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MINUTES of MEETING of MID ARGYLL PARTNERSHIP held in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD on WEDNESDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2015

Present:

Councillor Sandy Taylor (Chair)

Councillor Anne Horn

Councillor Donald MacMillan for item 4(a)
only

Attending:

Melissa Stewart, Area Governance Officer
Audrey Martin, Projects and Renewables Manager
Christopher Breslin, Scottish Canals
Inspector Julie McLeish, Police Scotland
Ben Tustin, SEPA
David Kent, South Knapdale Community Council
Hugh Thomson, South Knapdale Community Council
Andrew Wilson, North Knapdale Community Council & Mid Argyll Initiative
Andrew Buntin, Lochgilphead Community Council
Betty Rhodick, Lochgilphead Community Council
Mary Smyth, Craignish Community Council
Jim Malcolm, Dunadd Community Council
Lynda Syed, Furnace Community Council & Argyll TSI
Jane McCurdie, Phoenix Project & Mid Argyll Initiative

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

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

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of:

Councillor Robin Currie
Councillor Dougie Philand
David Jardine, Forestry Commission
Kate McAulay, NHS

2. MINUTES

(a) Minute of the meeting of the Mid Argyll Partnership held on 29 October 2015

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

(b) Minute of the meeting of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Community Planning Group held on 12 August 2015

Partners agreed to note the Minute of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Community Planning Group, held on 12 August 2015.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Lynda Syed provided an update in relation to the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership Outline Strategic Plan. She advised that the consultation was now underway, and that an event which was open to the public had recently been held in the Mid Argyll Community Hospital. She noted that the event had not been particularly well attended and that the consultation document seemed a little cumbersome. She advised that she had asked for Executive Summaries of the document and would distribute these to anyone who requested one. Discussion in relation to the feedback was had, with Partners noting the difficulties of responding constructively as there are no structures or systems to work against. Councillor Horn advised that she was a member of the Health and Social Care Integration Board and that she would feedback to the Board the comments of Partners. The Area Governance Officer agreed to circulate the Executive Summaries to Community Councils.

Lynda Syed provided a brief update in relation to the Mens Shed project. She outlined possible venues for the group and spoke of discussions with the Council about the possibility of securing a 6 month lease for premises in Lochgilphead which had previously been operated as a joiners workshop. The Chair, Councillor Taylor agreed to speak to the Council's Property Services regarding this possibility. Ms Syed advised of the National launch of the Scottish Men Shed Association, which was due to take place in Glasgow in November, and advised that she was hopeful that "shedders" from the Mid Argyll area would be in attendance at the event.

The Chair thanked Ms Syed for the information provided.

4. OUTCOME 1: THE ECONOMY IS DIVERSE AND THRIVING

(a) Scottish Canals

Partners were given an presentation by Christopher Breslin of Scottish Canals.

Mr Breslin outlined the development projects on the Crinan Canal and advised that there are approximately 1,500 transit journeys through the canal per annum. He explained that the aim was to increase dwell time and attract visitors to the area. He outlined plans for the full length of canal from Ardrishaig to Crinan and identified individual hubs along the canal and the wider area which would link together with the aim being to encourage visitors to stay longer within the area.

Mr Breslin advised that Scottish Canals had pin-pointed Ardrishaig as a regeneration site and outlined potential areas for development in the "Yot Spot" in Pier Square, Ardrishaig and the former Bridge House Hotel, Ardrishaig.

Mr Breslin provided information on the Crinan Corridor Charette, highlighting the opportunities to review the 2008 Ardrishaig Regeneration Framework and to create a community plan for Lochgilphead. Mr Breslin

also gave an overview of a number of successful projects undertaken by Scottish Canals.

Discussion took place regarding funding, with Mr Breslin advising that a bid had recently been drafted for Charette funding and he outlined the community stake and role. He explained that the purpose of the Charette was to link up communities around the canal and made specific reference to Lochgilphead and Ardrishaig. Discussion took place in respect of the proposals of the Boundary Commission, the support from Foundation Scotland and the possibility of a tie in to the charette proposals.

The Council's Projects and Renewables Manager advised that there was a wider consultation as part of the Charette and offered to provide feedback once the charrette had been completed.

The Chair thanked Mr Breslin for the information provided.

Decision

The Partnership noted that the Councils Projects and Renewables Manager would provide an update on progress to the next meeting of the group.

(b) Community Trusts

The Chair, Councillor Taylor introduced Jane McCurdie of the Phoenix Project to the group and set out the context for discussions.

Andrew Wilson advised that consultations in respect of the Mid Argyll Initiative were due to start on 29 October 2015 in Lochgilphead and Ardrishaig.

He advised that North Knapdale were in the process of setting up a Community Trust.

Mary Smyth advised that although she was not a member of the Trust she was aware that Craignish Community Company had been established for a number of years and that they are currently working on purchasing some land next to the school for use by the school and the local community.

Councillor Horn advised that Tarbert and Skipness Community Trust are currently drafting a plan for the use of empty properties in the village, and developing a back packers hostel near to the Clonaig Ferry. Councillor Horn further advised that the outdoor mini-gym is due to open next week and is located across from the adult gym; that the community wind turbine is now active and that there is a development day planned to develop the local plan.

Jane McCurdie, of the Phoenix Project advised that the works are ongoing in relation to the Clock Lodge Project, with the wind and watertight works

scheduled to start in Spring 2016. She advised that these works must be completed before Harbro can progress the second phase of the build.

5. OUTCOME 2: WE HAVE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Councillor Taylor introduced the item and spoke of the Actions contained under Outcome 2 of the Single Outcome Agreement. He spoke of the number of improvements on the road particularly the A82 and A83 and the delivery of the rollout of high speed next generation broadband. The Councils Projects and Renewables Manager updated the group on plans in respect of the mobile network, which included improvements to the current EE Contract, the Beacon Project, and Scottish Government funding. The Chair advised that the Economic Forum considers connectivity as being one of the top three priorities in the area. He advised of meetings with the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth, John Swinney MSP, to see what pressure can be applied to ensure Argyll and Bute are recognised and it was agreed that the Projects and Renewables Manager would bring an update on "Broadband and Mobile Communications" to the January meeting (which would include plans for mast sharing).

Mr Buntin spoke of the pilot Ferry Service between Campbeltown and Ardrossan and ways in which a permanent service could enhance Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands as a whole. Councillor Horn provided an update in terms of the ongoing work of the Campbeltown Ferry Sub-group and advised that a decision in respect of the continuation of this service, is expected before Christmas.

Further discussion was had in relation to the last exit/entrance to the canal before being secured for the night during summer months, with Mr Breslin advising that he would feedback comments to the local operations manager for consideration.

Concerns were raised regarding the budget cuts proposed by Argyll and Bute Council, with the Roads budget being of particular concern for rural areas. The general feeling of the Group was that resources are falling at a time where community expectations are growing.

6. OUTCOME 6: PEOPLE LIVE IN SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES

The Chair, Councillor Taylor introduced the item and spoke of the actions contained under Outcome 6 of the Single Outcome Agreement.

Betty Rhodick spoke of the contingency plan lodged with Argyll and Bute Council by Lochgilphead Community Council. She explained that the Community Council were in a position to update the plan and had asked the Council if the original plan could be returned to allow them to do so. Unfortunately the Council advised that the plan had been mislaid. The Area Governance Officer agreed to take this matter forward with the Council's Emergency Planning Officer, and request that the Dunbeg plan be provided as a template for the update. Councillor Taylor apologised for the inconvenience caused to the Community Council.

Inspector McLeish of Police Scotland spoke of issues within the area and highlighted that priorities are road safety, anti-social behaviour and drugs. She outlined the

current activity around rural crime and advised of the rural watch scheme which is being rolled out via Community Councils.

Inspector McLeish further advised of a series of ATM frauds in the Inveraray area and outlined protection methods. She also spoke of a multi-agency exercise with harbours throughout Argyll and Bute to protect against the refugee crisis.

Discussion took place in respect of signage in the South Knapdale area; Police attendance at Community Council meetings; and various issues surrounding pedestrian safety. Inspector McLeish undertook to work with South Knapdale Community Council to identify funds for replacing the crimestoppers sign and also agreed to look at reintroduction of a newsletter on a quarterly basis.

7. COMMUNITY

Ben Tustin of SEPA advised that he continued to work closely with Scottish Water and the Council's Planning Department in respect of sewage issues. He advised that he was scheduled to attend a meeting with Police Scotland in relation to waste dumping to agree a strategy to tackle the issue.

Councillor Horn advised of the mini-gym opening in Tarbert and also of the fireworks display, which had proved popular in previous years.

Lynda Syed on behalf of Furnace Community Council advised that the work behind houses on the shore side has now started. She highlighted the success of a recent fundraising event, "Women of Furnace, Past and Present" where over £600 had been raised.

On behalf of Argyll TSI, Lynda Syed advised that she was in the process of producing a newsletter, which is issued in the first week of every month and offered an opportunity for groups to advertise forthcoming events. She requested anyone who would like to use the service to contact her directly.

Mary Smyth of Craignish Community Council advised of the drop in event for the launch of the Mid Argyll Initiative, which is scheduled to take place on Saturday 31st October.

Andy Buntin of Lochgilphead Community Council advised that he had been busy with responses to the proposals by the Boundary Commission. He explained that the Community Council had been involved with works of both Scottish Canals and the Mid Argyll Initiative, and that the Foundation Scotland plans were progressing well. Mr Buntin outlined plans for the front green play park and advised that discussions were ongoing with Argyll and Bute Council to tighten up funding.

Jane McCurdie of the Phoenix Project thanked Members for the invitation to join and advised that she was happy to attend future meetings of the Mid Argyll Partnership.

Jim Malcolm of Dunadd Community Council advised of an engagement event with the Council's Roads Department which had proved successful and that the Community Council were happy to be involved in the Mid Argyll Initiative.

8. THEMES FOR NEXT MEETING

The Area Governance Officer advised that the themes of the next Community Planning Group were still to be confirmed. She advised that she would notify the Partnership of these by email as soon as she was in receipt of the information.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair, Councillor Taylor outlined Argyll and Bute Council's Service Choices programme. He advised that the Council have agreed a plan to reduce expenditure to meet income. Councillor Taylor further advised that Officers had been asked to identify potential savings. He outlined the timescales involved in setting the budget in 2016 and advised that the public consultation was due to be published by the end of the week. The Area Governance Officer agreed to circulate the web link to the consultation document to all Community Councils.

10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Mid Argyll Partnership will take place on Wednesday 27th January 2016 within the Council Chambers, Kilmory, Lochgilphead.