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## Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership

### Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group

31 January 2024

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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 12 January 2024. The briefing is for noting and relevant discussion.

### Summary

The CPP Management Committee met on the 12 January 2024 with the meeting being held on a hybrid basis from the Council Chambers, Kilmory and via MS Teams. 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 Friday, 12 January 2024, 10:00 am - Argyll and Bute Council \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#)

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Matters Arising from Area Community Planning Groups (ACPGs)

An update was provided on the discussions which had taken place at all 4 Area Community Planning Groups during the October/November 2023 cycle of meetings.

The Management Committee noted that Colin Buchanan was appointed as Vice Chair of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles ACPGs and that both the Bute and Cowal and Helensburgh and Lomond ACPGs will seek to appoint new Chairs at the meetings scheduled in February 2024.

The Management Committee also noted that following concerns around road safety within Sandbank, the Council's Roads and Infrastructure Services will submit a report to a future Bute and Cowal ACPG meeting outlining possible safety measures in that locality.

## **COUNCIL AREA PLANS**

Stuart Green delivered a presentation on the development of 8 area plans across Argyll and Bute which will identify local service prioritisation and investment opportunities in communities.

The Management Committee were advised that funding opportunities that arise from the UK or Scottish Governments were usually announced with short bidding notice periods, yet the amount of work required to develop a suitable business case is high, which can be challenging. The area plans look to establish a clear record of the capital project visions and aspirations within communities. By getting ahead of the curve in this, the hope is to be able to take greater advantage of, and capitalise on, future funding and investment opportunities.

Stuart advised that there will be direct community engagement and consultation moving forward with Community Councils and Development Trusts. £200,000 has been allocated from the Council's Priorities Investment Fund for this work.

## **CROSS CUTTING THEMES**

### **Climate Change**

Andy MacPherson advised that he started in post as the Climate Change Project Manager on 30 October 2023, employed by ACT on behalf of the Management Committee and the project was in good financial health currently.

Andy has been meeting with key contacts within the CPP and the wider climate change community and has looked at the climate strategies of similar localities, and other public bodies, to identify parallels with the specific geographical challenges in Argyll and Bute. He has also been working with the Sustainable Scotland Network and believes there is an opportunity to collaborate with them.

Community feedback is that they want to focus on climate change action with short, snappy plans to support that. He is also keen to capture climate change plans in alignment with the Argyll and Bute Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities of housing, transport infrastructure and community wellbeing.

### **Financial Inclusion**

Fergus Walker highlighted that:

- From 1 April to 30 November 2023, £428,416 had been spent against the 2023/24 funding allocation of £458,284 from the Scottish Welfare Fund and there is a projected overspend of £200,000 for the year.
- Up to 30 November 2023, £803,862 had been spent of the initial tranche of £869k from the Discretionary Housing Payment fund.
- Up to 31 October, 2279 households facing food and fuel insecurity in Argyll and Bute had benefitted from the Flexible Food Fund with an average client gain of £1416 per household. £204k had been granted from Shared Prosperity Funding that will allow the project to continue to 2025.

- Work continues to introduce School Clothing Project to Mid-Argyll and the Isles. There is now a [live website](#) for this project and Fergus is looking to work with Community Development to help identify and fill gaps in project coverage.
- From £141,000 funding provided by the Scottish Government, 1300 Love Local cards had been issued to islanders, each with a value of £85. Grant payments of £4000 has also been paid to island based foodbanks.

Fergus advised that project working in partnership with Poverty Alliance will start this year. A project outline will be shared in due course, but in summary, they are looking to setup a Citizens Panel of people living in Argyll and Bute that have lived experience of poverty. The project will seek to learn from them what it is like, where the pressures are and what could be developed to help alleviate rural poverty. There is also a project in place that is working with Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau on Council Tax collection which aims to protect vulnerable people from the Debt Recovery process.

## **Digital Communities**

Ross Hamilton (Regulatory Affairs Manager, Telecoms, Consumer and Post Policy at OFCOM Scotland) delivered a presentation on the work of the OFCOM Digital Inclusion team. In December, OFCOM published their annual report “Connected Nations” and an interactive dashboard on which holds information on fixed and mobile connectivity at Local Authority level. In Argyll and Bute, superfast broadband has increased by 4%, resulting in over 1400 more properties having access to superfast broadband compared to 2022. There has also been a 2% increase in the level of 4G geographic coverage in the area.

Ross noted concerns around the resilience of the technology network in more rural parts of Scotland and OFCOM are consulting with providers to provide greater clarity on their need to comply with security duties, such as battery power backups, and the infrastructure that is required to ensure connectivity remains in the event of power cuts. OFCOM are looking at what more can be done at network infrastructure level and are looking to start a dialogue and discussion about what sort of aspects should be considered as part of this.

## **Argyll and Bute Outcomes Improvement Plan (ABOIP) for 2024 – 2034**

Rona Gold delivered a presentation on the Argyll and Bute Outcomes Improvement Plan (ABOIP) for 2024 – 2034.

The presentation contained high level statements of intent, in order of priority, under each of the 3 outcomes (transport infrastructure, housing and community wellbeing). Rona reminded the Management Committee that seven areas were identified and included as part of the extensive consultation (the additional priorities were financial inclusion, climate change, digital inclusion and diverse economy/skilled workforce) but the three in focus here came out as the priorities.

## **COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING**

CLES were commissioned by the Management Committee to take forward work on a strategy and action plan for Community Wealth Building (CWB). The report under consideration asked the Management Committee to consider a series of broad recommendations under each of the pillars of CWB, specifically spending, workforce, inclusive ownership, financial, land and property. The recommendations, driven by interviews, workshops, scoping and experience of what has worked well in other areas can be found, in their entirety, by following this [LINK](#). The Management Committee noted that final recommendations would be considered at the next meeting of the Steering Group before consideration at the next meeting of the Management Committee.

The Management Committee also received a presentation regarding CWB in Argyll and Bute. The presentation emphasised that CWB is a practical economic development approach to delivering community economic aspirations and community ownership, with many CWB qualities already in place in Argyll and Bute, including anchor institutions, strong procurement and existing community ownership.

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

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