

Mull Community Council Meeting

12th July 2016, 7pm, An Roth, Craignure.

Present: Billy McClymont, Fiona Brown, Jane Stevens, Allan Cameron, David Pollard, Ronnie Campbell, Susan Campbell, Willie Hume, Allan Cameron and Juliet Vines.

In Attendance: PC Clare Chalmers, Neal Goldsmith, Angus Williams, Louise Glen and Jenny Reddaway.

Apologies: Rory Forrester, Steve Willis, Graham Alexander, Jim Corbett, Councillor Mary-Jean Devon and Councillor Alastair MacDougall.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- **WH** asked that the wording that the Lochbuie road would be resurfaced to the Lochbuie road would be repaired.

Proposed: **FB**

Seconded: **WH**

MATTERS ARISING

- **AW** was very concerned that his reputation had been damaged in the Minutes during discussions on the motor-home issues at the previous meeting that implied campsites had not been doing enough to attract these visitors. **AW** had been running his campsite since 1975 and had put considerable investment into the site over the years, including a CDP and hard standings. **AW** considered that building more campsites would not necessarily solve the problem of motor home owners parking up almost where they liked and would not resolve problems such as rubbish being dumped. Motor home owners can easily afford to stay on sites but often have such a vehicle to avoid staying on sites and having more freedom to park where they wish, akin to wild campers with tents.
- **JS**, who had spoken with **AW** over the telephone prior to the meeting, felt **AW** had some very valid points and suggested that, at some point, a bye law regarding wild camping may be needed. **CC** pointed out that, in the case of Ledaig car park, a bye law existed, but it was not being enforced. **BM** pointed out that, during the Music Festival, measures had been agreed to limit the number of motor homes and campervans in the car park but the Council failed to send over the personnel to sort this.
- **BM** thanked **AW** for both his investment and vision and apologised that his reputation may have been harmed. He suggested that, when the season was reviewed in the autumn, **AW** be co-opted to the Community Council to act as an advisor.
- **DP** volunteered to keep in touch with the NWMCCW.
- **SW** advised that it was proposed that the Craignure park would contain a wild flower meadow, a cut grass area, benches and maybe a shelter; the latter was thought to be an excellent suggestion.

RET (NG)

- NG provided figures for the three ferry routes since RET began, as shown below:

		Variance	% Difference
Fishnish to Lochaline	Shipped Passengers	-3,055	-8.83%
	Shipped Cars	-1,444	-9.84%
	Shipped CV M	-2,661	-19.74%
	Shipped Coach M	-100	-12.34%
Oban to Craignure	Shipped Passengers	30,236	18.10%
	Shipped Cars	17,551	46.45%
	Shipped CV M	-7,811	-22.48%
	Shipped Coach M	544	14.63%
Tobermory to Kilchoan	Shipped Passengers	3,510	37.86%
	Shipped Cars	1,435	98.02%
	Shipped CV M	-119	-66.72%
	Shipped Coach M	12	143.75%

- **NG** advised that the group were attempting discussion with A&BC regarding ring-fencing some of the additional monies raised from pier dues at Craignure to be spent on improving the pier. A very considerable amount was raised in pier dues, some of which was spent on the Craignure pier but was also used to spend on other A&BC owned piers. With the increase in dues taken with RET and the second boat, it was suggested that these additional monies should be spent on improving the pier to allow for larger vessels to be moored there overnight. Nothing has been decided and in any event, it is for A&BC and Transport Scotland to decide. It was noted that the reason Calmac did not wish vessels to moor overnight in the winter was because it was not safe.
- **NG** advised that the RET sub-group of the Ferry Committee had had discussions with the Outer Isles and with Arran with regard to what might be expected when RET came in and also with Calmac.
- **WH** asked about the marshalling lanes. **NG** confirmed that Chris James had agreed to sell the extra land but A&BC wished to try the lowering of the kerb option. It was agreed that additional marshalling space was needed and even more so when a larger vessel would come in in 2018. The Coruisk has 44 spaces whereas the larger vessel would have between 60 and 67 spaces. **NG** advised that a different sub-group was dealing with the lanes situation. The Community Council was invited to send a representative to the next meeting.

- NG advised that Kilchoan had asked if they could send a representative to the Ferry Committee and this had been agreed.
- DP asked if the problem with the lift being out of order on the Coruisk was a health and safety issue. NG said that if it were, the H&SWE would not allow the vessel to be used and there was no spare vessel to take over. It was noted that, if the Coruisk's lift was out of order wheelchair users would have to travel on the Isle of Mull.
- WH raised the problem with people struggling with luggage and shopping as asked if a trolley or a van would be made available. NG advised that a van was more likely as it could be hired whereas a trolley would require capital investment; the Ferry Committee would chase this up.
- NG reminded the Community Councillors of the very short (four days) consultation period regarding next winter's timetable and advised that he had had a further email from Mr Taylor regarding next summer's timetable. On this occasion 15 days' notice had been given with the deadline of 9am on 25th July for replies. Although the Ferry Committee had spoken to a number of people, NG asked Community Councillors if they would try and get some views and let NG have these for the weekend, as NG had commitments which meant he would need to reply to Mr Taylor early the following week. It was noted that any changes must be backed up by a good reason, for example the issue of the 0855 and 0930 boats and connectivity with public transport.
- BM felt that the community should own Craignure pier. NG said that whilst this was realistic, a great deal of number-crunching would be required and there would need to be assurance that the community would be able to sustain the ownership well into the future.

POLICE REPORT

Date of Report: - 11/05/2016 – 13/6/2016. PC Clare Chalmers

Crimes/Offences that have occurred in community area since last meeting	<p>For period 14/6/2016-11/07/2016 Total number of incidents recorded = 37</p> <p>Crimes / Incidents of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>LB30 – Tobermory area:</u> <p>18 incidents recorded, of note:</p> <p>Male selling alcohol to U18's</p> <p>Theft of Money High value (CID)</p>
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	<p>2x domestic incidents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>LB31 – Craignure area:</u> <p>8 incidents recorded, of note:</p> <p>2 x Minor Road traffic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>LB33 – Salen area:</u> <p>5 incidents recorded, of note:</p> <p>Males on Bikes causing annoyance</p> <p>Domestic Incident</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>LB34 – Bunessan area:</u> <p>8 incidents recorded, of note:</p> <p>Search and Rescue male fallen</p> <p>Theft of car, Hit and Run</p>
<p>Updates on any actions from previous meetings</p>	
<p>Incidents of note or crime trends</p>	<p>Divisional priorities remain as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Protection - Serious Crime & Terrorism - Violence, Disorder & Antisocial behaviour - Road Policing

Forthcoming events	The Ross of Mull & Iona Gala

- **CC** advised that the theft and hit and run were related and the search and rescue assisted a male who had fallen and sustained a broken leg.
- **DP** asked if there was any upwards trends showing between last and this year; **CC** didn't believe so but had not done a direct comparison. She offered to do so but **BM** said that **JT** was keeping on top of the situation and would report back at the end of the season.

ADOPTION OF AUDITED ACCOUNTS^{SW} (JSWW)

- **JS** circulated the previous year's accounts that had now been agreed by independents. These needed to be adopted so that she could apply for the grant.
- **JS** reported nothing outstanding although she had been asked about the £377 in the Keep Mull Moving account. Some money had been used for the original Otter sign in 2014; all other Otter warning signs had been funded by the Otter Group.
- **DP** pointed out that the money paid to the secretary was greater than the grant. **JS** agreed that the grant for the minute-taker exceeded the amount granted for this and a little money is lost each year.
- **BM** advised that a cheque for marquee usage of £250 would be coming. **JS** pointed out that the Community Council receives a good amount of money from marquee hire. However, it was getting somewhat tired. **LG** suggested contacting Laura MacDonald at A&BC for a grant to update the tent.
- **AC** suggested that a place to keep the marquee should be investigated as the present container was on its last legs.
- The Adoption of the Accounts was proposed by **DP** and seconded by **FB**.

MOTORHOMES/CHEMICAL TOILET DISPOSAL PROBLEMS (SW)

- **SW** reported that, following concerns that some motor-homers were emptying the contents of their cassette toilets down public toilets, he had checked and this represented a very serious situation as the chemicals in these portable toilets attack pipe work and plastic seals, not to mention the tanks themselves if made from GRP or polythene.
- **SW** suggested that notices should be put in all public toilets asking motor-home owners to dispose of the contents of their toilets at the sites capable of dealing with the chemicals properly – The Sheilings, Tobermory campsite and Crannich.

- It was agreed that A3 signs should be prepared for the toilets at Calgary; Salen; Craignure; Dervaig, Buinessan; Fionnphort and Ulva Ferry. The posters should have a map showing the official disposal points. **JS** asked to prepare wording and speak with KFT re design.
- Concern about the cost of the posters was raised and it was agreed it would not be appropriate for the Keep Mull Moving money to be used. **LG** suggested approaching Calmac for help from their community fund.

ROADS UPDATE (WH)

- **WH** reported that the jet patcher had been over for 9 weeks so far; it was due to come back to the island for a further two weeks.
- **WH** reported that the Craignure section has been surfaced and there remained the verges to do.
- **WH** reported that the disabled and taxi bays in Tobermory and white lines for the bus lanes in Ledaig had been repainted.
- Noted that disabled and taxi bays, plus yellow lines, in Craignure needed to be done.
- **RC** advised no white lines in Buinessan car park.

VERGE GRASS CUTTING – loss of sight lines (WH)

- **WH** had reported that he had received a letter from a member of the public complaining that the B roads such as the 8035 are becoming dangerous for both drivers and pedestrians because of the loss of sight lines as the verges have not been cut. **W** concurred with this view and asked that the matter be addressed. **WH** suggested that verges need not be cut to their full length but only where sharp bends occur and in places where bracken has encroached to the road edge.
- **WH** advised that verge cutting would start at the back end of the current week or at the start of the following week.
- **WH** advised that verge cutting would be undertaken on the same basis as last year, i.e. once a year and sight lines would be addressed.
- **BM** advised that Duart road end needed attention.
- **AC** asked why A&BC, which had budgeted for the two staff who had left their employ, had not replaced those staff.
- **RC** raised the question of grass cutting at graveyards and **BM** suggested that the schedule for this be obtained.

UPDATES

- Abandoned caravans/trailers, Craignure: **SW** had spoken with Peter McLuckie. He came over to inspect and agreed to their removal. He will raise necessary paperwork for removal stickers prior to their uplift. This will take a couple of weeks but reassurance given that it will happen.
- Dervaig Toilets: **SW** had spoken with Colin Morrison and having received confirmation that the toilets would only be used for that purpose would write a letter of support for the asset transfer.
- THA/Aros Park – **SW** had written a letter of support.

- Killiechronan: W had written to Mr Cummings-Bruce at Killiechronan and subsequently telephoned him regarding the incident and the installation of an otter sign. Mr Cummings-Bruce is opposed to any signage but has agreed his manager, Fiona Cherry, would monitor the situation over the summer and report back. **JSWW** aware.
- Library service: W had been in communication with Pat McCann with whom **MCC** could meet later in the year to get the best deal to move forward.
- Screening at Pennygown: **MCC** had been successful in their bid for hedging from the Woodland Trust and the plants would arrive in November.

COUNCILLORS' REPORTS – No Councillors present.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **FB** advised that there were no further developments as regards NHS/SAS situation. The first meeting of the Mull and Iona locality group would take place on Thursday 14th July. **FB** was hoping for more community involvement but stressed that locality groups were not decision-makers, there were higher tiers before decisions made.
- **LG** advised that the Oban Times would be running features on NHS rural services over a ten week period and would like to have two weeks on Mull & Iona issues.
- **AC** raised concerns about A&BC planning following a developer receiving a request for a 200 year flood forecast at a time when the statutory consultation period was almost over; this should surely be requested before the application went in?
- The Oban Times had received a letter (attached at Annex 1) from Mr Barry Turner of Derbyshire. Mr and Mrs Turner are regular visitors to Mull and were expressing their disappointment in the island's amenities and infrastructure. Community Councillors discussed the points in Mr Turner's letter prior to a response being sent. The key items were:
- "There is no visitor centre on Mull". This is not true: there is the main visitor centre at Craignure; the caravan at Tobermory and the Ross of Mull Historical Centre.
- Mr Turner stated that Calmac operated the "rudimentary" public toilets at Craignure; these are A&BC run toilets He further stated that there were only three very basic public toilets at Salen, Calgary and Bunesan. Whilst most agree the facilities were basic, this statement was not correct.
- Mr Turner complained that there insufficient viewing points. Community Councillors generally agreed with this though the efforts of MICT in creating viewing points was noted and also the desire to expand on existing numbers.
- Community Councillors agreed that Mr Turner's comments regarding the state of the island's roads and the lack of passing place signs were reasonable though **WH**'s comments that the deferment of £80,000 works on the Craignure section was due to the paver being needed elsewhere in an emergency.
- Mr Turner reported a conversation with another visitor who had been parked off road and not in a passing place being aggressively told to move by someone who he assumed was a local. Whether this was the case, it was only an assumption on behalf of the visitor.
- Mr Turner said that Mull seemed to have "a malaise in its attitude to visitors" and a lack of concerted will by anybody to improve anything. Community Councillors felt strongly that this was denigrating to the people of Mull, with its many award-winning enterprises.

- **SW** would respond to Mr Turner.
- **FB** gave her apologies for the August meeting.

The meeting closed at 21.10 hours.

Date of next meeting: 7.00pm on Tuesday, 9th August, 2016.

Annex 1.

Letter from Mr Barry Turner.

1 Oak Drive

Doveridge

Derbyshire

DE6 5NF

Monday, 11 July 2016

The Editor

The Oban Times

Oban

Argyll

Dear Sir,

What is wrong with Mull?

My wife and I have just spent a very enjoyable four weeks in Scotland.

First we visited Lorn, staying on Seil Island from where we explored several locations including Lismore, Luing and Easdale Islands.

Moving on to Skye for a week, we looked at Elgol, Sligachan and the Armadale area and then went over to Raasay for the day.

Everywhere we went we found a friendly welcome and great infrastructure.

Public conveniences, almost exclusively Community owned and run, were plentiful, clean and well looked after with donation boxes in every one.

Car parking and Viewpoint areas were more than adequate.

There were visitor centres in most places, even on Lismore and Luing, small islands where to create such facilities must take a lot of work.

The roads in all of these locations were very well maintained with numerous passing places (very adequate ones) and good signage.

Callum's Road on Raasay, built by one man over ten years, was excellent.

There was evidence everywhere we went of fairly recent resurfacing work having been completed despite council cut backs.

Nearly 1800 miles of trouble free motoring and plenty of resources for both visitors and residents even around the remote Applecross area.

As visitors we were welcomed everywhere and it was obvious that tourism was wanted.

Our final week was spent on the Isle of Mull.

This is a beautiful island is a world-renowned wildlife watching location and somewhere we have visited frequently over the last twenty years, and two or three times a year since we retired.

Unfortunately, Mull is somewhere that hasn't really progressed at all over the last twenty years in regard to amenities and infrastructure for both locals and visitors.

The roads are appalling with worn out surfaces. There are inadequate and badly maintained passing places, many of them not signed at all. Surfaces are a patchwork of years of temporary repairs and passing places are often dangerous to use because of deep potholes on either end.

An £80,00 resurfacing and widening project at Craignure is still not finished and already breaking up apparently just abandoned by Argyll and Bute until July.

Given the very much better condition of the roads and passing places elsewhere in Lorn, those on Mull can only be the result of years of neglect by the Argyll and Bute Council.

There is no Visitor Centre on Mull.

Calmac provides rudimentary toilet and waiting room facilities at Craignure which experiences an extremely high number of passengers and vehicles coming to and going from Mull every day and in all weathers.

The entire island has only three very basic public toilets at Salen, Calgary and Bunessan. Toilet facilities were provided at Fishnish Ferry but these are now closed for the foreseeable future. The temporary Calmac Office at Tobermory has no toilets.

Salen was closed two years ago but re-opened after prolonged public pressure from residents.

Dervaig once had public toilets but these too were closed by the Council several years ago and have not re-opened even though residents in Dervaig would like to run them.

Calgary toilets are community run but cannot be described as anything other than very basic and have no donation box for users to contribute to running costs. We, like many visitors, would be more than happy to contribute to the running of all community run toilets on Mull.

Tobermory Marina has toilet facilities for a small charge but they aren't available 24x7.

There are very few viewpoint areas and the Forestry Commission mostly runs these. All have got very poorly maintained entrances with deep potholes both in their entrances and parking areas.

Many lochs have nowhere to stop at all to look at the scenery or watch for wildlife. There are passing places with missing 'Passing Place' signs but plenty of short wooden poles with little yellow Police signs saying that you can't stop and you may be fined if you do.

Finding somewhere to actually stop and watch Mull's wildlife, a major reason for many visitors coming to Mull in the first place, can be quite a challenge.

On the ferry back to Oban a couple of weeks back, we spoke with a gentleman who had heard about Mull's landscape and wildlife was returning from his first three-day visit.

He loved the island and wanted to go back for longer. He was however surprised at one stage of his visit after he pulled off the road to admire the view. He was not in a passing place, just off the road and out of the way.

A car pulled up alongside, blocking the road, and the driver, who he assumed was local, got out and quite aggressively told our visitor that he should not be parked where he was and had to move.

We were told this without any prompting and he asked if this was a common occurrence. Unfortunately is.

So, it seems that you can drive around Lorn, Skye, Oban, Ardnamurchan and Morvern and make use of excellent facilities, as you would expect to be able to do in this day and age. You will also be welcomed.

Mull however, seems to be the victim of prolonged neglect, a malaise in its attitude to visitors and a concerted will by anybody to improve anything.

I don't understand why, nor do many other people I talk to.

So I ask, what is wrong with Mull?

Is Mull being punished by Argyll and Bute?

Are Argyll and Bute ignoring Mull because nobody on the island bothers very much?

Is it because Mull as a visitor destination doesn't really need to put any effort in to welcome visitors as it gets a good income from tourism without having to?

Perhaps funding Café Culture harbour side projects in Oban to the tune of £6.5 million pounds is more important because visitors keep going to Mull no matter what the infrastructure is so why waste Council money improving anything?

I don't know, I really don't.

Regards,

Barry Turner