MINUTES of MEETING of OBAN LORN & THE ISLES AREA COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP held in the MICROSOFT TEAMS AND IN THE MCCAIG SUITE, CORRAN HALLS, OBAN
on WEDNESDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2026

Present: Colin Buchanan, Luing Community Council (Chair)
Councillor Kieron Green, Argyll and Bute Council
Councillor Amanda Hampsey, Argyll and Bute Council
Councillor Andrew Kain, Argyll and Bute Council
Councillor Luna Martin, Argyll and Bute Council
Robert Taylor, Scottish Fire and Rescue
Elaine Robertson, Oban District Access Panel
Duncan Martin, Oban Community Council
Jane Metcalf, Coll Community Council
Catriona Petit, Hope Kitchen
Andy MacPherson, Argyll and Bute Climate Action Network
Judith Hawcroft, North Argyll Carers
Joan Best, Crossroads
Mahailia Kateryna, Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface
Jen Broadhurst, Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau

Attending: Stuart Green, Corporate Manager, Argyll and Bute Council
Detective Inspector Michael Lochrie, Police Scotland
John McLuckie, Community Planning, Argyll and Bute Council
Kirsty McLuckie, Community Planning, Argyll and Bute Council
Hannah Odoom, Home-Start Lorn
Stuart McLean, Committee Manager, Argyll and Bute Council

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of:

Councillor Willie Hume, Argyll and Bute Council
Lucy Sumsion, National Farmers Union
Theresa Augaitis, UHI Argyll College
Petra Pearce, Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface
Inspector Matthew Shaw, Police Scotland

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES OF THE OBAN, LORN AND THE ISLES COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2025

The minutes of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group held on 12 November 2025 were approved as a correct record, subject to revising Item 8f Partner Update to read ‘lack of paid carers’ rather than ‘lack of unpaid carers’.

4. COMMUNITY FOCUS

Hannah Odoom, Manager of Home-Start Lorn, delivered a presentation detailing the extensive support provided to families across Oban, Lorn and the Isles since the organisation's inception in 1988, and on Mull since 2012. She highlighted the growth and increased demand for services between 2021 and 2025, reflecting the charity’s vital role within the community.

Hannah explained that Home-Start Lorn operates as part of the National Home-Start UK network yet remains a stand-alone local charity collaborating with a wide range of partners. Funding streams include the Scottish Government, Local Authority, donations, fundraising efforts, trusts and bequests, all of which enable the team to help families build resilience, reduce isolation, and improve the overall well-being of parents, carers and their children.

At present, Home-Start Lorn boasts 8 paid staff members, 31 dedicated volunteers and 7 Trustees, collectively supporting 160 families. The service maintains a clear pathway for referrals, accepting those from Health Visitors, Social Work, Midwifery and self-referrals. All support is provided free of charge, with the only eligibility requirement being at least one child aged five or under in the family.

In 2025, the organisation celebrated the opening of a Family Centre on Stevenson Street, Oban. The centre offers a welcoming space for family groups, one-to-one support, parenting classes and workshops to help develop practical skills. It also serves as a hub for volunteers to offer assistance, receive training and foster peer friendships.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information provided.

(Reference: Presentation by Home-Start Lorn)

5. AREA COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Group gave consideration to a report which outlined the governance arrangements of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group (Area CPG) specifically the Terms of Reference, membership and the future meeting dates.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group:

1. adopted the Terms of Reference submitted in this report (Appendix 1) and agreed that these be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure their ongoing currency and appropriateness for the work of the Area CPG as it develops over time.

2. agreed the membership of the group as attached (Appendix 2) and agreed that the membership of the group be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure currency and appropriateness for the work of the group as it develops over time; and

3. noted the future meeting dates of the Group as:

    - Wednesday 13 May 2026
    - Wednesday 12 August 2026
    - Wednesday 11 November 2026
    - Wednesday 10 February 2027

(Reference: Report by Committee Manager, Argyll and Bute Council, dated January 2026, submitted)

The Chair ruled, and the Area Community Planning Group agreed, to a variation in the order of business to facilitate officer attendance. The minute reflects the order in which items were discussed.

6. CRIMESTOPPERS AND COMMUNITY INTELLIGENCE

The Group gave consideration to a verbal presentation from DI Michael Lochrie, Police Scotland, who highlighted a campaign which was launched on 9 February in collaboration with Crimestoppers including information about identifying what organised crime was; the impact of drugs in communities; money laundering and how it affected communities; and promotion of anonymous opportunities to report criminal activity. DI Lochrie highlighted the importance of communities as a primary resource for intelligence gathering and noted the value of Community Planning Group support in promoting the campaign with their networks.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information provided.

(Reference: Presentation from Police Scotland)

7. UPDATE ON ASPIRING PLACES: COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN ARGYLL AND BUTE

The Group gave consideration to a report providing information on an evaluation which had been completed in respect of the Aspiring Places initiative. The report highlighted the key findings, including levels of participation, user satisfaction and challenges. Stuart Green highlighted that the existing site would remain while the review was carried out; that the Funders Forum Steering Group would work with communities at appropriate stages and that the review outcomes would inform improvements to the Aspiring Places initiative.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted:

1. the successful launch of the Aspiring Places platform and that it remains a live site for the benefit of communities, funders and the Council.

2. the key findings from the evaluation of the scheme as set out in paragraphs 3.7 to 3.10 of the report and

3. an emerging need to develop a more sustainable approach to managing grant funds in an equitable manner for the Council and our communities alike and therefore the Council is undertaking a review of our internal approach and practices in the management of grant funding.

(Reference: Report by Corporate Support Manager, Argyll and Bute Council, dated 7 January 2026, submitted)

8. COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Group gave consideration to a report which outlined matters discussed during the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Management Committee meeting held on 5 December 2025. The report provided information on the appointment of the new Chair of the CPP Management Committee; the CPP Improvement Plan; Fair Funding Guidance and Community Wealth Building Charter and Climate Change. The report also provided information on the updates from each of the Area Community Planning Groups, which took place in November 2025; progress within each of the Priority Outcomes and the presentations on the Argyll and Bute Employability Partnership and Economic Strategy and Single Authority Model.

John McLuckie highlighted the links in the report to the revised CPP Welcome Pack and noted that the CPP had launched a podcast.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Partnerships Lead, Argyll and Bute Council, dated 4 February 2026, submitted)

9. ARGYLL AND BUTE OUTCOMES AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN - PRIORITIES UPDATE

The Group gave consideration to a presentation which was delivered by the Partnerships Lead of the Community Planning Team. The presentation highlighted a summary of progress made; outlined agreed objectives and actions for the Transport and Housing priorities; noted that the objectives for the Community Wellbeing priority would be refined at the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee on 20 March and highlighted that 3 thematic sessions would take place to finalise the actions and establish available partner input and resources.

The Group held a lengthy discussion around the financial pressure being faced by the Health and Social Care Partnership, with many Partners raising concerns that any reduction in resource could have a detrimental impact on Community Wellbeing.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group:

1. noted the information provided; and

2. noted the concerns raised by Partners around the proposed budget cuts to the Health and Social Care Partnership and agreed to highlight to the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee that should these budget cuts be approved that it would have a significant, negative, impact upon the Community Wellbeing priority and associated plan.

(Reference: Presentation from Partnerships Lead - Community Planning, Argyll and Bute Council)

The Chair ruled and the Area Community Planning Group agreed to take a 10 minute comfort break at this point.

10. PARTNERS UPDATE

(a) Police Scotland Update

The Group gave consideration to an update which provided information on the ongoing work of the Service and information on serious and organised crime; acquisitive crime; road safety and road crime; violent crime; public protection and agricultural crime.

The update highlighted that from 23 February 2026 the new Area Inspector for Oban, Lorn and the Isles would be Inspector Alasdair MacLaren.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Police Scotland, dated February 2026, submitted)

(b) Scottish Fire and Rescue Update

The Group gave consideration to a report highlighting the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) FQ3 review of local performance across Oban, Lorn and the Isles(OLI) for the period 2025-26. The report gave a breakdown of fires and special services incidents which occurred in the OLI Area within that period and provided information on Community Safety Campaigns; On-Call Firefighter Training; the Christmas Gift Appeal and the work of the Community Action Team.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, dated February 2026, submitted)

(c) **Public Health Update**

Consideration was given to a public health update from Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership's Public Health Team on the ongoing wellbeing and prevention activities overseen and delivered by them in Argyll and Bute. The update provided information on the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention training being held across Argyll and online; the Speakeasy online bitesize sessions; the Argyll and Bute Alcohol and Drug Partnership; Argyll and Bute Youth Voices Conference which was held in November 2025; the Planet Youth Residential; the Recovery Orientated System of Care framework; the 'With You' organisation renovation of a building in Bute to provide support; the Volatile Substance Use training held in November 2025; the Medically Assisted Treatment Standards Experiential Programme 2025-2026 and the Screening Inequalities event which is being held in Campbeltown on 25 February 2026.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Health Improvement Senior, Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership, dated February 2026, submitted)

(d) **Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau Update**

The Group gave consideration to an update from Jen Broadhurst from Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau. The update highlighted that between January and December 2025 they had supported over 2000 clients, with 65% of clients being new to the service. It was noted that the vast majority of cases related to Welfare rights and Benefit enquiries. Information on Volunteer recruitment; the provision of new services which included Energy Debt Advice and the Homelessness Prevention Pilot; existing services; outreach locations and research areas was also provided.

Ms Broadhurst advised of the stakeholder survey which is used to inform new areas of work and partnership opportunities with Partners encouraged to complete the survey which could be found at: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ABCABCommunityPartnerSurvey2026/.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau, dated January 2026, submitted)

(e) **Live Argyll - Community Learning Update**

Consideration was given to an update from the Live Argyll Community Learning Service, which provided an update on Adult Learning in Oban, The update included information on Skills for Life, Learning and Work; Digital Skills; Health and Wellbeing and a number of courses and projects that had taken place since the last meeting of the Group. The update also highlighted the Youth Work taking place in the area, information included Youth Action Groups, Youth Action Council, Cycle Awareness day to be held in Dalmally on 13th February and noted 7 pupils from Oban High School received the Dynamic Youth Award for attending Oban Fire Station and learning new skills.

It was highlighted that as part of Argyll and Bute Council's budget-setting process, Live Argyll has been asked to carry out a consultation on their services to understand how potential changes may affect adult learning programmes and learners. Partners were encouraged to complete the survey and provide the feedback required. The survey can be found at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BQJB7LL.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Live Argyll Community Learning Services, submitted)

(f) **Health and Wellbeing Network Update**

The Group considered the update from the Health and Wellbeing Network which highlighted events taking place in Oban on 24th June 2026 and also information on an event that will take place on the Isle of Mull in the Autumn.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information.

(Reference: Report by Health and Wellbeing Network dated 27th January 2026, submitted)

(g) **Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface (TSI) Update**

The Group considered a report from TSI which highlighted the Strategy Review 2026-2031, now known as Community Voices; information on a volunteering Network Event taking place in Rockfield Community Centre on 7th March; a call out for more Trustees for the Argyll and Bute Museum and Heritage Forum; a webinar on Charity Tax and VAT which will provide

information for Charities on improving your VAT position, Gift Aid procedures and claims, charity trading and the need for subsidiary companies, minimising the cost of VAT on capital building projects and a list of other services on offer to Third Sector Groups.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information.

(Reference: Report by Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface, dated 29th January 2026, submitted)

(h) **Oban Community Council Update**

The Group considered a report from Oban Community Council advising that they had been successful in receiving funding from Inspiring Scotland's Neighbourhood Ecosystem Fund to support the development of an Oban Nature Network. The project will help guide regeneration, address invasive species, and improve connectivity between currently fragmented habitats to better support biodiversity and rare species. The project is intended to contribute to the delivery of Scotland's 30 by 30 commitments, translating national ambitions for nature recovery into practical, place-based action that is both evidence-led and community-supported.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the information provided.

(Reference: Report by Oban Community Council, submitted)

(i) **Opportunity for Verbal Partner Updates**

Oban District Access Panel

Elaine Robertson advised that the Accessible Transport Survey regarding trains and buses is ongoing and it is hoped this will be extended, in future to consider ferries and planes. Elaine also advised that the bus stop at Dunbeg remains unlit and that this has been report ed at the highest level within the Council and that a designated footpath between Oban Station Square and the Railway Pier has reached a possible solution with costings and designs currently being investigated.

Re_Store Oban Development Trust

Catriona Petit advised that the Development Trust have now been in the Re-Store shop for two years now and have recently undergone a refurbishment improved access within the store. Catriona highlighted that tickets are available for the annual fashion show which will take place on 2nd April 2026 in the Corran Halls; the Climate Café is working on recycling improvement and signage and that the Alcohol and Drug

Recovery Café continue to help navigate people seeking help with addiction issues.

Crossroads

Joan Best advised that Crossroads remains busy and are currently providing 364 hours of face-to-face support and respite care; have restarted their support on Tiree and have enough funding to keep going until April 2027. Joan highlighted her concern of the proposed cuts being made by the Health and Social Care Partnership and how this would affect their service.

North Argyll Carers

Judith Hawcroft advised that North Argyll Carers continue to offer emotional support to carers in the area including 147 young carers. Judith reported that they have introduced peer support on Coll to re-establish young carers groups and also voiced her concern for the future of the service going forward given the lack of funding security.

11. CLIMATE CHANGE

(a) Argyll and Bute Climate Action: developing a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for Argyll and Bute

The Group gave consideration to an update on progress with the climate change strategy, which provided information on the progress and timeline; ongoing partnership work: developing a business case and governance options for a Climate Ready Region for Argyll and Bute; and Community resilience/emergency plans: initial findings from review of existing plans and engagement with community councils.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group:

1. noted the overall progress since the October update;

2. agreed to return any feedback on the draft climate Action Plan, by 20 February to Andy Macpherson, CPP Climate Change Project Manager andy@act-now.org.uk;

3. noted the progress on developing an Argyll and Bute Climate Ready Region, and agreed to provide any feedback on the forthcoming business case and governance model funding options by 20 February to the above contact; and

4. noted the progress on review and engagement to date on community resilience/emergency plans, with any further input welcomed.

(Reference: Report by Climate Change Project Manager, Argyll & the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust, dated 20 January 2026, submitted)

(b) **Climate Change Resilience Group Update (Short Life Working Group)**

Colin Buchanan advised that he was still finding it a challenge to get Community Council's to engage with the Short Life Working Group and that it seemed that the Climate Change Project Manager was having more success in this regard. The Chair confirmed that he would seek to engage with local Development Trusts on resilience projects and would feedback to a future meeting.

Decision

The Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group noted the verbal update.

(Reference: Verbal update by Chair of Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group, dated 11 February 2026)

(c) **Opportunity for verbal updates on Community Based Initiatives**

There were no verbal updates provided under this item.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Group noted that the next meeting of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Community Planning Group would take place at 10.00am on Wednesday 13 May 2026.