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MINUTES of MEETING of OBAN LORN & THE ISLES COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP held via MICROSOFT TEAMS on WEDNESDAY, 25 AUGUST 2021

Present:

Kevin Champion (Chair)
Councillor Elaine Robertson
Stuart McLean – Committee Manager, Argyll and Bute Council
John Sweeney - Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Joan Best – Crossroads North Argyll
Susan MacRae – Skills Development Scotland
Carol Flett – Living Well Co-ordinator
Theresa Bain – Local Manger, University Highlands and Islands
Judith Hawcroft - North Argyll Carers Centre
Marri Malloy - Oban Community Council
Duncan Martin – Oban Community Council
Jessie McFarlane – Oban Community Council

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair opened the meeting in Gaelic and welcomed everyone to the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group.

The Chair spoke to an update received from the Vice-Chair, which read as follows;

Good Evening All, I hope you are all well. I would like to apologise that I am not in attendance of tonight's meeting to say this myself, however I will be stepping down as Vice-Chair. I would like to thank you all for the support and opportunity I was given. I would like to emphasise my gratitude towards the team behind it all who were beyond helpful and supportive. I hope to see you all at future meetings as a member.

The Chair, on behalf of the Group, wished her well in her future endeavours and looked forward to welcoming her to future meetings.

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of:

Joan Best - Crossroads North Argyll;
Rachel Lawlor – Vice-Chair;
Eleanor MacKinnon – Rockfield Centre;
Lynn Campbell – Department of Works and Pensions;
Councillor Jim Lynch; and
PC Laura Evans – Police Scotland.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

Marri Malloy, Oban Community Council, joined the meeting during the forgoing item

3. MINUTES

(a) **Meeting of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Community Planning Group held on**

12 May 2021

The minute of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group meeting held on Wednesday 12 May 2021 was approved as a correct record.

Jessie MacFarlane, Oban Community Council, joined the meeting during the forgoing item

4. COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Group considered a briefing note which provided an overview of the discussion which took place at the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee meeting on 30 June 2021.

Decision

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

(Reference: Briefing note by Committee Manager, dated 25 August 2021, submitted)

5. PARTNERS UPDATE

(a) Community Learning Service Update

The Group considered an update from Argyll and Bute Council's Community Learning Service which detailed its transfer to LiveArgyll, the resumption of the Health and Wellbeing Project, delivery of the Enhanced Summer Programme and the ongoing development of the Community Learning and Development Plan for 21-24.

Decision

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

(Reference: Update by Community Learning and Development Assistant, dated 25 August 2021, submitted)

(b) Scottish Fire and Rescue Service - Oban, Lorn and the Isles - Q1 2021/22

A report highlighting the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) Q1 2021/22 review of local performance within Oban, Lorn and the Isles was considered by the Group.

Further to the submitted update the Group noted that SFRS were continuing to facilitate fundraising events for charities such as the Anthony Nolan Trust which included engaging with high schools to encourage pupils to become involved with the project. The Group noted this was aimed at many youth groups, not just those in an educational setting.

Discussion focused on a public consultation on Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) which is open until 11 October 2021 and could be accessed via the SFRS website - <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/consultations/ufas-consultation.aspx>; and that the increase in grass fires was due to long spells of dry weather.

Mr Sweeney advised that legislation on compulsory linked fire alarms will come into force from February 2022, and that these can be installed for free by the SFRS to those household who are at risk and fit the criteria to qualify for home safety fire visits.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group reviewed and noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Station Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service dated 25 August 2021, submitted)

(c) Islands Living Well Network (Mull and Iona, Tiree, Coll and Colonsay)

The Group considered an update from Carol Flett, The Islands Living Well Network, which included that they have chosen emotional and mental wellbeing, education, prevention and early intervention on alcohol and drugs and child poverty to be their priorities for the year.

Carol Flett advised that membership levels continue to fluctuate and Living Well were keen to make contact with anyone on Mull who would like to join and hoped that their presence on social media will help spread their message. It was noted that the Flexible Food Fund Roadshow would soon be going to Mull, Iona, Tiree, Coll and Colonsay.

Decision

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

(Reference: Update by Carol Flett, The Islands Living Well Network, dated 30 July 2021, submitted)

(d) North Argyll Carers Centre Community Planning Update

The Group gave consideration to an update from the North Argyll Carers Centre which provided detail on how they have been able to carry out a phased return to face to face support with carers at their centre on Albany Street; how they were able to offer activities for groups of young and adult carers outdoors; and how they ran a number of activities as part of Carers Week which raised awareness of carers' roles, issues and the support they can offer.

The Group noted North Argyll Carers could be contacted at their website - <https://www.northargyllcarers.org.uk/> or email info@northargyllcarers.org.uk or via telephone on 01631 564422.

Decision

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

(Reference: Update by Judith Hawcroft, North Argyll Carers Centre, dated August 2021, submitted)

(e) **Opportunity for verbal updates by Community Planning Partners** (Pages 7 - 12)

Rockfield Centre

Eleanor MacKinnon was unable to attend but provided an update in her absence which was read out by the Committee Manager as attached to the minute.

Department for Work and Pensions

Lynn Campbell was unable to attend but provided an update in her absence which was read out by the Committee Manager as attached to the minute.

Skills Development Scotland

Susan MacRae advised that careers advisors were back in schools and at the centre in Oban and that officers are working to identify the next cohort of leavers and that a report on their destinations would be submitted to the next meeting. The Group noted that there will be virtual events held by the Scottish Education Exhibitions which were free sessions aimed at all prospective higher education students.

University Highland and Islands (UHI)

Theresa Bain advised that Argyll College had started back for the 2021/22 session with all classes taught remotely other than practical courses, which would be reviewed during the October break.

The Group noted that there was an excellent advertising campaign on certain channels and passed on their compliments to the marketing team at UHI.

There was lengthy discussions held on the lack of accommodation options for students as well as those seeking employment in the area which was a nationwide issue. It was agreed that the housing situation would be taken up with ACHA and West Highland Housing for future discussions.

Crossroads North Argyll

Linda Duncan advised that they had been very busy with referrals with 5 in last 10 days and that they had successfully recruited two more members of staff including one based on Mull but they still required more staff, particular male care attendants.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP INVOLVEMENT OF AREA COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUPS

Consideration was given by the Group to a briefing note which provided information on the aims of the Climate Change Working Group as was formed by the CPP Management Committee and explored how Area Community Planning Groups could become more involved.

The Group noted that the Oban Fire Station had won an environmental award as the best in Scotland, and sixth across the UK for energy reduction which included the installation of 60 solar panel cells which reduced their electricity usage by 50% and allowed them to sell some energy back to the grid.

Decision

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

1. discussed the information outlined in the briefing note;
2. agreed to continue consideration of relevant project/organisations that could be put forward as an addition to the ACT interactive map until the November 2021 meeting, suggesting the following in the interim;
 - a) No Plastic Straws in Oban was a school initiative which saw pupils lobby local businesses;
 - b) Refill a water bottle refill scheme app used by Argyll College - [https://www.refill.org.uk/about/#:~:text=Refill%20is%20mainly%20an%20%E2%80%98on%20the%20go%E2%80%99%20app,search%20for%20online%20retailers%20that%20offer%20home%20delivery](https://www.refill.org.uk/about/#:~:text=Refill%20is%20mainly%20an%20%E2%80%98on%20the%20go%E2%80%99%20app,search%20for%20online%20retailers%20that%20offer%20home%20delivery;);
 - c) Re-tech an organisation that supplies a large metal cabinet to place in offices to re-cycle electronic goods used by Argyll College; and
 - d) an Ardfern community initiative aimed at helping re-populate the sea bed (link to Channel 4 News item <https://www.channel4.com/news/the-argyll-community-fighting-to-save-a-small-part-of-the-ocean-one-oyster-at-a-time>);
 - e) the Moleigh Recycling Centre; and
3. agreed to continue consideration of a representative (and substitute) to represent the Oban Lone and the Isles ACPF on the Working Group until the November 2021 meeting.

(Reference: Report by Committee Manager, dated 25 August 2021, submitted)

7. 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 at 2pm on Wednesday 10 November 2021.

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Update - The Rockfield Centre now open to public with tenants moving in and bookings progressing well from community groups restarting activities with both outdoor and indoor events.

This month sees us hosting ARTMAP open studio with 4 local artists and our Gallery hosting National exhibition as part of Coast and Waters of the Paul Glazier Island Photography Exhibition.

With large rooms well ventilated with the Victorian “fresh air” ventilation reinstated we plan to commence the autumn programme of workshops and events from September as a mix of online and in person sessions.

As activity increases our small staff team and volunteer team will continue to grow.

Current initiatives include- Heritage Horizons placement –

https://www.chartsargyllandisles.org/opportunities/exploring-the-heritage-of-the-oban-dye-garden-placement/?fbclid=IwAR0RoYWl3o3XzeMnYsBwX3LbmzMx0I2GD3b1rgVJ6eBRh_OJg0ycKymInvw

Community jobs Scotland YP employment opportunity – contact Job Centre

Plus a wide range of activity for the wider community to engage with including

- Eco Creatives Cluster
- New Wellness programme
- People and Place heritage programme including Young Archaeology Club and our very popular Heritage Blethers and Shuftys
- YP Artschool programme
- Arts Workshops and our wider performance programme
- Not forgetting all the activity that our wonderful volunteers assist us to offer.

We look forward to seeing you all making use of your local cultural hub as we gradually open the doors to Oban and beyond over the coming months.

Eleanor MacKinnon

www.therockfieldcentre.org.uk 01631701921

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DWP Update – 21/07/2021

Argyll and Bute

Stats/MI (Recorded as of 10th June 2021 stats map)

Office	Total UC Claimants	Conditionality groups					
		Preparing for work	Planning for work	Working – No requirements	No work Requirements	Working – With requirements	Searching for Work
Campbeltown	952	30	14	183	226	165	326
Dunoon	1197	50	20	193	304	207	420
Helensburgh	1287	54	14	267	314	245	397
Oban	1979	65	35	498	359	321	702
Rothsay	678	39	10	102	191	110	227
	6093						2072

Customers searching for work by age (as at May 2021 statsx-plore)

	18 - 24	25 - 49	50 – 59	60+
Campbeltown	66	192	68	49
Dunoon	66	282	127	56
Helensburgh	85	272	118	49
Oban	157	425	164	96
Rothsay	29	122	47	37
Total	403	1293	524	287

Help to Kickstart a young person's career in your community

Funding for employers to recruit a young person aged 18-24 is still available with the Kickstart Scheme offering financial support for employers for 26 weeks

Are you ready to take on new talent or do you know an employer that can get a young person's career started? Get involved in the Kickstart Scheme - [read our new employer prospectus](#) or attend one of [DWP's employer webinars](#) to find out how Kickstart can help your business grow and provide life-changing opportunities to young people.

Find out more

Could you help promote the Kickstart Scheme? Use the new [Kickstart Scheme Communications Toolkit](#), packed with new assets, to help spread the word, get businesses signed up, provide life-changing opportunities to young people and help the wider economic recovery.

If you haven't heard about the Kickstart, check out the new [Kickstart Employer Prospectus](#). Alternatively, please contact the Employer & Partnership Manager for Argyll & Bute for more information by emailing elizabeth.macbrayne2@dwp.gov.uk

Plan for Jobs Skills and Employment Programmes

The [Plan for Jobs skills and employment programmes](#) information for employers page on GOV.UK has been updated. It includes information on a range of government programmes, some of which offer financial incentives, are available for employers who are considering hiring employees, offering work experience or upskilling existing staff.

The Government's Plan for Jobs is working with 1.3 million employees who moved off furlough in March and April. The [furlough scheme](#) will remain in place until the end of September to ensure jobs are protected as businesses get back on their feet.

DWP and Google

DWP has partnered with Google to provide 9,000 jobseekers across the UK with scholarships to gain a Google Career Certificate. Jobseekers will have access to Google IT Certificates which focuses on IT Support, Data Analyst, Project Manager and UX Designer ensuring that the labour market of tomorrow stands a better chance of getting that job. These certificates are recognised by industry experts and employers.

The scholarship will let jobseekers access courses to grow the necessary skills for a career in technology and IT, with DWP customers being referred to the scholarships by their Work Coach.

Civil Service Recruitment

The UK Government has launched a new **recruitment campaign** - 'Closer to Home' to encourage people in Scotland to apply for hundreds of vacancies in the UK Civil Service. There is a wide range of career opportunities within the Civil Service, including many remote working opportunities. Current vacancies can be found at [Civil Service job search - Civil Service Jobs - GOV.UK](#)

MoneyHelper

The Money and Pensions Service has launched [MoneyHelper](#) a new support service and website for customers. This brings together the Money Advice Service, The Pensions Advisory Service and Pension Wise. The three legacy websites for those services are no longer active.

Special Rules for Terminal Illness Update

The current Special Rules for Terminal Illness which fast-track benefit applications for those with a terminal diagnosis of six months is to be replaced with a new 12-month, end of life definition.

The change will ensure that people in the final year of their life will receive financial support quicker than they can do at present, at a higher rate through revised Special Rules. The move ensures that clinicians still have discretion and are supported by a realistic and straightforward definition, consistent with current NHS practice. More information can be found in the press release on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/special-rules-for-terminal-illness).

Bereavement support update

On 15 July a draft plan was laid before Parliament which will extend bereavement support to an extra 22,500 people.

This will extend Widowed Parent's Allowance and Bereavement Support Payment to surviving co-habiting partners with children who were living with their partner at the time of death. These changes will be retrospective, and will apply from 30 August 2018.

Shared Accommodation Rate changes

DWP has implemented changes to the Shared Accommodation Rate that will help thousands of vulnerable care leavers access additional housing support. The changes mean that care leavers can now claim the higher one-bedroom rate for longer, as the maximum age limit has been raised to 25, from 22.

Also, anyone who has lived in a homeless hostel for three months or more, regardless of age, will now be able to claim the higher rate, as the age limit has been removed.