

## Management Committee

Date: December 2022

Agenda Item:



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### Area Community Planning Groups – November 2022 Meetings

#### 1. Purpose

This paper presents key matters arising during the Area Community Planning Group meetings that were held virtually in November 2022.

#### 2. Recommendations

The Management Committee is asked to:

- a) note the Highlights detailed at section 4 of the report; and
- b) note that Ryan MacIntyre (Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament) was appointed to the position of Vice-Chair of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning 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).

All meetings were held on a virtual basis using Microsoft Teams. Prior to the meetings discussion took place with the Area Chairs and Vice Chairs and a standard agenda template was agreed. There was good attendance at all 4 meetings by a variety of partners.

#### 4. Highlights

All groups considered:

- Climate Change Working Group

Stan Philips, Chair of the Climate Change Working Group, submitted an update report that highlighted the actions being taken forward to address the climate

emergency in Argyll and Bute; the development of governance arrangements and structures to support the Climate Change Project Officer post.

- Time for Change

Representatives from Time for Change Argyll and Bute advised that they were a group of residents who are campaigning to raise awareness of climate change. Time for Change advised that they are increasingly aware of the need to build resilience in all areas and are working with civil contingencies within the council and other partners to that effect.

- CEBR - The Socio-Economic Impact of CalMac Ferries

Robert Beauchamp, The Centre for Economics and Business, spoke to The Socio-Economic Impact of CalMac Ferries report. The report was a quantitative analysis of the impacts of CalMac as a company (employment, Gross Value Added, turnover, and employee compensation supported directly and through the supply chain) and of impacts of service levels on island communities (ferry users' welfare, economic activity, employment, population).

- Argyll and Bute Health & Social Care Partnership Update

The Groups considered a public health from the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership. The update highlighted information on the Public Health Team Annual Report for 2021-22 and the Mid Strategy Living Well Report for 2019-21.

- Allenergy - Bute and Cowal, Helensburgh and Lomond and Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands

A presentation given by Dr Lynda Mitchell of Allenergy (B&C and MAKI) and Rachel McNicol (H&L) was considered by the afore-mentioned Groups. The update included information on what Allenergy are working on including Affordable Warmth, Education, and Local Energy Projects. The update it was noted that Allenergy can access a number of interventions for clients experiencing energy cost crisis such as the Fuel Bank Foundation; Scottish Government Home Heating Support Fund; Glasspool Trust; and Argyll and Bute Flexible Food Fund.

- Argyll Community Housing Association - Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands and Oban, Lorn and the Isles

Both the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands and Oban, Lorn and the Isles received an update from Michelle Mundie, Chief Executive, Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA). Ms Mundie highlighted some of the Association's recent

investments in new housing stock, specifically 10 new units at Inveraray in June 2022, 4 units at Tarbert, 2 new units at Millknowe and the new developments planned at Dalintober and Port Ellen. It was noted that ACHA tenant Cathy Grant of Glendaruel had been elected Chair of the Association and that Lachlan Woods of ACHA had received recognition at the UK National Awards where he received the award Energy Champion of the Year.

## **Bute & Cowal**

Laura Walker, on behalf of Strachur Joint Efforts, advised that they had received ten thousand pounds from the Big Lottery Fund to create opportunities for young people in the area. Laura highlighted some of the events and activities that have subsequently been created including a pop up café, with different themes for each and opportunities to develop skills such as cooking, customer service and budgeting. Laura added that this project would provide young people with qualifications to add to their CV.

The Group gave consideration to an update from Sandy McLeod of Argyll and Bute TSI which included information on the positive feedback received regarding the Community Directory; the conversation café hosted ahead of the launch of the next round of Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Funding; the Positive Destination Scheme; volunteer events held to encourage new volunteers for organisations and free online training available for volunteers and staff members of organisations.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) submitted an update regarding the number of customers claiming universal credit and legacy benefits; job seekers allowance; employment and support allowance; and income support. The report also covered information on recruitment events held by Rothesay and Dunoon Job centres; the new telephone shared line number with New Style Employment & Support Allowance; fuel direct; broadband social tariff; health adjustment passports; managed moves to Universal Credit; the influx of pension credit claims; disability cost of living payment stakeholder toolkit; cost of living payment; Government plans to cut energy bills; the raised Administrative Earnings Threshold; Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claims and Adult Disability Payments (ADP).

Reeni Kennedy Boyle of Fyne Futures provided the Group with a verbal update including information on the volunteer programme; ongoing collaboration work with a variety organisations; the employability programme extension; and the environmental work that had been completed.

Partners also considered an update from Iona MacPhail, Chief Executive of Fyne Homes. The update included information on the AGM held in October; property lets for 2021/2022; maintenance and Fyne Futures. Iona also highlighted that Fyne Homes is unique due to its 3 Wind Turbines which are situated in Glenbarr and

added that profits are distributed between Fyne Homes, Fyne Futures and the Community of Glenbarr. Discussion was had around sustainability and Iona highlighted that new builds are being developed to a high quality and the challenge will be for retrofitting.

## **Helensburgh & Lomond**

The Group considered a report from Shona Barton, Governance Manager, regarding the results of a future meeting arrangement survey undertaken following the August meeting. Thirty-three responses were received with the majority of respondents confirming they would like the option for either face to face or Hybrid meetings. It was also highlighted that respondents were happy to continue with daytime meetings with the majority in favour of these being held in the morning, with venues across the area being used – but with the option to have Hybrid arrangements in place.

Plastic Free Helensburgh, represented by Angela Anderson, thanked Argyll and Bute Council for arranging Climate change training for all Councillors and also thanked Scottish Water for their plans to have a top up tap at the start of the John Muir Way. Angela also provided information on the Cardross Warm Homes Event; the single-use plastic ban; beach clearing and Marine Debris and the Anchor Group.

The Group considered an update from Sarah Davies, Helensburgh Community Council. Sarah highlighted that all 20 positions on the Community Council were filled following the recent election. The update also included information on the completion of the new leisure centre; the litter bin survey; the refurbishment and replanting of the Memorial Garden in Hermitage Park; the Helensburgh to Dumbarton cycleway and the positive development of a future role for the town pier. The Community Council reported that they will continue the maintenance of the shrub beds in the square and the monthly beach cleans, in conjunction with Plastic Free Helensburgh. It was also highlighted that the group had collected more than 100kg of rubbish on a recent litter pick and that they had applied for a grant of £250 from the Grab Trust to cover the payment of skip.

The Group gave consideration to a presentation from Norman McNally, Helensburgh Community Council on Vision for Helensburgh which was established to gather community and visitor information on how residents and visitors see Helensburgh and how they would like to see it flourish. Norman highlighted that they had received over 2000 comments but that the project was put on hold due to the Pandemic. A re-evaluation workshop was held during the autumn of 2021 in the Victoria Halls, Helensburgh. Following the workshop, four 'burning' topics were identified – A total Kidston to Craigendoran Waterfront Strategy; Environment; Amenities for youth, young families and visitors, and Local Connectivity/mobility which will now be taken forward by the Group.

Consideration was given to an update from Sarah Davies from Fun First. Sarah highlighted that they continue to run six Funtime and one fitness session weekly for parents and children under five and monthly Fun First Friend Sessions. The update also included information on new committee member volunteers from the community; a Halloween party and the planned Christmas party. Discussion took place in regards to the successful recruitment of volunteers.

Destination Helensburgh advised that they had witnessed an increase in visitor numbers to the Information Centre and that their gift shop Highlandman's Road is proving to be popular. The Group advised that they continue to promote Helensburgh and Lomond through various media channels and that they had launched the "Discover Helensburgh" walking trails app.

Gill Simpson on behalf of Helensburgh Community Hub, provided an overview of the Hub's activities. Gill advised that they are currently promoting reading for pleasure with two major collaborations developed, the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and the spring book event in collaboration with the Hub, Jean's Bothy and H&L Carers. The update also included information on the ongoing support for volunteers and groups across the area and ways they can welcome people in over the winter months and community engagement.

The Community Focus item highlighted the work of the Helensburgh and Lomond Foodbank which is an independent community foodbank operated by unpaid volunteers and all the food is shared with those in need. The update also highlighted the amount of food bags issued and the amount of adults and children supported, between 01/07/21 to 30/09/21 and from 01/07/22 to 30/09/22 there was an increase of 37.3% in food bags issued and an increase of 67.6% in numbers supported. It was added that the increase illustrates the adverse impact that the rise in the cost of living is having on the local community, particularly those with children. It was reported that should demand continue to rise, as is anticipated, there is a concern that this charitable food aid response will become unsustainable.

### **Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands**

The Group considered a written update from Forestry and Land Scotland which highlighted the land management plans at Carradale, Beinn Ghuillean and South Knapdale. Civil engineer works at Rhonadale Bridge in Carradale and an update on *Phytophthora ramorum* and the environment.

Campbeltown Community Council highlighted that traffic management is still a big issue in the area with work on a Climate Change Resilience Plan and pathway improvements ongoing.

Jackie MacPherson, on behalf of University of Highlands and Islands (UHI), advised that they held their first face to face event in 3 years which was the Graduation of Students in the Queens Hall in Dunoon. The new academic year has started with a more flexible approach where students can attend the UHI facility or stay at home. Students have been reminded that the UHI is a warm space and they are supporting students with providing a breakfast/lunch during this cost of living crisis.

Kintyre Food Banks, represented by Mary Ann Stewart, highlighted in 2012 they had 4 clients per week attend the food bank compared to 58 adults and 25 children in October 2022. She advised that the Food Bank had received funding to allow them to offer not only food, but meals and basic essentials to people. The foodbank opens 2 mornings a week but volunteers are available to make up emergency parcels when required. The process of making up the Christmas hampers has started with a small gift also included.

The Mid Argyll Youth Development Services (MAYDS) delivered the Community Focus item. Fiona Kalache, Operations Manager of MAYDS gave an overview of the work carried out within the Mid Argyll Youth Development Services which includes free swimming lessons, supporting 117 young carers across the MAKI area, access to Counselling, Outreach/drug and alcohol education. Employability Training which has successfully seen some young people enter apprenticeships with local trades. It was also noted that there had been the opportunity for free driving lessons for youths on Islay. MAYDS has more recently purchased adjacent property to the centre where they hope to develop a skate park. They have also been distributing free fuel and food tokens due to the cost of living crisis and have received funding from Scot Spirit which allowed some of the young carers to go away for respite to Park Dean Holiday Parks.

### **Oban, Lorn and the Isles**

The Group agreed to appoint of Ryan MacIntyre, Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament, (MYSP) to its membership and to the position of Vice-Chair for the Oban, Lorn & The Isles Area Community Planning Group.

Aideen Shields gave a presentation on the projects that the Isle of Kerrera Development Trust are involved with, specifically the completion of the north/south road, which enables residents to safely access the lifeline ferry. Aideen advised that a funding package had recently been secured to commence on the final phase of renovation to the Old School, due to open as a community hub in summer 2023. The Development Trust are also aspiring to undertake further projects such as Council adopted road improvements, adopting of the new north/south road and increased ferry capacity.

Oban Access Panel representative Jim Tolmie highlighted their campaign to make braille labelling statutorily on foodstuffs. Jim advised that a flyer had been produced

and that they have been working with Disability Quality Scotland and Sight Scotland. While support has been given by Holyrood to this initiative the labelling of foodstuffs must go to the Food Standards Agency for agreement.

Argyll and Bute Regional Engagement Co-ordinator for Scottish Communities Climate Action Network advised that the Scottish Communities Climate Action Network (SCANN) is a volunteer-led network with membership open to any community group across Scotland that is taking action on the climate crisis and to any organisation that is involved with or supports such community-led action.

Emma Sutcliffe on behalf of Dunollie Museum Castle provided the Community Focus item. Emma highlighted that over 16,000 people had visited since April 2022, following restoration works. Emma highlighted the social impact the museum has had as well as some of the groups on offer, such as the New Routes Health and Wellbeing Group, Threads and Yarns Group and the Gaelic Language sessions which are delivered online and in partnership with the Furan Gaelic Centre.

#### **4.1 Community Council Elections**

All 39 community council inaugural meetings to formally constitute the community councils who had sufficient membership as at the election on 20 October 2022 took place between 26 October and 29 November. A further by-election was organised for 15 December for those who did not reach the membership threshold. The nomination period for the by-election returned sufficient numbers to allow a community council to be formed in 14 other areas and dates for meetings (following the date of election) are now being progressed.

Unfortunately Kilfinan, Lochgilphead and Sandbank could not be formed due to lack of candidates coming forward and as a result have been placed in a dormant state until sufficient interest from within the community is forthcoming that would result in a strong and sustainable community council being formed. There have already been discussions with 2 of the community council areas about candidates who would be willing to put forward a nomination. This is currently being progressed by officers.

#### **4.2 Further Actions**

It is requested that the Management Committee note the report and the successful meetings held in November 2022.

#### **5.0 Implications**

Strategic Implications	Meetings of the Area Community Planning Group held in April 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

For More Information:

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