

**MINUTES of MEETING of MID ARGYLL PARTNERSHIP held in the
on WEDNESDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2013**

Present:

Cllr. Sandy Taylor Argyll and Bute Council (Chair)
Cllr Donnie MacMillan ABC
Cllr Anne Horn ABC
Sgt. Mark Wilson Police Scotland
John Woods Alcohol Focus Scotland
Rod Buchanan ACHA
Neil Gerrard HIE
Leonard McNeill West Loch Fyne CC
David Kent South Knapdale CC
Gina Kent South Knapdale CC
Sandy MacGilligan Craignish CC
Mary Smyth Craignish CC
Robert Millar Lochgilphead CC
Jeanette Laughton Ardrishaig CC
Duncan Clelland Community Development ABC
Paul Martin Amenity Services ABC
Stephen Doogan Governance and Law ABC

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were intimated by:

Councillor Robin Currie
Jim Frame (SEPA)
Benedict Tustin (SEPA)
Kate MacAulay (NHS Highland)
Joanna Peebles (Scottish Water)
Betty Rhodick (Lochgilphead CC)
Stewart Clarke ABC
Sandra Gasgcoine

The Chair proposed, and the meeting agreed to take two additional items on the agenda:-

- 1) A short paper on the terms of reference of the MAP and how it could improve representation on the group
- 2) A Presentation from John Woods re the work of CALA

The first item was taken by reason of the need to improve representation in light of the upcoming CPP consultation to ensure all voices were heard, and the second item was taken since the funding for the group has now expired and there is an urgent need for alternative sources to be found.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2013

The Minute of the previous meeting held on 11 September, 2013 was approved as a true record, with the single amendment that it was agreed that Cllr Horn had given a presentation at the meeting in relation to item 6 (Tarbert Music Centre) rather than just speaking and was looking for feedback re the letters which had been sent out, none had been received as yet and the AGO agreed to seek a response.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2013

There were no matters arising.

4. VILLAGE/ TOWN/AREA PLAN UPDATES INCLUDING

(a) CRAIGNISH

Mary Smyth commenced her update by reading a prepared statement. Craignish CC had considered resigning en masse over an issue with planning. An Application involving the Church of Scotland for a mixture of large private and affordable housing social was considered by the PPSL committee of the council and was determined by four members, all the local members having to declare an interest in the application. The CC feels that this application is against the Craignish Community Plan and the Local Plan. Craignish CC feels let down by Argyll and Bute.

Cllr. Taylor responded, advising that Members are obliged to be of an open mind when considering planning applications and can be reported to the Standards Commissioner if this is not the case. He welcomed the approach from the CC and explained his personal circumstances in the matter. Cllr MacMillan confirmed that he had felt it necessary to declare an interest, and was of the firm view that had acted entirely properly. The CC was disappointed that none of their local Members could participate. The Governance Officer clarified that in circumstances where a reasonable member of the public could construe a Members words or actions as indicative of him or her having predetermined an application, then the Member should declare an interest. The Governance Officer also noted that there was a considerable volume of guidance available from the Council on this and other matters, and agreed to make it available on request. It was confirmed that both Members and the CC had each learned from this incident and that roles and responsibilities were now clearer. Mary Smyth noted that the application has now been determined, and confirmed that the CC are not going to oppose this.

The Chair commended the good work done in the Craignish Community Plan and agreed that this was a model of best practice, which he had promoted to other community councils in Mid Argyll.

(b) NORTH KNAPDALE

David Kent, the new convenor of North Knapdale CC confirmed that the Inaugural meeting of the new CC had taken place and that the office bearers had been agreed. David wished to defer providing a further substantive update until the next meeting preferring to listen to the meeting and consider how best to contribute to this and future meetings

(c) WEST LOCHFYNE

Leonard McNeill noted that an issue had arisen recently at Minard regarding the rerouting of some sewage pipework at the side of the main road directly in front of housing in the village, it was noted that some time ago land was rented by the Community Council in order that Scottish Water could route some pipework across it at ground level. This was done and the surrounding area landscaped, which restored the amenity of the immediate area. Unfortunately, apparently the pipework was not functioning as efficiently as required, and the Community Council are now concerned to note that the pipework has been substantially changed without any consultation and at this time sits approximately three feet above ground, and is most unattractive. The preferred option from the Community Council perspective is obviously for the pipes to be at ground level or buried. If however, this solution will not work the Community Council are open to discussion as to how best to shield the pipes.

The Area Governance Officer agreed to contact Scottish Water to raise this issue.

(d) TARBERT CONSERVATION AREA

Councillor Anne Horn updated the group on local issues in Tarbert. It was noted that this is the 10 year anniversary of the Conservation Trust. Anne highlighted that the work undertaken by the local community working with partners had made an enormous difference to the village and highlighted specifically the successful creation of the Woodlands area which now includes an outdoor classroom, a green gym and other facilities. Similarly events like the fish festival bring much needed commerce to the area. The local produce project has now completed.

The Christmas lights switch on had been hit by bad weather which caused a power cut on the day, however, the lights were switched on successfully the following day. A number of local craft fairs have also taken place.

Achahoish Primary school created a "St. Hilda Museum" and the Secretary of State for Education has written to the school commending it on this effort. The Chair thanked Anne for her informative update.

(e) FURNACE

No update received.

(f) DUNADD

No update received (currently inquorate)

(g) INVERARAY

No update received

(h) LOCHGILPHEAD

Bob Millar returning Convenor of the Lochgilphead Community Council

confirmed that the CC had chosen its office bearers. He also noted that the CC was continuing to pursue its issues re planning with the Council re the old school site at Manse Brae these issues primarily relating to inadequate planning enforcement.

Bob Millar noted that the developer had not yet submitted plans for the necessary landscaping of the housing development. It was however reported by the Lochgilphead CC convenor that he understood that the path from the new houses behind Manse Brae down to Blarbluie Road were to have the path upgraded with lighting and the railings to be removed. Bob reported that this matter is to be further discussed at a meeting of the Community Council on 19th Dec.

(i) ARDRISHAIG

Jeanette Loughton advised that there have been a considerable number of projects and events involving Ardrishaig CC recently. She noted that this year's Ardrishaig lights switch on was a real community event and when complete it was akin to a mini Gala. This success has encouraged the Community Council to make the lights switch on an annual event. Jeanette advised that funding for this event came from a variety of places including both local businesses and the Ardrishaig Community Trust (Alt Dearg Wind farm).

Jeanette noted that Ardrishaig CC membership is now at fifteen members out of a maximum 16. She reported that the Community Council had held a joint meeting with the community trust on 10th Dec, the purpose of which was to consider options for developing the town. The group is looking to improve the frontage of the town particularly around the arches.

Jeanette reported that the Community Council had been in continuing contact with Scottish Water regarding flooding issues at the King George V playing field. This is resulting in flooding down Glengilp Road.

Jeanette also noted that the Community Resilience plan for the Area is now in place.

The metal railings at Brae Road are still an issue. The delay appears to be that there is an issue as to whether it is the Council or Scottish Water who are responsible for the maintenance of the railings

Jeanette commended Council officers working in Ardrishaig for regularly making themselves available for consultation and discussion with members of the CC., thereby providing invaluable assistance. This was noted particularly in relation to planning staff.

It was noted that since the responsibility for the Crinan Canal had been passed to Scottish Canals, there has been considerable fruitful discussion about the CC being able to improve the War Memorial by applying for a licence to upgrade it without having to negotiate every detail separately.

It was highlighted that this year alone £130K has come into Ardrishaig from the wind farm. The Trust are meeting on the 11th January to review the February round of applications for approval, which has 30K to allocate. Jeanette noted

that the trustees were employing a prudential management strategy for the Fund with the remaining amount of this year's allocation being retained for larger long term regeneration projects for the area

A short discussion about regeneration and the involvement of planning and potential enforcement followed. The Chair suggested that given that planning and enforcement were issues which appeared to have been identified by a number of Community Councils as areas where training was wanted, that there might be scope for a future training event to which all could be invited. The Area Governance Officer was instructed to contact planning to ascertain whether this could be arranged to take place immediately after the next MAP meeting

Finally, Jeanette reported on the work currently being undertaken at the King George V playing field.

5. HOUSING ISSUES

Rod Buchanan updated the group on the current status of housing allocation in Mid Argyll. Rod noted that Dewar Avenue is still currently more or less a blank canvas. One issue of interest to the MAP was that the road leading up to Bridge Terrace is owned by Argyll Estates not the Council or ACHA - consequently, the agreement and participation of the owner is needed in order to upgrade the road –this is still under discussion but has not yet been agreed. Rod noted that ACHA own 5 out of the 6 houses on the road, but that the road is currently nowhere near adoptable standard.

Rod reported that the planned upgrading of the path from Duncholigan to Kilmory had not been included in the works which were budgeted for this year and so did not get funding. An application will be submitted again next year.

Tarbert- An Issue was reported by Rod regarding the Oakhill re-roofing project. There have been issues surrounding this because it required the agreement of a number of parties, and one household which had previously agreed has now moved -necessitating the agreement of the new party.

Cllr Horn highlighted the perception that people are being moved from this area because houses are damp and uninhabitable. She also noted that she had been informed that an owner in Church Terrace had unsuccessfully sought ACHA assistance. Cllr Horn questioned whether people currently in damp properties will seek to move to the new houses which will result in worse voids being left with ACHA for longer periods.

Rod noted that no one wanted damp homes, but explained that he has experienced difficulties in tenemental properties with some private owners, either unwilling or unable to pay their share of the projected costs. Rod noted that this was an on-going issue which would not be solved overnight.

Leonard highlighted the previously poor state of Lochnell Street in Lochgilphead and commended ACHA for improving the street at the entrance to the town. It was noted that there remain a few sites which have not yet been improved. It was noted that there are three RSLs in this area and the AGO was requested to invite Fyne Homes to the next meeting of the partnership.

Rod was invited by the Chair to give a presentation on strategic issues in housing at the next meeting.

The Chair queried whether the delay in appointing the Inveraray CARS conservation officer had impacted on the work to Relief Land etc. Rod indicated that this had not been the case so far.

6. SCOTTISH WATER

Joanna Peebles had sent her apologies as she was unable to attend the meeting. The Area Governance Officer agreed to raise issues raised by members with Scottish Water.

7. TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

A report was tabled from Julian Green detailing this year's roads capital program – the program for 2015 is still being compiled. Jetpatching, winter maintenance and drainage works are still ongoing.

8. HEALTH/SOCIAL CARE ISSUES

There were no updates provided.

9. COMMUNITY SAFETY

Councillor Anne Horn updated the group on the activities of the Community Safety Forum including the actions re the trunk road, and the successful installation by the fire service of *deaf alerters* (smoke alarms for the deaf) which give a visual representation of and alarm for the hard of hearing.

POLICE UPDATE

Sgt. Mark Wilson – Noted that since the incident is still ongoing he was unable to comment in any detail regarding the recent serious sexual assault. However, he was able to say that it was hoped that the investigation was nearing fruition. No wider risk to the public is foreseeable. – Sgt Wilson indicated that the Police are aware that there have been comments re the lack of updating the community on this matter, it is hoped that this will soon be remedied.

There was a discussion re the issue of cold calling and the group noted that at the moment there was no immediate intention to set up cold calling zones in Mid Argyll until the Arrochar pilot had been tried. Some partners commented that the information currently on the website was useful.

There had been a number of minor issues re road closures for parking and bin emptying during the summer festivals in Tarbert, these have been addressed and have been successfully resolved.

It was noted that there have recently been a number of break-ins and it was suggested that this was the work of two distinct groups, the farm based burglaries appear to be the work of a gang from outwith Argyll; however, it is unlikely that the gang are farmers given that on occasion they have

disturbed animals, thereby alerting the owner.

The break-ins at Inveraray/Minard are thought to be the work of a different group, and it was noted that all were empty houses and only cash and jewellery were targeted.

Sgt. Wilson noted that a buzzard was being released on the date of the meeting. This bird had been involved in a road accident, and had been handed in to the police by concerned individuals. The bird had been cared for in an appropriate aviary, however, having recovered it is now to be released back into the wild.

Overall, the crime statistics are down with 109 crimes reported this quarter as opposed to 130 for the same period last year. Violent crime is down; however thefts and road safety offences seem more or less static. There has been an increase in the number of fixed penalties issued by the police (which are included in the figures).

10. COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

(a) NUISANCE CALLS

One or two members of the group highlighted that they had recently experienced an increase in the number of unsolicited marketing telephone calls they were receiving. Advice was given that the Telephone Preference service, while not perfect was still the best avenue to take. It was also noted that fax machines regularly received similar calls with a substantial cost in paper and ink. It was noted that blocking these calls can prove difficult since many originate outside the UK and will not adhere to UK legislation re multi-diallers etc. The advice was to report nuisance calls to both your telecoms supplier and to the police so that the activity is at least recorded as an issue.

(b) COMMUNITY PLANNING

It was noted that the Single Outcome Agreement Consultation events originally scheduled for November had not yet taken place due to having been rescheduled for February 2014.

There will be a CPP event on Islay on the 27th Jan, one in Kintyre on the 14th February and one planned for Tarbert on 18 February 2014.

Duncan Clelland noted that application for 3rd sector grants open this week and that £35k is available in this round. Jeanette asked whether feedback on contributions/application could be made available. Duncan agreed that this would happen.

11. AMENITY ISSUES

(a) HORSE MANURE ON CANAL FOOTPATHS

Paul Martin from Amenity Services advised that there here is currently no applicable legislation re offences for failure to remove horse dung, but there is guidance, which will be circulated.

Paul noted that dogs are a very different issue, legislatively. As in other areas

the long winter nights mean that the problem has become a higher profile issue.

(b) PADDLING POOL - LOCHGILPHEAD

An issue was recently raised by a parent in Lochgilphead who highlighted a potential danger to toddlers should they stumble and fall into the empty concrete based pool. The ensuing checks have raised a number of other issues which are currently undergoing consideration. These include a filtration system for the pool.

(c) CRAIGNISH CEMETERY

A wall bordering Craginish cemetery was damaged during works to extend the cemetery; this has not yet been fully reinstated.

12. ALCOHOL PRESENTATION

An informative Presentation on the work of CALA was given by John Woods and would be circulated to the Group by the Area Governance Assistant.

13. AOB

(a) TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair discussed the former uncertainty around the role of the MAP in relation to the Community Planning Partnership (CPP), and confirmed that the MAP had been confirmed as a strategic partner of the CPP. Sandy spoke to the potential for the MAP to make a substantial contribution to Community Planning and asked members to look to a new approach, in which the group would focus on strategic issues for the Mid Argyll community. Cllr Taylor indicated that he had in mind the need to expand membership of the MAP to include businesses and third sector representation. It was agreed that the original terms of reference would be circulated for members for their information and comment as part of the ongoing development of the partnership group.

(b) WW1 COMMEMORATION

An outline of the arrangements for the upcoming commemoration of the start of W.W.1 was provided by Cllr. MacMillan. Further details to be provided when available.

14. 2014 MEETING CALENDAR

The dates below were proposed by the Chair and will be confirmed at the next meeting.

12th March 2014

11th June 2014

10th September 2014

10th December 2014