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## Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership

### Bute and Cowal Area Community Planning Group

15 August 2023

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## Community Planning Partnership Management Committee Update

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This briefing relates to the meeting of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Management Committee which was held on 22nd June 2023. The briefing is for noting and relevant discussion.

### Summary

The CPP Management Committee met on the 22nd June 2023 with the meeting being held virtually. This update provides an overview of the discussion which took place.

Reports which were discussed at the meeting can be found by following this link - [Agenda for Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership - Management Committee on Thursday, 22 June 2023, 10:00 am - Argyll and Bute Council \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#)

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Matters Arising from Area Community Planning Groups

- An update was provided on the discussions which had taken place at all 4 Area Community Planning Groups during the April 2023 cycle of meetings. The Management Committee were advised that the utilisation of hybrid meeting equipment in Helensburgh and Lomond (HL) and Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands (MAKI) continues to be positive.
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- The Community Planning Partnership Management Committee recognised the issues raised by the Dunoon Gourock Ferry Action Group and would request clarification on the specific ask from the Bute and Cowal ACPG as it mentions that it wants to see 'action' from the Management Committee however it's not clear what action it wants to see in reference to this matter. If deemed appropriate as a next step, the Community Planning team could facilitate a discussion between the Chair of the CPP Management Committee, the Chair of Bute and Cowal Area Community Planning Group and the Chair of the Dunoon Gourock Ferry Action Group.

The Management Committee is also interested to know more about any existing community partner involvement regarding this issue within the Bute and Cowal area. Transport Infrastructure is one of the top three priorities identified through the consultation process earlier this year which will feed in to the forthcoming focus group discussions to help inform the new 10-year Outcomes Improvement Plan. The Area Community Action Plan for Bute and Cowal will also be updated in 2024 and there will be opportunities to discuss transport issues in Dunoon and surrounding area within that engagement process.

## **CROSS CUTTING THEMES**

### **Climate Change**

Stan Philips provided a presentation in addition to his paper on Addressing the Climate Emergency in Argyll and Bute project by the Climate Change Working Group (CCWG). Consideration was also given to who should sit on the Climate Change Steering Group (CCSG) which will manage the climate change action plan project over the next two years.

Mr Philips advised that, once established, the CCWG would manage the function and support the CCSG, continue to seek funding, monitor the action plan and continue to report progress to the CPP Management Committee. Cllr Currie added that the Council had declared a climate emergency and was open to suggestions on what else the Council could be doing to be more involved in this.

It was also noted that Stan intends to step down as the Chair of the CCWG once the climate change action plan project is established.

### **Financial Inclusion**

Fergus Walker highlighted the range of work being delivered around financial inclusion, including Scottish Welfare Fund, Discretionary Housing Payments and School Clothing Project.

Mr Walker advised that he is looking to further enhance data matching to better identify communities in particular need and that a 2 year project is about to start in partnership with the Poverty Alliance and the Third Sector to evidence local and national factors that affect poverty.

### **Community Wealth Building (CWB)**

Takki Sulaiman advised that work was being taken forward on a CWB - Audit, Strategy and Business Plans with CLES having been appointed as consultants. The plans will look at the five pillars of CWB (plural ownership of the economy, making financial power work for local places, fair employment and just labour markets, progressive procurement of goods and service and socially just use of land and property).

The work CLES are being asked to do has been divided into lots:

- Lot 1 is an audit of existing best practice and a mapping exercise against each of the five pillars,
- Lot 2 is to identify case studies that can be replicated across Argyll and Bute and identify opportunities relevant to our local and strategic plans,
- Lot 3 is the development of a CWB strategy and action plan, and
- Lots 4 and 5 are the development of 2 business cases and models to move actions forward in two areas (proposed to explore a business model for Community Energy and a food hub but the final focus will be determined by the audit and mapping exercise).

### **Digital Communities**

Alex Edmonstone provided an update on the CLD Partnership, advising that Digital Skills is a key theme in the 3 year strategy. As such, a digital work stream group has been created to look at digital inclusion and complete a mapping exercise. Alex also advised that a pilot to provide free Wi-Fi access (dongles) to those with an identified learning need in Helensburgh had gone well and it was hoped this could be rolled out across a wider area.

Iain MacInnes advised the R100 fibre roll out is progressing in Argyll and Bute, with installation currently being undertaken at Ardfern. Unfortunately, the roll out had experienced delays due to lack of accommodation available for contractors.

As part of the Shared Rural Network Infrastructure programme to install 4-5G in rural areas, the Argyll and Bute area is due to have 50 new mobile masts installed. Iain advised that this is a considerable investment in the area to target partial and not spots in network coverage. Three have gone live and there are 18 more at the planning stages across the area. Digital Hubs have been installed and are operating on Iona and Islay and drop in sessions have been organised to show residents how the hubs work. Digital hubs are also planned for Coll and Tiree but there have been some supply issues that have delayed the start of work at those sites.

### **Building Back Better**

Kirsty Moyes detailed the successful structures and ways of working with the community that have been developed since the start of the pandemic and gave an overview of the engagement undertaken with communities. This included regular meetings, peer to peer working, targeting funding to meet needs and the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan consultation.

Kirsty also outlined what is happening in partnership work on the identified themes with recommendations on how to progress on gaps and building this work with communities going forward, taking learning from the positives and challenges during that time.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF NEW OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

John McLuckie provided an update on the ongoing work on the new Outcome Improvement Plan, specifically the top 3 themes (Transport Infrastructure, Housing and Community Wellbeing). John advised that the themes had been discussed in detail at a CPP Management Committee Development Day in Arrochar on 18 May 2023. This was followed up with a survey which was circulated to all partners to complete to gather intelligence and insight on the top themes.

Output from the Development Day included the preference to meet in person and extended meetings as required to deep dive into topics and to create a steering group to direct the creation of the ABOIP over the next few months. The steering group would ideally look to be in place by July / August consisting of 3 - 4 members of the CPP Management Committee, focus groups would happen in September / October and then the data will be analysed before the ABOIP is published in November / December.

## **UPDATE ON WIDER PARTNERSHIP WORK**

David Adams-McGilp, VisitScotland Regional Director, Argyll and the Isles, and Cathy Craig, CEO Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative, gave a presentation on the VisitScotland Action Plan and the current state of tourism in Argyll and Bute.

David explained the outcomes of the national plan are across four strategic outcomes:

- SPREAD includes easing visitor number pressure in certain areas and encouraging/promoting visitors to areas with more capacity and looking at extending the traditional visitor season. There is work ongoing on how to measure how successful this strategy will be and David noted that Scottish tourism is still in a post Covid recovery and growth phase.
- SPEND covers public and private investment in our tourism facilities, destinations and experiences to improve visitor experience in Argyll and Bute.
- SUSTAINABILITY is a key part of the action plan and the current Scottish Government Tourism strategy and the National Strategy For Economic Transformation (NSET) both share a commitment to destination net zero.
- SATISFACTION looks at ensuring positive local attitudes to area tourism using community engagement, visitor management, the rural tourism infrastructure fund and industry / tourist satisfaction. It is important that communities do not have development imposed upon them but that they are part of the planning to make the most of local assets.

Cathy gave an overview of the tourism industry in Argyll and Bute, advising that the value of the local tourism market had not recovered post pandemic with visitor numbers down with continued negative effect to local businesses. The 2023 visitor

survey is currently underway and although tourism is making progress, this year's market is looking to be more depressed than last year, with over half of businesses surveyed in the area saying they were struggling financially.

In 2023 a new area tourism website was launched and there had been various marketing campaigns to attract visitors to the area, especially to boost low visitor numbers in Mid Argyll and Kintyre. Recruitment of staff within businesses in Argyll and Bute remains a critical challenge.

On a positive note, interest in our area is high and funding from Highlands and Islands Enterprise had enabled the recruitment of a travel trade expert who represented Argyll and Bute at national exhibitions and secured sign up by 21 new travel operators to add Argyll and Bute destinations to their itineraries.

### **ARGYLL AND BUTE HOUSING EMERGENCY**

Cllr Robin Currie notified the Management Committee that the Council had declared a housing emergency and encouraged all partners to attend a Council housing summit that is due to be held in October / November to agree action on how this can be addressed. Morag Goodfellow, Highland and Island Enterprise, added that as housing had been identified as a priority in the ABOIP consultation this can be taken forward by the CPP Management Committee via the Strategic Housing Forum.

#### **For further information, please contact:**

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