

Management Committee

Date: 30 June 2021

Agenda Item:



Area Community Planning Groups – April/May 2021 Meetings

1. Purpose

This paper presents key matters arising during the Area Community Planning Group meetings that were held virtually in April/May 2021.

2. Recommendations

The Management Committee is asked to:

- a) note the Highlights detailed at 4.0;
- b) note the change to administrative arrangements for the Helensburgh and Lomond ACPG; and
- c) consider the request from the Area Community Planning Groups in relation to contributing to the work of the Climate Change Working Group.

3. Background

There are four Area Community Planning Groups, one in each of the Council's administrative areas (Bute and Cowal; Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands; Helensburgh and Lomond; and Oban, Lorn and the Isles).

In accordance with decisions made by the Management Committee in June 2017 the groups are supported by staff from the community planning and community development team in all areas, with administrative and governance support for meetings provided by the Committee Services team with some elements of the Helensburgh and Lomond ACPG meeting being undertaken by Police Scotland/SFRS.

These meetings were the second round to be held on a virtual basis. Prior to the meetings discussion took place with the 4 Area Chairs/Vice Chairs and a standard agenda template was agreed. There was good attendance at all 4 meetings by a variety of partners.

4.0 Highlights

All groups considered:

- CPP Management Committee Update
- Covid-19 information on case numbers and vaccinations
- UK Withdrawal from the EU
- Campervan, Motorhome and Staycation Activity
- Area Community Planning Action Plan Update
- Basecamp Trial Update
- Police Scotland Community Engagement Team

Cristie Moore, the Council's Gaelic Development Worker attended the Oban Lorn and the Isles and Bute and Cowal meetings having previously attended the MAKI and Helensburgh and Lomond meetings in February.

Highlights from specific meetings were as follows:

Bute & Cowal

The Bute and Cowal Area Community Planning Group heard from Police Scotland that some summer events have been cancelled in the area including Butefest, Bute Highland Games and Cowal Games with the position of Argyll Rally still to be decided. Inspector Boyle also reported that that funding had been granted from the Scottish Government to put in place partnership working and support in anticipation of an influx of tourists into area over the summer months.

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service reported that Test and Protect facilities delivered within the Dunoon and Rothesay stations had been in operation since February and March respectively and would be in place for the foreseeable future.

Bute Island Alliance (BIA) provided a verbal update concerning the position of Ardenraig Gardens. The Group noted that a meeting with BIA and the council's asset management team had been arranged for the end of May following receipt of BIA's expression of interest in facilitating the formation of a community trust.

Charles Dixon-Spain, on behalf to the Colintrave and Glendaruel Development Trust, advised that due to poor connectivity in the area a Community broadband project had begun. Whilst they had been unable to attract suppliers large enough to

execute the project they are exploring solutions via connectivity testing and promoting the use of hotspots on mobile phones.

John Hair introduced Forestry and Land Scotland's current priorities in the area, including the management of *Phytophthora ramorum* and their land management plans for individual forest areas. Discussion focussed around keeping community groups up-to-date on road closures with Mr Hair also responding to a number of questions submitted by the representative from Sandbank Community Council.

Helensburgh & Lomond

The meeting was well attended by a number of partners who provided updates. A number of partners are involved in initiatives around the National Park area including the provision of extra litter bins and additional toilet facilities which have been well received so far. Kenny Auld from Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park advised that they were awaiting the outcome of a bid to the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund for funding to assist with strategic work in researching where there are gaps in terms of toilets, litter bins, waste disposal facilities and general visitor needs. He also noted the Park were working with partners to provide regular communication updates.

As the Covid restrictions are relaxed groups and organisations are able to get back to opening up services with it being noted that the Garelochhead Station Trust had recently relaunched with a successful pop up café and the group Fun First had resumed their sessions with limited group numbers. Angela Anderson, Plastic Free Helensburgh and Time for Change Argyll and Bute advised that there were a number of litter picks being organised.

Alan Comrie from SPT was in attendance and provided an update on the ongoing cycle route works and updated on the measures in place on public transport due to the current restrictions. He also noted that there were a number of additional services in place which were enabling transport to vaccination appointments and that the West Highland Line would see additional capacity for bikes being introduced. Discussion took place around the options for additional bus routes with it being noted that SPT were constrained in what services they could provide if there was already a commercial service in operation on a route but that requests would be dealt with on a case by case basis if submitted to SPT's operational team for consideration.

Neil MacFarlane, Transport Scotland provided information to the Group around various works which had been completed in the area. He also gave an update on the Visitor Management Strategy for the area which was being worked on with the National Park, Police Scotland and the Council to monitor and manage traffic as lockdown restrictions are eased.

The Group heard a presentation from Eddie Cusick of Helensburgh Community Hub who provided information on the background to the organisation and the work that was ongoing to prepare the building for re-opening in early July. It was hoped that partnership working would ensure that the space would be at the heart of the community and would provide volunteering opportunities as well as services which were needed in the area.

Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands

A number of partners were in attendance and provided updates to the Group – this included representatives of 6 Community Councils.

The Group heard an excellent presentation from Elaine Whyte from the Clyde Fisherman's Association which provided detail on the fishing industry in Argyll and Bute and covered what impact Brexit and Covid-19 was having.

A presentation was also provided by Eric Spence, South Kintyre Development Trust who provided detail on the Covid-19 response provided by the Kintyre Community Resilience and Recovery Group. The co-ordination of the response in the area was commended by the Group with a number of partners commenting on the positive experience and assistance that they had received.

Linda Syed from Furnace Community Council advised of ongoing concerns in relation to Furnace Surgery, with it being noted that the building has been closed due to restrictions. Further detail on the concerns of the community was provided following the meeting and has been passed to the HSCP for response.

The Group discussed the report on campervan and staycation activity and a number of points were raised which were forwarded to the Head of Development and Economic Growth for response.

The results of the partner attendance survey were discussed and taking account the responses it was agreed that one meeting per year would be held in the afternoon on a trial basis starting with the November 2021 meeting. It was also noted that the majority of respondents welcomed the opportunity to participate virtually and that once restrictions are eased that hybrid meetings may become the norm.

Oban, Lorn and the Isles

The Group considered an update from the Department for Works and Pensions which detailed their response to Covid-19 as well as various initiatives they were involved with. It was confirmed that the easing of restrictions had resulted in Oban Job Centre's case size decreasing by 25% as hospitality re-opens, creating job opportunities.

The Group considered a verbal update from Eleanor MacKinnon, Oban Communities Trust, in relation to The Rockfield Centre. The Group noted that the opening of the building was delayed due to Covid-19 but that the Centre continued to operate as a community anchor organisation by moving most of their activities online. However, with more staff coming on board they aim to develop more face-to-face activities such as working with Atlantis Leisure Centre to facilitate a summer camp programme.

Joan Best advised the Group that Crossroads - North Argyll Carers had been very busy with referrals for respite for unpaid carers and are currently providing 150 hours a week. North Argyll Carers had placed an advert for staff on the islands but had not received any applications, Ms Best asked that anyone with an interest in securing a position to get in touch.

Catriona Petit, on behalf of Hope Kitchen, advised the Group that the Greenshoots Garden had remained open throughout the pandemic by working with partners and had started a new initiative working with primary care mental health teams and social prescribers to deliver woodland based activities and run the Looking on the Bright Side Allotments initiative. Hope Kitchen also worked in partnership with the Rockfield Centre, through the Community Fund, to deliver their response to people's emotional and mental health issues due to the impact of Covid-19.

Police Inspector Mark Stephen advised the Group that a successful bid to Argyll and Bute Council for funding enabled them to employ an officer to work with new wardens around Staycation activities and police bicycles will soon to be available to officers to enable them to access places where cars cannot.

The Group considered an update by Marie Harrower, Oban Access Panel, on the work of the Panel in promoting social inclusion and securing a more accessible environment in Oban and the surrounding area. The Group noted that the Panel aim to make improvements for locals and visitors by linking into national campaigns and working with the local authority to identify potential problems accessing buildings. The Group heard how the Panel were keen to engage with young people to help them continue in the development of an access plan for the area. They are also working on an initiative to try to ensure products in shops can be identifiable for all by labelling products in braille.

4.1 Administrative Arrangements for Helensburgh and Lomond Area Community Planning Group

Following the decision taken by the Management Committee in June 2017 the Helensburgh and Lomond ACPG has been supported in terms of administrative arrangements by Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue and by members of the Community Planning/Development Team. These arrangements allowed all of the

Groups to continue with a quarterly meeting schedule and that support was very much appreciated at a time when Council resources were stretched. A review of this support has recently been undertaken and as from June 2021 the administrative and governance arrangements will be provided by staff from the Council's Legal and Regulatory Support Service. This change will provide a consistent approach to these arrangements across all 4 Area Community Planning Groups.

4.2 Climate Change Working Group and Area Community Planning Groups

At a recent meeting of the Climate Change Working Group a suggestion was made that information could be shared with Community Councils by one of the members who is also Chair of the Bute and Cowal ACPG. This was then discussed at the recent meeting of the ACPG Chairs and Vice Chairs to agree the draft agendas for the August round of meetings. At this meeting the Chairs and Vice Chairs felt that a discussion at the ACPGs could provide examples of initiatives taking place in local communities as well as highlight areas which could contribute to the climate change agenda. They asked if there could be a short paper provided to the meetings on the work of the Climate Change Working Group which could be used to facilitate discussion – and if possible an officer to attend to speak to this item.

4.3 Further Actions

It is requested that the Management Committee note the report and the successful meetings held in April/May 2021.

The Management Committee is also asked to note the change to the administration arrangements for the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Community Planning Group.

The Management Committee is asked to consider the request in relation to the Climate Change Working Group.

5.0 Implications

Strategic Implications	Meetings of the Area Community Planning Group held in February covered various Outcomes.
Consultations	No prior circulation of this report.
Resources	No direct resource implications however consideration of the issues raised and following courses of action may have a knock on effect on finance and/or staff resource
Prevention	Contributes to the prevention agenda
Equalities	Contributes toward reducing inequalities

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For More Information:

Shona Barton, Committee Manager, shona.barton@argyll-bute.gov.uk

References: n/a

Appendices: n/a