership discussed the importance of early intervention in health care and hoped that the new way of working would allow for that. The Partnership particularly discussed how encouraging the community to become more active in all stages of life is a key part to early intervention. The Partnership held a discussion on ways in which encouraging active lifestyles within the area could be achieved.

The Chair thanked Councillor Philand for his update and asked the Partnership to use this opportunity to get their views across. A query was raised as to when the deadline for consultation was, Councillor Philand advised that there was no date as such however they are looking to begin writing the strategy as soon as possible and therefore the sooner the better.

(b) FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL AREAS

The Community Development Officer for Argyll and Bute Council advised the Partnership that she was here to specifically discuss health and wellbeing grants. Ms Baird advised that Health and Wellbeing grants are given to communities to allow them to provide an opportunity to make the community more active. She advised that within Mid Argyll there is approximately £7377 to be given out and groups can apply for this grant. The Community Development Officer provided the Partnership of some previous examples in which the grants have helped in Mid Argyll, which included the Rowing Club in Ardrishaig and Blarbuie Woodlands in Lochgilphead.

(c) DOCHAS CENTRE UPDATE REPORT

Maggie McLaren provided an update on the work of the DOCHAS Centre, in particular the work they do in their Circle of Friends Programme. She advised that the centre had been successful in securing funding and was using this funding to provide a befrienders service to the area. She advised that the funding received was used to train up volunteers and to pay for travel. Ms McLaren reported that although they only cover areas within the postcode PA30-31 this is still a large area and travel is a large expense. She reported to the Partnership that they currently have ten matches with three volunteers waiting for PVG checks to be returned, however advised that they have always had more referrals than volunteers. As a solution to this, early on, they agreed to run a bi-monthly event where people can come along and socialise with other people. She reported that the scheme had been successful in securing additional funding and therefore have recruited a co-ordinator who can ensure the scheme runs successfully. Ms McLaren reported that they had received a few referrals from Tarbert however at present did not have any volunteers for Tarbert, however advised that they currently run similar bi-monthly events and noted that they have a similar set up in Islay.

Ms McLaren advised the Partnership of some of the other services which are offer by the DOCHAS centre in Lochgilphead and provided in Mid Argyll, particularly the free Counselling service which is funded by MacMillan. She advised that they offer the only free Counselling Service within the area and they offer home visits where they can support people who are unable to attend the centre. Ms McLaren reported that they had recently purchased iPads which, using facetime, can be used to provide Counselling for people in rural areas. Ms McLaren advised that the DOCHAS Centre works well with all of their partners and hopes that the Partnership now has a better understanding of the work in which they carry out.

(d) MEN'S SHED

Lynda Syed from Argyll Voluntary Action provided an update on the Men's Shed project. Ms Syed provided some background information regarding the Men's Shed Movement, and explained to the Partnership what it is. Ms Syed advised that within the area they have been seeking to see if there would be interest in setting one up. Ms Syed advised that they have held several pop up workshops and have developed an interest which has resulted in a mailing list being created with over thirty people from a wide range of different backgrounds however it has proven problematic to find a suitable time for anybody interested to get together.

Ms Syed advised that they are currently looking to secure a venue and currently have two options in mind. Ms Syed explained the venues and their locations to the partnership. She advised that as well as trying to secure a venue, they are working towards carrying out a needs analysis for the project. Ms Syed reported that the Councils Community Development Officer is currently designing the survey and Ms Syed asked the representatives on the Partnership if they would consider inviting them along to their groups to gather their views.

The Partnership held a discussion on the idea and the proposed locations for

the project. Edward Laughton advised that in Ardrishaig there are several empty buildings that could be suitable for this project, which are all owned by Scottish Canals, however he has been unable to get plans from Scottish Canals as to what their plans are for the buildings. Councillor Currie advised that at a recent Mid Argyll Kintyre and the Islands Meeting and they gave a report as to what their plans were for the area and suggested they could be invited along to a future Partnership. The Mid Argyll Partnership agreed that they would invite Scottish Canals along to the next meeting to give an update on their development plans within Mid Argyll under Outcome 1, The Economy is Diverse and Thriving.

Decision

The Partnership noted that the Area Governance Manager would invite Scottish Canals along to the next meeting to discuss progress on their plans for Mid Argyll under Outcome 1, The Economy is Diverse and Thriving.

8. COMMUNITY

Councillor Horn advised that Tarbert had a run of very successful festivals so far this year and it was hoped that it would continue with Tarbert Fair which was being held this weekend.

Edward Laughton advised that Ardrishaig had a very successful Gala Day at the weekend and had been very lucky with the good weather. Mr Laughton advised that he was hopeful that the Committee would continue their hard work next year and the community will need to show their appreciation to ensure they do not quit.

Rod Buchanan advised that ACHA are currently carrying out work on flats on Lochnell Street, Lochgilphead. He reported that the work would include the re-pointing of the exterior of the building and it is hoped that this will help to tidy up the street. He advised that similar work would also be carried out on Church Terrace in Tarbert.

Sergeant David Ferguson reported that following the implementation of the new drink driving limits last year, drink driving across the whole of Scotland looks to have been reduced by around 25-50% which is a brilliant result. He advised that although this is a positive step forward, Police Scotland are continuing to work to reduce this further. Sergeant David Ferguson advised that Police Scotland are continuing to work hard to reduce the number of rogue workmen who have been targeting the elderly within the area. He advised that Police Scotland are working closely with the Council's Trading Standards Team and the Citizens Advice Bureau but reported that unfortunately an elderly local woman recently lost a large amount of money to the rogue tradesmen. He advised that Police Scotland would be happy to come to any local groups to discuss the risks directly with the local community so that hopefully they can be more aware and hopefully not put themselves at risk. He advised that the positive news is that any rogue traders which have been caught in the area to date, have been from out with the area however he advised that this shows how far they are willing to come. Sergeant David Ferguson advised the Partnership that the Police really rely on intelligence from the public to catch rogue tradesmen and stated that he hopes the community can work together to try and prevent anyone

else being hurt by these criminals.

Betty Rhodick provided an update on the Lochgilphead Armed Forces Day. She asked the Partnership to remember that although this event is held in Lochgilphead, it is the Armed Forces Day for the whole of Argyll and Bute. Ms Rhodick advised that the following comments had been left on the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Veterans Message Board following the event:

“I have attended a large armed forces day in Edinburgh, we marched up the Royal Mile to our inspection point then were dismissed and told to make our way to Princes Street Gardens where we would get a cup of tea, well that was the servicemen the dignitaries went off for a civic reception. My first armed forces day parade in Stirling was uneventful, the next was at Bridge of Alan, where a couple of us gate crashed the officers tent, we left gracefully when spotted. The third and what will be my last Stirling Parade saw us queue up to pay £4 for a pint, £4 for a nip, £4 for a very small portion of chips. No doubt Stirling council will have profited from this, you never know it might even have covered the dignitaries wee after parade do.

Lochgilphead you put them to shame, a simple parade, followed by an in inspection, dismissed to partake in the hospitality provided, first drink free and remainder at normal bar prices. Well done Betty and Geordie Rhodick, I will see you next year. I was totally gobsmacked how the majority of shop windows were displaying service memorabilia, photographs of the local servicemen, the recruiting posters were that auld they were recruiting for the Argylls. Once again, well done Lochgilphead.”

Ms Rhodick noted that this post proved how successful the day was and advised the Partnership that she was very disappointed that a week before the Parade, Scottish Water began work on the front green, and Argyll and Bute Council dug up the bottom of Argyll Street. She noted that this had caused the organising Committee a great deal of stress, and advised that we need to communicate better to ensure that if a parade or event is planned in the community, work is not carried out which could jeopardise this event.

Andy Bunton advised that Lochgilphead had benefited from a very successful visit from the Vikings despite the event being organised at very short notice. He reported that it was a success and was glad to see the primary classes that were able to attend and benefit from the visit. He advised that he is looking forward to seeing them back again next year. Mr Bunton reported that Lochgilphead Community Council were really pleased to see that a number of shops had tidied themselves up and asked the Partnership if there was anything the Council could do to force the other premises in the street to carry out some work to the external of the buildings. The Chair advised that he, along with Councillor MacMillan and Philand, had raised this issue with the planning department before and unfortunately, at this stage enforcement action can not be taken. Mr Bunton advised that Lochgilphead Community Council were planning on putting a notice in the local paper congratulating the businesses who have carried out work to the exterior of their buildings in a hope to shaming some of the ones in a poor state to take action.

Jim Malcolm advised that Dunadd Community Council had carried out community engagement to identify the most important issues to the community. He advised that broadband had been the top. He advised that he had reported this issue to BT and

advised that the community feel strongly about improving the broadband. He advised that he did not get a response however he has found out that BT are making improvements to the broadband in the Dunadd area. Mr Malcolm advised his fellow Community Councillors to find out what your community wants, do a bit of background research and take this knowledge to BT and you will get results.

9. THEMES FOR NEXT MEETING

The Partnership noted that the themes for the next meeting would be:-

Outcome 2: We have infrastructure that supports growth.

Outcome 6: People live in safer and stronger communities.

The Chair advised that members of the Partnership should look at these outcomes prior to the next meeting and think about how they impact their community. He advised that we can then use the Partnership to bring together common issues and then carry these issues forward to the ACGP. The Area Governance Manager circulated a copy of the Single Outcome Agreement for Mid Argyll to allow members the opportunity to identify issues and bring them forward to the next meeting.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business discussed.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Partnership noted that the next meeting of the Partnership would take place on Wednesday 28 October 2015 at 10am within the Council Chambers, Kilmory, Lochgilphead.