

**MINUTES of MEETING of MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE AND THE ISLANDS AREA COMMUNITY
PLANNING GROUP held by SKYPE
on TUESDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2020**

Present: Ian Brodie, East Kintyre Community Council (Chair)
Councillor John Armour
Councillor Alastair Redman
Councillor Sandy Taylor
Shona Barton, Committee Manager
Antonia Baird, Community Development Officer
Brian Smith, Community Learning Team Leader
Colin Wilson, Local Government Boundary Commission
Ronnie Hinds, Local Government Boundary Commission
Susan MacRae, Skills Development Scotland
Catherine Kennedy, Mid Argyll Community Transport Volunteers
Rachel Whyte, Islay Community Council
Phil Dickinson, Craignish Community Council
Valerie Nimmo, Campbeltown Community Council
Alison McGrory, Argyll and Bute HSCP

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first virtual meeting of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group and outlined the procedure for the meeting.

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of:

Councillor Rory Colville, Argyll and Bute Council
Councillor Robin Currie, Argyll and Bute Council
Councillor Anne Horn, Argyll and Bute Council
Councillor Donald McMillan BEM, Argyll and Bute Council
Councillor Douglas Philand, Argyll and Bute Council
Samantha Somers, Argyll and Bute Council
Donald Watt, Argyll and Bute HSCP
PC Laura Evans, Police Scotland
Jane Cowen, Tarbert and Skipness Community Trust
Catherine Anne MacAulay, Campbeltown Community Council
Alyson MacGillivray, South Islay Development Trust
John Rennie, Balfour Beatty
Eric Spence, South Kintyre Development Trust
Jim Porteous, Islay Community Council
Lynn Campbell, Department for Work and Pensions

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

(a) **Meeting of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Community Planning Group held on Wednesday, 5 February 2020**

The Minute of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group meeting held on Wednesday, 5 February 2020 was approved as a correct record.

4. COMMUNITY FOCUS

(a) Mid Argyll Community Transport Volunteers

Catherine Kennedy, Transport Co-ordinator for Mid Argyll Community Transport Volunteers provided information to the Group around the reaction of the Mid Argyll Community Transport Volunteers throughout the Covid19 pandemic. Catherine detailed the significant increase in workload and services provided by the group, advising that the volunteers had agreed initially to provide their time for free to ensure that people in need could obtain assistance without any charges before grant funding was in place to assist with this and ensure drivers could be paid for their services. Catherine noted that her own workload had increased significantly and much of her time was spent co-ordinating and arranging additional requirements such as PPE for drivers.

Catherine advised that Mid Argyll Community Transport Volunteers were part of the local Caring for People effort and had been involved in the provision of many services such as: the delivery of prescriptions; delivering food parcels; obtaining and delivering shopping for those in need; and their usual transport service. Catherine outlined the way in which shopping for clients had changed to meet the government guidance and noted that during the Covid19 pandemic the group had a larger than usual client list as alongside the over 60s and disabled people who usually used the service, the group also assisted those who were shielding and self-isolating. Catherine advised that the increase in workload was particularly difficult for the group due to many of the volunteers themselves being over 70 and therefore unable to assist, this reduced the number of available drivers from 30 to 4 before an appeal saw the number rise to 12.

Catherine provided an account of the fear felt by drivers when travelling during the height of lockdown that they would be stopped and questioned as the drivers were not considered key workers. Catherine noted that she felt that the service was crucial to the NHS in enabling people to get to their appointments and advised that rules in place due to Covid19 meant that only one client could be transported per car, which caused an increase in demand for transport and decreased the groups availability for local runs when attending hospital appointments in Glasgow with clients. Catherine advised that as well as the services outlined previously, the group had also taken pets to the vets on behalf of owners, delivered packages and provided other services as they were needed. Catherine also noted that pressure on volunteers had increased due to the road closures at the Rest and Be Thankful.

Catherine advised that the group had received financial assistance through HIE from government resilience group funding which had enabled the group to provide their services for free, the funding for which had ended on the 30th August when a small charge had been introduced for clients. Catherine noted that a grant had also been received to assist with the purchase of PPE for volunteers and the group awaited the outcome of an application for a recovery grant from the Scottish Government which would allow the group to again provide their services for free. Catherine emphasised that the group was largely continuing to provide the same services, with the exception of delivering food parcels.

Catherine expressed concern that during lockdown all information which was being disseminated appeared to be geared towards those who were on social media and the internet, while a lot of the group's clients were not. Catherine noted that many clients relied on the group for information and phoned daily to request updates. Catherine advised that in particular she was concerned that some clients had been unaware that they could receive food parcels. Catherine outlined some concerns expressed by clients such as food wastage in food parcels and clients who were healthy and over 70 feeling that they should have been contacted to ensure that they were not requiring assistance.

Catherine advised that she believed that Mid Argyll would have benefitted from a local resilience group, as had been in place in Kintyre and Islay, which could have seen the efforts better co-ordinated and ensured that no one had been missed in terms of support. Catherine noted that the Caring for People group had been useful but that not all organisations had operated through them. Catherine reiterated that overall the effort had been very positive and they had received lots of good feedback from clients and the drivers who had been on the front line during the pandemic.

Councillor Armour advised that as one of the co-ordinators of the Kintyre Resilience Group he would agree with Catherine that much of the communication had been aimed at those who were online, noting that he had provided a daily bulletin on Argyll FM for those who did not have internet access to ensure that they were aware of the most up to date news. Councillor Armour noted that unfortunately he had been unaware of this group at the time of the broadcasts, however in future if there was a requirement to provide information in this way again he would be happy to work with Catherine around this.

The Chair thanked Catherine for her presentation.

Decision

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group considered and noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Community Development Officer, dated 10 November 2020, submitted)

5. PARTNERS UPDATES - 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 Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands 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: Report by Samantha Stubbs – Strategic Development Manager, Third Sector Interface, dated October 2020, submitted)

(b) West Kintyre Community Council Covid-19 Support

The Group considered an update from West Kintyre Community Council detailing their community response to Covid-19 which included producing scrubs and face coverings, commencing local shop deliveries for those in need and seeking additional support for those in the area through Shopper-Aide as well as funding efforts to assist Shopper-Aide, Campbelltown Food Bank and the Friends of Tarbert group.

Decision

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group:

1. considered and noted the information provided; and
2. noted that in the absence of a representative from West Kintyre Community Council the Committee Manager would take back any questions to West Kintyre Community Council and circulate any responses to the Group.

(Reference: Report by Margaret Pratt, West Kintyre Community Council, submitted)

(c) 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.

Alison McGrory outlined details within the report, noting that it provided details in relation to the area wide response which had involved the public health department, the Council, the Third Sector Interface and local councillors among others. Alison advised that on the 16th of March 2020 a group of people with an interest in resilience was formed in anticipation of lockdown and this group met on a daily basis over a three month period to discuss issues arising in line with the Scottish Government resilience strategy.

Alison provided details of some of the services provided throughout the pandemic and noted that there was a cognisance of those who were not able to access information online through the use of postal drops and advertisement of a national helpline. Alison noted that in total 990 volunteers were identified, as well as groups on the ground who were mobilising themselves to provide support. Alison advised that the Caring for People response had a role in terms of people who were asked to shield by the Scottish Government, advising that in total approximately 3,300 people were asked to shield within Argyll and Bute. Alison provided details of the services made available during this time, including ambient and fresh food packages. With reference to earlier comments by Catherine Kennedy in relation to the availability of food parcels, Alison noted that it was unfortunate that there appeared to have been a communication breakdown in that case as all those shielding were communicated with by letter from the Chief Medical Officer and notified of how they could obtain a food parcel, noting that at the height of lockdown upwards of 1,000 packages per

week were being delivered.

Alison advised that a comprehensive evaluation of work undertaken during the response was being undertaken and lessons were being learned, particularly around communication and community working.

Decision

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group considered and noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Alison McGrory - Health Improvement Principal, Health and Social Care Partnership, dated 10 November 2020, submitted)

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

Ian Brodie, East Kintyre Community Council

Ian Brodie advised that East Kintyre Community Council had formed a group, comprising of members of the Community Council and volunteers, at the beginning of lockdown which had served the community as required. Ian noted that the group had delivered a bottle of hand wash to all of those listed by the local GP surgery, and handed out bars of soap provided by South Kintyre Development Trust. Ian noted that some work had also been carried out with local shops and one volunteer who had a PVG had been assisting with picking up shopping and delivering prescriptions. Ian advised that this support could be reinstated if required.

Rachel Whyte, Islay Community Council

Rachel Whyte advised that Islay had benefitted from having a resilience group in the area, noting that the Community Council had undertaken a huge amount of work in response to the Covid19 pandemic. Rachel outlined work which had been carried out, including erecting signage and the implementation of hand sanitiser stations across the island and outside of the local Co-ops. Rachel noted that the resilience group on Islay had worked fantastically and Islay also now had a recovery group set up to assist with coming out of lockdown. Rachel noted that reports from the recovery group indicated that people had become somewhat cocooned and were at times unwilling to come out again as they had been made to feel very safe, noting that this was causing concern with regard to social isolation. Phil Dickinson sought and received confirmation from Rachel that hand sanitiser had been purchased using the supporting communities grant and noted that Craignish Community Council planned to use some of this fund in future for safe coffee mornings to prevent social isolation. Rachel advised that attempts were being made to prevent social isolation, however this was a worry on Islay and elsewhere in Argyll and Bute, particularly due to the lack of Mental Health support available in the area. Rachel agreed to discuss this issue in further detail with Phil following the meeting and urged everyone at the meeting to reach out to anyone who they felt may be struggling with the effects of social isolation.

Councillor Alastair Redman

Councillor Redman advised that it had been a huge concern locally that the Co-op had not provided hand sanitiser at the entrance of their shops, despite other shops in the area doing so, as it was not their statutory duty and noted that he felt that it was a moral duty that they should be providing this. Councillor Redman thanked Rachel and the Community Council for arranging this and thanked volunteers across Islay and the Kintyre peninsula for going above and beyond, often at their own expense. Councillor Redman highlighted recent spates of vandalism on Islay which Rachel had notified Police of. Councillor Redman, following comments made by Rachel in relation to a lack of mental health provision in the area, noted that many of his constituents had contacted him with concerns around mental health provision.

Phil Dickinson, Craignish Community Council

Phil Dickinson advised that he found the sharing of ideas at the group useful in seeing how other groups had utilised their funding and dealt with the pandemic. Phil advised that a group had been set up in Craignish including representatives from the Community Council, Community Company and Village Hall. Phil noted that a document outlining the response had been sent on to the Committee Manager who would circulate to attendees and advised that he would briefly outline the contents of this.

Phil advised that the group had decided that their role would be as a portal of information who could signpost people to available services, noting that this was largely carried out via Facebook, e-mail and voice file notes for those who struggled with reading. Phil noted that the group had also put together a pack for every household with printed information and details for organisations which could be signposted to.

Phil noted that it was the priority of the group to ensure that no one was missed who required support and a list of vulnerable people had been collated and shared with a first responder network, each person on this list was allocated a volunteer who would assist them and check in on them every week. Phil outlined work which had been carried out to assist people including signs being erected, messages being distributed reinforcing government advice, and those reporting breaches of guidance being signposted to the Police. Phil highlighted that much of the work of the group had been around running a hardship and food fund, noting that 138 people had been assisted through this. Phil advised that the group were currently planning further options for the next stage of the fund and noted the challenges around meeting the criteria for this, advising that there were a number of ideas being explored with this in mind.

Antonia Baird, Community Development Officer

Antonia advised that she would provide an overview of the work which had been carried out across the MAKI Area by groups who were not represented at the meeting, noting that the communities throughout the MAKI area had spontaneously organised themselves in a number of compassionate and creative ways to suit their community's needs. Antonia provided details of the different ways in which support was provided such as providing shopping, collecting and delivering prescriptions and co-ordinating activities to prevent isolation and loneliness.

Antonia advised that people could be referred to local community organisations via

the Caring for People helpline and that this had resulted in many new connections being made and the needs of individuals being met by their communities, noting that this had been particularly successful in areas such as Kintyre where referrals had decreased when individuals were made known to the Kintyre Resilience Group. Antonia provided details of the work carried out by the Caring for People Partnership such as creating a Guide to Safe Volunteering, putting in place a protocol for safe delivery of medication and obtaining insurance for those providing volunteering services. Antonia advised that a volunteer matching portal was created as outlined in the update from TSI and noted that the Council had worked with the Co-op to create supermarket cards for volunteers to avoid unnecessary handling of cash. Antonia outlined the services provided by local community groups, as well as third sector and private sector organisations and noted the different ways in which the groups had met varying needs across the area and were involved in partnership working.

Susan MacRae, Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

Susan MacRae introduced herself to the group as the new Area Manager for Argyll and Bute and the Western Isles and advised that she would be happy to provide an update on the work that SDS had carried out during the Covid19 response. Susan advised that SDS staff had largely worked from home during lockdown and many services were provided online, through Skype or by telephone although a blended approach was now being adopted in certain aspects of their work in line with national guidance. Susan provided details of work which had taken place with schools with the assistance of Head Teachers and guidance staff, noting that the impact on younger people had not been as negative as initially feared due to many of them having had offers of employment and further education in place prior to the lockdown period.

Susan noted that help was available for both young people and adults via the National Helpline on 0800 917 800 or by using the My World of Work website at www.myworldofwork.co.uk and encouraged anyone in attendance to signpost to these resources anyone who they thought may benefit from these services.

Brian Smith, Argyll and Bute Council

Brian Smith provided an update on the activities of the Community Learning Team in terms of the Covid19 response, advising that the service had previously provided largely face-to-face support and required to adapt quickly to the national guidance to provide services virtually. Brian noted that the team were also involved in the Caring for People effort, providing assistance with the helpline and the food project, as well as the delivery of prescriptions and shopping across Argyll and Bute. Brian advised that the team also provided support to school hubs which provided care for the children of essential workers and allowed essential workers to continue to work throughout lockdown.

Brian provided information around the Digital Connections project and support provided to those requiring it to access online support and blended learning. Brian noted that the team had undertaken a lot of work in relation to the No One Left Behind project by the Scottish Government and assisting those who required support to find work or to undertake training, also focusing on providing support with their health and wellbeing.

Brian provided details of youth work undertaken by the team including work around: youth participation; youth forums; a successful bid to the Scottish Government's Youth Work Education Recovery Fund which would allow a programme of learning for disengaged pupils incorporating outdoor learning and an SQA qualification; and work to encourage those who had struggled throughout lockdown to re-engage with learning and rebuild relationships. Brian encouraged anyone who was aware of someone who could benefit from the support of the Community Learning Team to get in touch.

Councillor John Armour

Councillor Armour advised that he had been a co-ordinator for the Kintyre Resilience Group which had been set up by Eric Spence of the South Kintyre Development Trust prior to lockdown. Councillor Armour noted that the group had attracted more than 150 volunteers within a week, who were then split into areas to provide support. Councillor Armour advised that the group had worked with Campbeltown, East Kintyre, West Kintyre, Southend and Laggan Community Councils to identify people who were shielding and self-isolating. Councillor Armour provided details of the work carried out by the group with the Caring for People helpline, noting that in most cases where a request was made for support a co-ordinator would ask a volunteer to action this and it would be resolved within an hour.

Councillor Armour advised that the community and local business had pulled together to get things such as shopping out to those who needed it, while the West of Scotland resilience network had provided soap which was distributed to communities as previously mentioned by Ian. Councillor Armour noted that the group had worked with the local Food Bank as most of the volunteers were over 70 and unable to do the work themselves which had left them in danger of closing. The Food Bank had therefore been relocated to the Town Hall for the duration of lockdown, assisted by volunteers, which allowed normal opening hours to operate and social distancing to be maintained with a separate entrance and exit being utilised. Councillor Armour advised that work had been carried out with Shopper-Aide and volunteers had been provided to assist them with an increase in workload. Councillor Armour emphasised that the group had been and continued to work well and were now looking at setting up a wellbeing economy project and having resilience in place in case of any future unexpected events.

Councillor Armour provided details of a liaison group which had been set up with local community councils, Scottish Power and the relevant contractors in response to concerns from locals around workers at the Beinn an Tuirc windfarm coming into the area from Ireland and the Central Belt during lockdown. Councillor Armour outlined the actions taken by the liaison group and noted that it appeared to have addressed many of the concerns of locals and assisted in ensuring the safety of people in the area by securing assurance from the parties involved that every appropriate precaution would be taken.

Valerie Nimmo, Campbeltown Community Council

Valerie Nimmo advised that she would echo much of what was said by Councillor Armour, noting that Campbeltown Community Council had been involved in the liaison group as mentioned and in supporting Kintyre Resilience Group during the

Covid19 response in various ways such as: co-ordinating volunteers; delivering shopping and prescriptions; providing telephone befriending services; and sewing scrubs and face masks. Valerie advised that Campbeltown Community Council had also provided financial support to Campbeltown Food Bank and Shopper-Aide using funding from SSE. Valerie thanked Councillor Armour for his reports on Argyll FM which assisted those who did not have access to the internet.

6. UPDATES BY COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERS

(a) Health and Social Care Partnership - Public Health Update

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

Alison McGrory outlined the contents of the report, particularly highlighting the Living Well Strategy, a new strategic framework for how people could lead healthier lives in Argyll and Bute. Alison noted that the Living Well strategy was developed over 2019 and took into account the opinions of over 450 people. Alison also drew the group's attention to small grants which were available to community groups through the strategy, advising that the fund had been oversubscribed which showed a requirement for the funding and noting that organisations would be notified of the outcome of their applications shortly. Alison advised that Health and Wellbeing Networks in Argyll and Bute were also being rebranded as Living Well Networks in line with the strategy and consultations which had been undertaken.

Discussion took place around underage drinking on Islay and it was agreed that Alison would follow this up with Rachel after the meeting. Alison advised that information around the HSCP's Alcohol and Drug Partnership would also be circulated to the group when available.

Decision

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group considered and noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Alison McGrory - Health Improvement Principal, Health and Social Care Partnership, dated 10 November 2020, submitted)

(b) Opportunity for verbal updates from Area Community Planning Group Partners

Councillor John Armour

Councillor Armour expressed concern at the poor attendance of partners at the meeting and noted that he was unsure what could be done to resolve this and encourage better participation. Rachel suggested that it may be beneficial to ask young people to attend the meetings, the Committee Manager confirmed that young people are invited as representatives to the meeting and noted that attendance was poor both in terms of Community Council and partner attendance. The Committee Manager suggested that it would be beneficial to highlight this at the next Community Planning Partnership Management Committee Meeting. Valerie Nimmo suggested that it may be beneficial to time limit presentations at the meeting and ensure that they were more concise to encourage people to come along.

Brian Smith, Community Learning Team Leader

Brian advised that work was being carried out by the Community Learning team with young people around youth participation and advised that he would be happy to provide some information around this at a future meeting of the group.

7. BOUNDARY COMMISSION PROPOSALS

The Group considered a report which advised of the Boundary Commission for Scotland's proposals for the Argyll and Bute area. Colin Wilson and Ronnie Hinds provided an overview of the changes proposed to ward boundaries in the Argyll and Bute area and the process for and reasoning behind the proposed changes, noting that no changes had been made to the boundaries for Argyll and Bute Council since 2007.

Discussion took place around: the benefits of island only wards in comparison to wards which included both island and mainland areas; the potential impact of the proposed changes in representation for those who would be placed in larger or smaller wards; the benefits of continuity by maintaining the current wards; the potential impact on lifeline services such as ferries if wards were to change; the willingness and ability of the Local Government Boundary Commission to take into account the views of the Council and local constituents during the consultation period; and the newly proposed boundaries being suited to service delivery arrangements 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/.

Decision

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group;

1. noted the position; and
2. 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 10 November 2020, submitted)

8. 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 Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands 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 to the appropriate Officer and circulate responses to the Group.

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

9. 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 held on 23 September 2020.

The Chair outlined details of the briefing note, particularly noting the appointment of a new Chair for the group in Joe MacKay of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The Chair drew the group's attention to the section of the briefing note relating to the presentation by Fergus Murray on wild camping and campervans, noting that a sub-committee had been set up around this and an action plan would be reported to a future meeting of the Management Committee. The Chair encouraged anyone with an interest in this matter to get in touch with Fergus Murray and to read the Minute of the recent Management Committee meeting on the Argyll and Bute Council website.

Decision

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group noted the briefing note.

(Reference: Briefing note by Committee Manager, dated 10 November 2020, submitted)

10. AREA COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP GOVERNANCE

(a) Appointment of Vice-Chair

The Group considered the appointment of the Vice-Chair of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group and discussion took place around the time commitment involved in the role.

Decision

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group agreed to appoint Rachel Whyte as Vice-Chair.

(Reference: Report by Committee Manager, dated 10 November 2020, submitted)

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Group noted that the next meeting of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group would take place by Skype at 10:00am on Wednesday, 3 February 2021.