

**MINUTES of MEETING of OBAN LORN & THE ISLES COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP held by
SKYPE
on WEDNESDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2020**

Present: Councillor Elaine Robertson (Chair)
Councillor Mary Jean Devon
Councillor Kieron Green
Councillor Jim Lynch
Councillor Roderick McCuish
Councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor
Councillor Andrew Vennard
Stuart McLean – Committee Manager, Argyll and Bute Council
Laura MacDonald – Community Development Officer, Argyll and Bute Council
Brian Smith – Community Learning Team Leader, Argyll and Bute Council
Inspector Mark Stephen – Police Scotland
Jenny Dryden – Health Improvement Lead, Health and Social Care Partnership
Kevin Champion – Senior Depute, Oban High School
Grant Young – Mull Safe and Sound
Joan Best – Crossroads North Argyll
Gary Cringles – Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Lynn Campbell – Department for Work and Pensions
Finlay McFee – Avich and Kilcrennan Community Council
Ian Gillies – Tiree Community Council
Dr John Holliday – Tiree Community Council
Guy (Zim) Knight – Seil and Easdale Community Council
Marri Malloy – Oban Community Council
Jane Martin – Iona Community Council
Alison Jones – Development Coll
Colin Wilson – Local Government Boundary Commission
Ailsa Henderson – Local Government Boundary Commission

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first virtual meeting of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Areas Community Planning Group and outlined the procedure for the meeting.

The Chair advised that she would Chair the meeting in place of John Fleming, who had stepped down as Chair of the Group. The Chair thanked John for his valuable input over the last year and advised that she hoped that John could be welcomed back to the Group in future.

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of:

Samantha Somers, Argyll and Bute Council
Albert Bruce, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
John Sweeney, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Susan MacRae, Skills Development Scotland

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

The minute of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group meeting held on Wednesday 19 February 2020 was approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising

The Chair noted that the last meeting of the Group had taken place in February due to the ongoing pandemic and subsequent cancellation of the scheduled May and August meetings.

The Chair advised that the matter discussed at item 4 (a) of the minute regarding drug related issues in Oban had been discussed with Alastair MacGregor, ACHA, and Craig McNally, HSCP, and had been highlighted to the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee who advised that the Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) would be the lead agency taking this forward. ACHA had also been invited to send a representative to the local ADP forum.

The Chair confirmed that the action agreed at item 8 of the minute regarding an evaluation of out of hours health and social care provision on the islands had been raised with the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee. The Chair requested that the Health and Social Care Partnership be invited to the next meeting of the Group to provide an update on this issue.

4. COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Group considered a briefing note which related to the virtual meeting of the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee which met on 23 September 2020.

The Committee Manager outlined the contents of the briefing note, particularly noting the appointment of a new Chair of the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee. The Committee Manager also highlighted the presentation by the Head of Development and Economic Growth for Argyll and Bute Council regarding concerns around wild camping and campervans, noting that a sub group had been created to develop an action plan which would be reported to a future meeting of the Group.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the briefing note.

(Reference: Briefing note by Committee Manager, dated 11 November 2020, submitted)

5. PARTNERS UPDATE - COVID-19 RESPONSE

(a) Third Sector Interface

The Group considered an update from the Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface (TSI) which detailed their response to Covid-19 which included supporting charities, social enterprises, community groups and encouraging volunteering.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group;

1. considered and noted the information provided; and
2. noted that in the absence of an officer from TSI the Committee Manager would take back any questions to TSI and circulate any responses to the Group.

(Reference: Update by Samantha Stubbs – Strategic Development Manager, Third Sector Interface, dated October 2020, submitted)

(b) Health and Social Care Partnership - Caring for People COVID-19 Community Response

The Group gave consideration to an update from the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) in relation to the community response work of the Caring for People Tactical Partnership and local Caring for People Teams.

Jenny Dryden outlined the contents of the report, providing details of a variety of support which was provided during the Covid-19 response including: a helpline where those requiring support could access a range of community teams; a community food project; regular telephone calls made to those shielding offering support; the development of a website providing information and support; and leaflets being distributed throughout the Argyll and Bute area with the assistance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Jenny noted that the Caring for People partnership had been nominated as a finalist in the Scottish Health Awards and expressed thanks to community groups, partners and volunteers who were involved.

Discussion took place around the positive aspects of community working and innovation which had come about through the Covid-19 crisis and how this could be sustained. Jenny confirmed that an evaluation was in process to capture lessons learned and to assist in maintaining positive partnership working.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group considered and noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Alison McGrory - Health Improvement Principal, Health and Social Care Partnership, dated 11 November 2020, submitted)

(c) Mull Community Council

The Group considered an update submitted by Mull Community Council which detailed the activities undertaken by the Community Council in response to the pandemic including the implementation of a website, Mullhealth, which provided information on shopping and advice for businesses with frequent updates on changes in Government policy.

In the absence of a representative from the organisation, Councillor McCuish asked that the Committee Manager gain feedback from the Community Council as to

whether the number of visitors during the Covid-19 crisis had had an impact on their resources.

The Community Development Officer requested information as to whether challenges highlighted around the flow of shopping from Tesco had subsided. Councillor Devon advised that this issue appeared to have been resolved, with shopping largely back to normal on the island.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group:

1. noted the update; and
2. noted that in the absence of a representative from Mull Community Council the Committee Manager would take back any questions to Mull Community Council and circulate any responses to the Group.

(Reference: Update by Mull Community Council, dated 11 November, submitted)

(d) **Opportunity for verbal updates from Area Community Planning Group Partners involved in resilience projects relating to the covid-19 response**

Joan Best, Crossroads North Argyll

The Chair advised that she was also the Chair of the Crossroads North Argyll Group.

Joan advised that many of the Crossroads staff had been working from home throughout the crisis, providing telephone support to unpaid carers which had then moved on to providing doorstep support to check how unpaid carers were coping. Joan noted that assistance had also been provided by the Group in delivering shopping and prescriptions where required.

Joan advised that the Group had restarted face-to-face support in August when they were able to and were now also able to provide respite. Joan noted that a grant had been received to provide free respite and travel for unpaid carers until the end of January 2021, advising that the Group would analyse what funding remained at this time.

Brian Smith, Community Learning Team Leader

Brian Smith provided details of the way in which the community learning service had adapted to the requirement to move learning online during the pandemic and noted that a number of platforms had been used to provide support to those who needed it. Brian advised that the team had also been involved in the Caring for People effort by assisting with phone lines; delivering food parcels and prescriptions; and producing scrubs and face masks. Brian noted that the team had also assisted with school hubs for the children of essential workers to allow them to work during the lockdown period.

Brian provided details of different projects around digital support, including the Digital Connections project which had seen 400 devices provided to the community

to assist them in staying digitally connected. Brian noted that the Connecting Scotland project had also seen over 1000 devices being delivered to schools to assist with online learning. Brian outlined work which had been carried out by the team with young people, including work to re-engage pupils who had struggled throughout lockdown; work with youth forums; work around increased youth participation; work around health and wellbeing following concerns raised in the Lockdown Lowdown consultation; work with Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) in look at a recovery plan; work around new United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) legislation being incorporated into Scots Law in 2021; and a successful bid to the Scottish Government's Youth Work Education Recovery Fund which would allow the team to work with partners to create a project which could be offered to young people and would incorporate outdoor learning and an SQA award.

Brian gave details of how the team were involved in the No One Left Behind initiative, assisting both young people and adults to identify and overcome challenges and barriers which they may be facing. Brian advised that since August the team have been able to begin some face-to-face support again although the majority remained online.

The Chair thanked Brian for this update, applauding the team for their partnership working and it was agreed that Brian and a number of youth representatives would be invited to attend a future meeting of the Group to provide an update on the work which was being carried out. Councillor Devon agreed to contact Brian regarding future engagement with the Corporate Parenting Board.

Laura MacDonald, Community Development Officer

Laura MacDonald advised that Community Engagement Training which had originally been scheduled for March had now been rescheduled to take place virtually in late November and information would be sent out to community groups and Community Councils around this.

6. PARTNERS UPDATE

(a) Health and Social Care Partnership - Public Health

The Group gave consideration to an annual report for 2019/20 which highlighted Health and Wellbeing in Argyll and Bute.

Jenny provided an overview of key points within the report, including the appointment of a new Associate Director for Public Health; the Living Well Strategy launch; grant funding in place across Argyll and Bute; a number of events which had taken place on adverse childhood experiences; the Cool to Talk service; the recruitment of 5 smoking cessation officers; and the use of conversation cafes to facilitate public engagement. Jenny also highlighted that the report format had been redesigned to increase accessibility.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group considered and noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Alison McGrory - Health Improvement Principal, Health and Social Care Partnership, dated 11 November 2020, submitted)

(b) **Opportunity for verbal updates by Community Planning Group Partners**

Grant Young, Mull Safe and Sound

Grant Young advised that Mull Safe and Sound was a mental health and community isolation support group which was started in September 2016. Grant noted that the Group provided peer-to-peer support to people across a wide age range, from people in their 20s to people in their 90s. Grant provided details of the way in which the Group had to adapt to Covid-19 and changing national guidance, advising that the Group had circulated leaflets with the assistance of the postal service which had included contact numbers for organisations such as the Samaritans for those who may have been struggling. Grant noted that the Group had provided virtual peer-to-peer support using Skype and Zoom and noted that a new men's support group had started on Monday and had been well attended.

Grant advised that the Mull Safe and Sound group is self-funded and applies for statutory funding where available. Grant noted that throughout the lockdown period, the core focus of the Group was on keeping in contact with their members and keeping them safe by sending out care packages and letting them know that support was still available.

In response to a question from Councillor McCuish, Grant confirmed that the number of visitors on the island had not affected the Group and noted that the Group was open to anyone requiring support. Councillor Devon praised the Group's activities and advised that they also assisted in signposting people to other services within the community and ensuring that visitors felt welcomed as part of the community. It was agreed that Grant would forward a leaflet to the Community Development Officer to be circulated to anyone who may be interested in their work.

Lynn Campbell, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

Lynn Campbell advised that the 5 DWP offices throughout Argyll and Bute had remained open during the lockdown period for vulnerable customers and provided details of additional measures put in place to ensure safety during the pandemic. Lynn noted that most interaction with customers since March had taken place digitally or by phone. Lynn advised that DWP were now working with customers around new initiatives and that 13,500 new employees were being hired to support with the increase in caseload sizes for the service. Lynn provided details around the recruitment of youth employability coaches; work around the Kick-start initiative; and work which was ongoing to ensure that all applications were processed in a timely manner. In response to a question from the Chair, Lynn confirmed that the DWP work in partnership with the Council's Community Learning Team.

Lynn advised that Oban was one of the hardest hit areas in the UK during lockdown, with an increase in caseload of 300% and advised that partnership working had been important in managing this. Lynn provided details of a video chat service pilot which would run on the 18th of November and noted that Oban Job Centre had been selected to trial this with customers. Lynn confirmed that she would contact Councillor Devon out with the meeting to discuss a constituents experience in

applying for Disability Living Allowance.

Councillor Lynch advised that staff in Oban Job Centre had been helpful when contacted and expressed concern that employment issues would increase, noting that plans should be put in place to combat this. Lynn confirmed that a new DWP service leader had been appointed for the west district and a meeting had taken place with Argyll and Bute Council's Chief Executive and Head of Development and Economic Growth to highlight key areas where work is required. Lynn noted that work was being undertaken to analyse caseloads and demographics to gain a better understanding of customer's needs. Brian Smith advised that the Community Learning Team, alongside other partners, had also worked with DWP around digital employability hubs.

Inspector Mark Stephen, Police Scotland

Inspector Stephen advised that the Police had faced significant challenges and changes to the way they worked during Covid-19 and in light of regular changes in guidance, noting that the Police focus was on ensuring that there were sufficient resources in place to attend priority 1 and 2 calls where required. Inspector Stephen confirmed that all officers in the area have access to all necessary PPE equipment to respond to any situation. Inspector Stephen outlined a new system whereby low priority calls could be dealt with by call centre teams to ensure that there are enough staff available to deal with emergency calls where required.

Inspector Stephen provided an update on the upgrade to the custody centre and the training of officers in Mull, Tiree and Oban to use appropriate equipment to deal with significantly violent situations without the need to wait for teams coming from other areas, noting that rural stations now had access to the appropriate equipment in case it was required and were aware of how to use it if needed, although the need to use this equipment was not anticipated. Inspector Stephen confirmed that Police Scotland's policy continued to be to explain, engage and encourage before resorting to enforcement.

In response to a question from the Community Development Officer, Inspector Stephen confirmed that good levels of compliance had been seen across the area following challenges during the summer relating to an influx of people from other areas at a time when guidance had differed across Scotland.

Gary Cringle, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Gary Cringle advised that although there has been a national spike in domestic fire incidents, this does not appear to have been the case in the local area. Gary confirmed that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service had generally coped well throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, noting that there had been a small increase in accidental dwelling fires linked to the increase in time people were spending in their homes. Gary advised that there had been a decrease in the number of Road Traffic Collisions in the area which the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service had to respond to, likely due to a decrease in traffic..

Gary confirmed that community engagement remained high on the priority list for the service, noting that the service continued to attend properties who reported no working smoke detection throughout lockdown, although at that time only high risk

home fire safety visits were being carried out with appropriate PPE following an initial telephone assessment.

Gary advised that it was hoped to capture medium and low risk referrals for home fire safety visits as restrictions were eased, noting that in the interim the Service would continue to promote community safety messages. Gary confirmed that the Service continued as normal to action AP1 forms identifying the most vulnerable people within the community. Gary provided details of the Make the Call initiative which encouraged people to identify at risk individuals who may benefit from intervention.

Discussion took place around the new legislation coming into force around smoke detection systems in February 2022 and the ways in which this would impact people, as well as the support available from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. In response to a question from Councillor Devon, Gary confirmed that he would request clarification as to whether recruitment was being carried out specifically for the islands or if the ongoing recruitment process was part of a national campaign.

7. UK WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EU

A report on the Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership's response to the UK's withdrawal from the European Union was before the Group for consideration.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group;

1. were assured that the Council and the HSPC are as well prepared as they can be with regards to exiting the EU, and are actively engaged with partners through the local and national resilience frameworks; and
2. noted that the Committee Manager would take any questions back and circulate responses to the Group.

(Reference: Report by Chief Executive, dated 21 October 2020, submitted)

8. BOUNDARY COMMISSION PROPOSALS

The Group considered a report which advised of the Boundary Commission for Scotland's proposals for Argyll and Bute area.

Colin Wilson and Ailsa Henderson provided an overview of the changes proposed to the ward boundaries within Argyll and Bute and provided information around the framework which the Local Government Boundary Commission operated within.

Discussion took place around the benefits of Coll and Tiree being represented separately by their own Councillor; the increased representation which could be achieved by having Councillors local to the island communities they represent; the difference in requirements of island and mainland communities; the requirement for sufficient consultation with rural and island communities; the restrictions created by the need for parity across wards; potential changes required in terms of legislation; the definition of effective and convenient local government; and the need for more consultation to take place within communities to ascertain their views.

It was agreed that the Boundary Commission would arrange a further meeting with representatives from the Coll and Tiree communities. Ailsa invited further questions and comments to be addressed to the Local Government Boundary Commission, particularly around the community's definitions of effective and convenient local government as well as any potential solutions in terms of the division of wards in the area. Colin Wilson advised that further details regarding the review were available on the Local Government Boundary Commission's website at <https://lgbc-scotland.gov.uk/2019-reviews-electoral-arrangements>, noting that any further questions or comments could be directed to the Local Government Boundary Commission by e-mail at lgbc@scottishboundaries.gov.uk and feedback to the consultation could be given at https://consult.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk/reviews/argyll_and_bute_council_area_public_consultation/

The Chair thanked the Local Government Boundary Commission representatives for their presentation and noted that she would be interested to see the results of the consultation.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group;

1. noted the position;
2. noted that a further meeting would take place between the Local Government Boundary Commission and community representatives from Coll and Tiree; and
3. noted that further questions and comments could be addressed to the Local Government Boundary Commission using the details provided.

(Reference: Report by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland, dated 11 November 2020, submitted)

9. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR OF THE OBAN, LORN AND THE ISLES AREA COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP

The Group considered the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group.

The Committee Manager outlined details of the report and discussion took place around the roles and the benefits of the Group being led by someone from the local community. Assurance was provided to interested parties that guidance and support would be available from Councillor Robertson as the Group's current Vice-Chair, as well as from the Governance and Community Planning teams.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group agreed to continue the report to the next meeting of the Group in February 2021 to allow a review of the Group's membership.

(Reference: Report by Governance Officer, dated 11 November 2020, submitted)

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Group noted that the next meeting of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group would take place by Skype at 6:30pm on Tuesday 17 February 2021.