MINUTES of MEETING of OBAN LORN & THE ISLES AREA COMMITTEE held in the ON A HYBRID BASIS IN MCCAIG SUITE, CORRAN HALLS, OBAN AND ON MICROSOFT TEAM on WEDNESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2026

Present: Councillor Kieron Green (Chair)

Councillor Amanda Hampsey
Councillor Willie Hume
Councillor Andrew Kain
Councillor Luna Martin
Councillor Julie McKenzie

Attending: Seymour Adams, CHARTS
Tom Murphy, Roads and Infrastructure Manager
Ailie Law, Community Development Officer
Elsa Simoes, Design Manager
Shona Barton, Governance Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Councillors Lynch and Vennard.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

(a) **Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee - 10 June 2026**

The minutes of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee meeting of 10 June 2026 were approved as a correct record.

(b) **Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group - 12 August 2026**

The minute of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group meeting held on 12 August 2026, were noted.

(c) **Oban Common Good Fund - 10 August 2026**

The minutes of the Oban Common Good Fund meeting held on 10 August 2026, were noted.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME PART 1

The Governance Manager advised that two questions had been received in advance from Mr Terry Hegarty from Mull.

Question 1

In relation to the Mull Campus project's Island Community Impact (ICIA)and Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) reports, which may be found as sections 6 and seven in this 71-page document: *Integrated Impact Assessment Report (IIA)

The finalised draft of the IIA was approved on 05/02/25 according to the 'Document Control Sheet on page 2.

This would allow a few days for processing community input to help inform ICIAs and CRWIAs, whether gathered as responses to 13 specific questions presented via Stantec's online proforma, or otherwise ahead of its clearly stated 22/01/25 deadline for contributions.

The IIA Report was designated Appendix K to this report: *Mull Campus - Preferred Site Recommendation which is dated 27/01/25.

Paragraph 4.3.6 of the Site Recommendation report mentions that two scoring workshops took place on 15/12/24 and 23/01/25 to populate the all-important decision-making matrix See:

2 SiteSelection_ScoringSession2_230125_FINAL.pdf .

My first question is this: **How could completion of the critical Matrix scoring exercise have been fully and properly informed about Children's Rights and Welfare, or Island Community impacts or other concerns encompassed by the IIA report when it had not been finalised in advance of both scoring sessions?**

I ask the question because the preferred choice of Campus site was effectively selected through this process, but unless all scoring workshop participants had somehow been properly informed of all the information contained the IIA report before it was finalised, some of us are bound to lack confidence in the integrity of this opaque crucial decision-making process.

I understand that the Judicial Review absolved Argyll and Bute Council of unlawful behaviour in relation to the particular matters presented for scrutiny, but those issues did not extend to full lawful compliance with all relevant UNCRC provisions, so some widespread concerns accordingly endure.

A response from Commercial Services had been received prior to the meeting, as Mr Hegarty's connection was poor he stated that he was happy for the responses to be emailed to him. It was agreed therefore that the responses would not be read out but included in the minute and also emailed to the Area Committee Members and Ms Mayo.

Response from Commercial Services - The Matrix Scoring Exercise used to inform the selection process was a rigorous, evidence-based assessment undertaken by subject matter experts. The wider assessment team included transport specialists, planners, economic development professionals and other relevant experts, all of whom applied a consistent set of evaluation criteria. These criteria included deliverability, education, impact on family life, accessibility and transport, and affordability. Officers and the consultant team responsible for the assessment were also fully aware of the outcomes of the extensive community engagement undertaken during the summer and autumn of 2024 when forming their professional judgements. This technical assessment and scoring exercise was conducted independently of the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and was not solely

informed by, nor reliant upon, the findings of the community engagement exercise undertaken in December 2024 and January 2025. Whilst the finalised IIA document was indeed issued on 2nd February there was cognisance of the feedback which was received in advance of the closing date on 22nd January 2025. When the Council made its preferred site decision on 7th March 2025, the technical assessment, engagement feedback and the IIA were provided to Elected Members and formed part of the evidence available to inform their decision.

Question 2

Concerning the final sentence of the final paragraph of the CRWIA report (7.5.4) which reads: "*Ongoing consultation and mitigation strategies will be critical."*

How does the Council understand the meaning and implications of this strongly worded statement?

Also, how exactly has that explicit call to action resulted in subsequent *"ongoing consultation"* or *"mitigation strategies"* on the part of the Mull Campus team?

Response from Commercial Services - The statement contained within the previous IIA remains valid and continues to accurately reflect the Council's position. It makes clear that further engagement and consultation would be undertaken throughout the lifecycle of the project, and this commitment continues to be honoured. A formal consultation on the school relocation proposal is currently underway, and an IIA will be prepared to assess the relevant impacts particular to that statutory exercise. Separately, a further iteration of the IIA will also be prepared to inform the Council's consideration of the Outline Business Case in December 2026. This approach ensures that the Council's assessment of the relevant impacts remains current, robust and informed by emerging evidence and stakeholder feedback.

Question 3 – Mr Phil Hamerton

Mr Hamerton welcomed the submission of a detailed report on the potential flooding area and stated that it was very much appreciated. However, he stated that there were several aspects of the report that were not entirely clear and sought clarification on a number of points before raising a specific issue regarding invasive non-native species clearance.

Firstly, he referred to the review of the 2019 Flood Study, noting that the report indicated throughout that the review was either underway or being scoped, stating that it was unclear whether the formal review had commenced and requested clarification on its current status. Should the review not yet have started, he asked that details be provided on the scope of the review and the proposed timetable for its completion and requested clarification from the relevant officer as to the precise stage that had been reached.

Secondly, Mr Hamerton noted a recurring theme within the report regarding community engagement and observed that it appeared to identify a gap between information reported by local communities to elected members and the data held by the Flood Risk Management Team. He requested further information on how communities could provide more comprehensive data and to whom such information should be submitted, emphasising that it was important to avoid situations where

different parties were working from different datasets and therefore sought clarification on the process for gathering and sharing community information?

Mr Hamerton referred to the Japanese knotweed clearance works detailed within the report and stated that it was unclear how far the programme had progressed, he noted that Japanese knotweed had been removed from certain sections of the Black Lynn since the Committee had last met. However, he advised that these areas had been rapidly colonised by Himalayan balsam, which, while potentially less harmful in some respects, remained an invasive non-native species. He asked whether officers were aware of the presence of Himalayan balsam in locations where Japanese knotweed had been removed, acknowledging that the knotweed removal may not have been undertaken by the Council, as some affected areas could be on private land, and therefore officers may not have been aware of the issue?

The Roads and Infrastructure Manager advised that a number of operatives within the team were trained across all districts on Japanese Knot Weed eradication, so they will be starting the stem injection treatment at the Black Lynn in the next couple of weeks. He stated he was unaware of the establishment of the Himalayan Balsam, and would raise that with the local team.

The Design Manager responded on the first part of Mr Hamerton's question advising that she was still working on the Scope of the review of the 2019 Report, when this is concluded it will be put through the procurement process with a view that a contractor will be in place by end of January/February 2027. She stated when the successful bidder is in place a programme of meetings will be held in Oban with the Community and this is when it will be important to receive the data and comments from the community in order that any scheme can be refined going forward.

Councillor Hampsey asked if these community meetings would include the Ward Councillors?

The Design Manager agreed that Councillors could also be invited along to these meetings.

Question 4 – Ms Tracy Mayo

Regarding the Mull Campus and the recent meeting with the Cabinet Secretary and Councillors, how were the views of the community represented in that meeting and can it be confirmed whether the rights of the child, the UNCRC, were discussed along with the human rights explainer as part of that meeting?

The Chair advised that the Cabinet Secretary had requested a meeting with the Council about this issue and this was an opportunity for the Council to brief the Cabinet Secretary as to the status of the project and the steps that the Council were undertaking, the human rights explainer was not brought up at that meeting. He stated his understanding is that there is going to be a further meeting, arranged by the Cabinet Secretary, to which a range of stakeholders, including community representatives and the Council would be invited to as well as parliamentarians. That meeting might be an opportunity for such material to be brought to the Cabinet Secretary's attention.

Councillor Hampsey asked if the Mull Councillors would be invited to the next meeting with the Cabinet Secretary?

The Chair stated that it was a meeting called by the Cabinet Secretary and it was entirely up to her who she invited to the meeting, he advised it was his understanding that invitees would include representatives from the Council, Community and Parliamentarians, and would not include Ward Members.

5. CHARTS (ARGYLL AND ISLES)

The Committee gave consideration to a presentation by the Chair of the Culture, Heritage and Arts Assembly (CHARTS) for Argyll and the Isles. The presentation included information on the strategic aims, key projects and impact of partnership working on both regional and local areas and provided highlights of key projects throughout the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area. Mr Adams also provided information in relation to funding streams and the benefits of the continued support received from Argyll and Bute Council.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee considered and noted the information provided in the presentation.

(Reference: Presentation by Chair, Culture, Heritage and Arts Assembly for the Argyll and Isles, dated August 2026, submitted)

6. ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided links to the recent activities of Roads and Infrastructure Services.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated 9 September 2026, submitted)

7. OBAN PVA FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided an update on Flood Risk Management within the Oban Potentially Vulnerable Area and the progress on proposed short-medium term and medium-long term Actions.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee:-

1) considered the contents of this report; and
2) noted the constraints around resources to investigate the securing of additional funding for Flood Risk Management in Oban PVA.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure, dated September 2026, submitted)

8. ARGYLL SQUARE PROJECT: CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL REPORT AND DELIVERY UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update in relation to capital works and costs undertaken at Argyll Square, Oban.

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee were asked to consider and note the content of the report.

Councillor McKenzie moved an amendment to the recommendations that the committee notes the report but given the unresolved discrepancies in the financial and delivery information, refers the matter to full council for its consideration.

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Amanda Hampsey.

Councillor Green moved that the committee agree the recommendations of the report.

This was seconded by Councillor Kain.

As the meeting was being held on a hybrid basis, the vote required to be taken by calling the roll and members voted as follows –

Motion	**Amendment**
Councillor Green	Councillor Hampsey
Councillor Hume	Councillor McKenzie
Councillor Kain	
Councillor Martin	

Decision

The motion was carried by 4 votes to 2 and the Committee resolved accordingly.

(Reference: A report by Section 95 Officer, dated 6 August 2026, submitted)

9. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND APPLICATIONS 2026/27

Consideration was given to a report which detailed recommendations for the award of the Council's Supporting Communities Fund (SCF) for the 2026/27 round of funding that had been made available for distribution by the Council to organisations in the Oban, Lorn and the Isles area.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee agreed that the 17 applications, marked as 'Award' or 'Partial Award' within Appendix 1 of the report are awarded funding from the Supporting Communities Fund totalling £22,500. as follows:

Applicant	Recommendation	Amount Requested	Recommended Award 2026/27
Ignite Arts	Award	£1,470.00	£1,470.00
Tiree Makery	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Sound Waves SCIO	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Dervaig Community Hall	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Orchy and Awe Community Trust	Award	£1,457.00	£1,457.00
Oban Youth Café	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Bendoran Watersports CIC	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Tiree Windsurfing Club	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Coll Growing Group (Coll CDT)	Award	£870.00	£870.00
Hynish Trust	Award	£1,440.00	£1,440.00
Appin Village Hall	Award	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Misscarriage Support	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Developing Potential SCIO	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Lorn Toy Library	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Oban and District Access Panel	Award	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Relationship Scotland	Award	£375.00	£375.00
The Ardchattan Centre	Partial Award	£1,500.00	£888.00
Commun Gàidhealachd an Òbain	No Award	£1,500.00	£0.00
1st Oban Brownies	No Award	£1,500.00	£0.00
Sound Waves SCIO (2)	No Award	£1,500.00	£0.00
Kilchrennan Village Hall	No Award	£1,500.00	£0.00
North Mull Parish (Church of Scotland)	No Award	£1,500.00	£0.00
Taynuilt Pipe Band SCIO	No Award	£1,500.00	£0.00
Isle of Luing Community Trust	No Award	£1,500.00	£0.00
A' Bhuain Homecoming Committee	No Award	£1,500.00	£0.00
Neighbours to Friends CIC	No Award	£500.00	£0.00

(Reference: A report by Chief Executive, dated 29 July 2026, submitted)

10. AREA PERFORMANCE REPORT - FQ1 2026/27

The Committee gave consideration to the Area Performance Report for financial quarter 1 of 2026/27 (April - June 2026) which illustrated the agreed performance measures for this period.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee noted the performance and supporting commentary as presented.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services dated 9 September 2026, submitted)

11. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME PART 2

Question 5 - Mr Phil Hamerton

Regarding the underspend of the Gibraltar Street Project was there any community engagement as to where the funds available could be spent in Oban?

The Roads and Infrastructure Manager advised that he got involved when the Argyll Square Project was underway and was not aware of any community engagement.

Councillor McKenzie stated that it was brought to the attention of the Area Committee, which she was Chair of at that time, that an underspend on Gibraltar Street was to be spent on a very expensive bench. The members of the Area Committee thought the money could be better utilised. She advised that she had received representation from some constituents that Argyll Square was looking tired and could do with some investment. She was also advised that there was a tight time frame on the funding and if it had not been spent the Scottish Government would claw it back. Councillor McKenzie confirmed that there was no community engagement.

12. ARCHIBALD DOW BEQUEST AWARD RECOMMENDATION

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing information on an application that has been received for support from the Archibald Dow Bequest.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee agreed to award £50 to the individual applicant who met the criteria of the Archibald Dow Bequest.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated August 2026, submitted)

13. DRAFT OBAN, LORN AND THE ISLES AREA COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee workplan was before members for information.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee noted the contents of the workplan.

(Reference: Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee workplan, dated 9 September 2026)