

**Mull Community Council**  
**11<sup>th</sup> April 2017, 7pm, An Roth, Craginure.**

**Present:** Billy McClymont, Steve Willis, Jim Corbett, Fiona Brown, Willie Hume and Cameron Anson,

**In Attendance:** Cllr Mary-Jean Devon, Louise Lee, Seonadh MacKenzie, PC D Grierson, Ian Moody, John Little, Neil Stoddart and Jenny Reddaway.

**Apologies:** Joanne MacDougall, Susan Campbell, Rory Forrester, Jane Stevens, David Pollard, Ronnie Campbell and Moray Finch.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes for the meetings on 14<sup>th</sup> February and 14<sup>th</sup> March were proposed by WH and seconded by SW.

**MATTERS ARISING**

- JC reminded those present that, at the March meeting, that the MacPhail Monument was in need of repair. Donald Brown of Tobermory had, at JC's request had inspected the monument and estimated that the repairs would cost between £1,600 and £2,000. JC asked if an application could be made to the Waterfall Fund. It was agreed that JC would make the application on behalf of the Community Council.

**POLICE REPORT – 15/03/2017 – 10/04/2017- PC D Grierson**

Crimes/Offences that have occurred in community area since last meeting	<p>For period 15/03/17 – 10/04/17. Total number of incidents recorded = 34</p> <p>Crimes / Incidents of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>LB30 – Tobermory area:</u>  Vandalism to parked vehicle – enquiries ongoing.  Assault, Main Street Tobermory – enquiries ongoing.</li><li>• <u>LB31 – Craginure area:</u>  Female arrested and reported following vandalism and disturbance.</li><li>• <u>LB33 – Salen area:</u> No incidents of note.</li><li>• <u>LB34 – Bunessan area:</u> No incidents of note</li></ul>
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Updates on any actions from previous meetings	
Incidents of note or crime trends	Divisional priorities remain as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public Protection</li> <li>- Serious Crime &amp; Terrorism</li> <li>- Violence, Disorder &amp; Antisocial behaviour</li> <li>- Road Policing</li> </ul>
Forthcoming events	Mull Music Festival Local Council Elections

- DG advised that extra Police officers would be coming over for the Music Festival.
- MJD advised that a Council officer would come over from Thursday with additional Police. This year, they were aware that a cruise ship would be coming in on the Sunday and this was catered for as were spaces for camper vans.
- Following a tragic sudden death in Tobermory, MJD reported people were concerned about the protocols involved. MJD said that the members of the community who had proffered help including traffic duty should be commended.

#### **PRESENTATION BY TILHILL AND OTHERS.**

- BM welcomed the guests and members of the public attending. He reminded the members of the public that they were present as observers and not allowed to ask questions.
- BM also advised that a member of the public had asked to use Skype. It was felt that a decision on this should be put to all Community Councillors and would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting; the request for the use at the meeting was not approved.
- Ian Moody, harvesting manager for Tilhill, with many years of involvement with forestry on Mull, advised that he and his colleagues were attending to address concerns over the Tiroran road and the use of neo-nicotinoids, namely Gazelle, in replanting schemes on the island. He introduced Mr John Little, Area District Manager for Tilhill and Mr Neil Stoddart, General Manager of JST Services (Scotland) Ltd. who carry out timber haulage work on the island.
- Mr Moody advised that his company had become involved with North West Mull and assistance had been obtained from the Strategic Timber Transport Board to help fund the haul route, following pressure to get the timber lorries off the road. A fully loaded timber wagon weighs 44 tons and the Tiroran road has a weight limit of 18 tons so a traffic management plan was agreed with the Council that no more than six loads could be carried over the road in one day and that central tyre inflation (CTI) must be used. CTI is a means of adjusting tyres to spread the weight of the vehicle more generally across the road. Mr Moody pointed out that between February 2016 and March of this year some 15,000 tons were shipped before problems were incurred. Mr Moody felt that, whilst undoubtedly the timber haulage had done some damage to the road, they were not the sole contributory factor to the failure of the Tiroran road.

- Mr Stoddart, whose firm had 25 years experience in the timber haulage industry, gave a PowerPoint presentation, initially detailing the importance of the timber industry to Britain. The world's third largest importer of timber, Britain needs a sustainable home-grown, timber supply. Haulage vehicles were an inevitable part of the forestry industry and various organisations (the Timber Transport Forum with officers for all areas and the Road Haulage of Round Time group who run the Tread Softly campaign) have strict rules. Haulage companies do consult with Councils and communities to minimise problems. Mr Stoddart acknowledges that timber wagons do cause some damage to roads and his company has been working on a number of solutions to reduce this. Amongst these solutions is the development of multi-axel wagons with tyres offset and one of these is unique and being employed at Pennyghael.
- Mr Moody pointed out that they currently have 6 -7,000 tons of timber at the roadside that cannot be shipped; he considered that, with Mr Stoddart's firm's solution, it should be possible to get the traffic order re-instated and move it out for the community. He hoped that Community Council would support this. WH asked why there could not be a floating pier at Tiroran as there is at Pennyghael. It was pointed out that the pier at Pennyghael was built several years ago at a cost of around £300,000 and costs would have increased over that time. Additionally, there is less timber to extract at Tiroran so it would not necessarily be a viable option. JC understood what was being said but pointed out that six 44 ton loads a day was far more frequent than the feedstuff lorries which also aren't constant. JC asked if say four loads per day with a lighter load would be feasible. BM felt that, if the lorry at Pennyghael could reduce the weight distribution considerably, it would be worth trying.
- SW asked if Mr Moody would be prepared to use say two weekly monitoring if the Pennyghael truck were used; Mr Moody thought that they should have checked more frequently but queried whether the Council were checking.
- MJD asked whether all the vehicles were fitted with CTI. Mr Stoddard advised that the first one used had flotation tyres and the second one had CTI.
- Concern was expressed that the £100,000 necessary for repairs might be futile if taking out the rest of the timber ruined the road.
- MJD asked that, if using the second vehicle, assurance could be given regarding road damage. Mr Stoddart said he would need to look at weights as a balance needed to be made.
- It was suggested that the Council should approach the Scottish Strategic Timber Board for financial assistance as Councils can now get assistance up to half of the amount put in, e.g. Council might contribute £0.5million and the Board could support with another £0.25million.
- Turning to the issues of using neo-nicotinoids to treat trees when re-stocking, SW explained that a concerned resident had raised the issue of this pesticide getting into private water supplies and water courses in general, inevitably reaching the marine environment. The Community Council had received reassurances from SEPA and the Environment Agency and felt it could take the matter no further. An additional concern had been expressed that workers might be fully conversant with the proper use of such pesticides.
- Mr Little advised that many of the forests had been created between 40 and 50 years ago and to make forestry sustainable, re-stocking was required. The biggest problem facing foresters is weevils that can decimate young trees to the tune of 60-70% in the first two years of planting. There was the potential to leave sites fallow for five years but this can create problems for the machinery used in re-planting and there is always the potential for weevils to fly in. Many pesticides previously used are now not available but Gazelle, the neo-nicotinoid locals are concerned about, is licensed and approved by the UK Government and labelled as causing no significant damage.
- Mr Little explained that the trees being brought in have been treated in a nursery and dried, with no residue found in the bags, before transporting. Mr Little advised that he was no expert and had to trust the professionals but there appeared to be no evidence

that Gazelle and cited a reference to a comparison given that the toxicity was less than caffeine. He pointed out that that it was a tool that forest owners were legally entitled to use and it was their decision to use the product or not. Mr Little said that he understood the strong concerns and that he would not be happy using the product if it was going to cause damage.

- With regard to the worry about operatives not knowing the proper rules about spraying, all operatives must have passed the PA6 test; anyone without English as their first language would not be able to pass this test. Those planting are supervised and have pictorial guides. FCS will spray up to 1m from a watercourse and spraying with Gazelle may take place 2-3 years after planting.
- Regarding enquiries over whether the water was tested or not, it was noted that this is a matter for the landowner. SW thought that the water should be tested before replanting as a control but Mr Little advised that this was not an industry standard. SW suggested that, if testing was done, this would offer some protection to the forestry owners.
- Asked about de-stumping, Mr Little advised that this can cause more problems and has the potential to upset water supplies.
- BM asked about dosage. Mr Little advised that the dosage worked out at 0.4kg per hectare but reminded those present that they are bringing in nursery treated trees and Gazelle is not classified as highly toxic. Asked about its build-up in the environment, Mr Little advised that neither its half-life nor residual amounts were significant.
- Mr Little advised that there was the option to spray but this was dependent on levels of infestation. Checking to see how many larvae are on the stumps is possible, but very expensive and time-consuming. Mr Little added that the waxing system does not work in this country.
- SW stressed that the Community Council did not intend to be judge and jury on these issues but it must bring up community concerns. Mr Little accepted this and said he would go back to the regulators on the subject of pesticides.
- CA advised that he was a Director of SWMID and as such had an interest in the Tiroran forest. SWMID would be monitoring the situation but had not seen any evidence of problems; he advised SWMID were not planting at this time.

## **HUSTINGS.**

- SW advised that MICT had requested that the Community Council share the costs of presenting the Hustings and that some dates were needed that were convenient for the Ward 4 candidates. MJD advised that May 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> were booked for a Hustings in Oban. LL, on behalf of the Oban Times, offered that the Oban Times would pay the costs of the hall. SW would discuss with MF and LL would email SW.

## **KNOCK BRIDGE**

- Community Councillors had been circulated with new information on the repairs to Knock Bridge, details below:
- Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 9:00 - Knock Bridge closed to traffic until completion of repairs.
- Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April until late May We will endeavour to open the bridge to vehicles between phases of work if safe to do so. If we are able to open the bridge between phases it will be at either 3t or 7.5t restriction.
- Late May until Mid-June – Ties installed by Albion Drilling. The dates for this phase are provisionally Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May until Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June.
- Late June - Road surfacing reinstated. This has been arranged to be carried out by Argyll & Bute Council's Roads Operations team, and the dates for this phase are provisionally Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June until Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June.
- End of June – Knock Bridge reopened to traffic with a reinstated 33t capacity.
- Pedestrian access. We will be accommodating pedestrians and allowing access whenever it is safe to do so throughout the works. Having discussed with the contractor for the

masonry repairs phase (also Argyll & Bute Council – Bridge Squad) pedestrian access will be managed in the same way as during the previous bridge closure in February. Any unsafe-to-cross periods will be kept to a minimum and we do not anticipate any long periods when the bridge cannot be crossed at any point during the works. The previous closure did not involve any long periods and whilst the works are for the entire bridge this time, the section repaired in February required more extensive repairs than the sections being repaired this time. If anything unforeseen happens during the works that would affect pedestrian access in any way, everyone will be updated immediately via this group and the website.

- Details of any restrictions on pedestrian access will be posted on the following website: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/knock-bridge-b8035-mull>
- The same site will have details if there any opportunities to open the bridge to vehicles.
- Any events planned over the period of the bridge closure whose organizers have contacted me directly have been accommodated within the programme – to ensure pedestrian / cycle / horse access can be gained when required.

### **BALURE CEMETERY**

- SC had heard from a resident that deer had got into the cemetery and caused considerable damage; it was asked if the site could be deer fenced. MJD asked that they write to her.

### **DAMAGE TO LOCHDON CRESCENT**

- SC had passed on to SW the fact that standing water had damaged the road. SW to email Hugh MacGregor.

### **UPDATES**

- WH reported that the abandoned car was still at Calgary and had been so for over a year. It was noted that more cars had been given seven day notices in Craignure. SW to follow up with Derek Crook.
- Referring to the long vehicle signs, SW reported no progress since 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016; MJD agreed to follow this up. JC advised that the road to Laggan was not suitable for large vehicles.
- WH asked what was happening regarding the marshalling area at Craignure; MJD advised that A&BC were waiting on a response from Transport Scotland.

### **COUNCILLORS' REPORTS.**

- MJD advised that the education report had made particular reference to poor management and leadership of education in Argyll and a special Council meeting had been held; the priority was to ensure that A&BC education services were fit for purpose.
- MJD reported that the Integrated Joint Board (IJB), which has eight voting members, had agreed an unbalanced budget (voting was 6 to 2)
- SW asked for information on the West Coast Motors depot situation. MJD replied she'd been updated by Tim Williams and been advised that the tree screening was very unlikely to be enforceable and that the hard standing would come under permitted development. The caravan was a separate situation. It was intended to replace the tree screening and it was suggested that a request for more mature trees be made.
- MJD highlighted the shortage of home carers and advised that A&BC had the highest spend in Scotland.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- SW reminded those present that the AGM would take place in May.
- SW advised that he had been approached by someone very keen to be a Community Councillor.
- FB reported that Ronnie Campbell was resigning on the grounds of ill health. All present expressed their sincere thanks to Ronnie for his long and tireless support to the Community Council.
- BM advised that he had some good news on the health issues. The proposal to reduce the number of hospital beds from three to two had been dropped and the dental van would be coming back. A new doctor, Dr Ward, would be coming to the island accompanied by his wife, also a doctor. The advertisement for more doctors was still in place.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.