

MULL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at An Roth on Wednesday 6th March

Present: Billy McClymont, Jim Corbett, Andrena Duffin, Adrian Stephens, Iain Campbell, John Maughan, Fiona Brown, Lindsay MacDonald, Nancy Somerville, Pam MacColl, Sarah Padley.

Apologies: Susan Campbell, Josh Liddle, Moira Westland, Marie Robertson, Moray Finch, Janna Greenhalgh.

In Attendance: Councillor Devon, Ellen Kane, Joseph Campbell, Mr & Mrs Roy Pedersen, Rev. John Paton, PC Dominic Grierson, several members of the public.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6th February were proposed by John Maughan and seconded by Lindsay MacDonald.

Active Travel Project

Ellen Kane and Joseph Campbell from Jacob's Engineering spoke about their project for A&B Council to identify suitable walk and cycle ways on the Island. This is an early stage of a high level review for the Government and Mull has been identified as a priority. They are looking for feedback from Islanders.

B.M. said that there was great potential on the Island especially where new roads had been made as the old road could be used, altho it would need a big investment. Work had already been done on the Craignure to Fionnphort route.

J.C. told us they were funded by SusTrans, more sustainable transport, to meet up with Community Councillors and wider stakeholders, ie schools, cycling and walking groups to identify issues. They would be engaging with land owners and working with Brodie's, solicitors, to put forward a plan by the end of May.

P.M. said Glengorm had already set up signed walking routes which could be included.

F.B. suggested looking at the routes round Pennygael especially the old way to Lochbuie.

J.C. offered to advise E.K. and J.C. as the landowner, and could help them identify routes. There was a Pilgrims route by Carsaig but it was not in good condition.

It was suggested they should contact Jean Whittaker, Moray Finch, the U3A walking group, walk highland, the cycling group, the Forestry Commission and the Rangers.

A meeting with interested parties is to be set up on the 21st March.

Police Report.

PC Dominic Grierson told us that this month there had been 21 calls for Mull North including various Road Traffic matters, one theft of a motor vehicle, which was recovered quickly and 3 recorded crimes. In Craignure there were 6 calls, calls of note were of sheep worrying near Java and possession of controlled drugs. In the Salen area, 6 calls, a drunk driver and 1 recorded crime. The Ross of Mull had 11 calls, calls of note were animal welfare concerns.

Report on meeting with Mr Drummond, MD of CalMac

B.M. reported that 5 Community Councillors had had a very positive meeting with Robbie Drummond. He had just visited Croatia where they are successfully working with 85 metre ferries and he was interested in the prospect of smaller ferries. After speaking with him we agreed to hold a ferry summit as has been done in the Western Isles and Islay.

Presentation by Roy Pedersen, author of "Who pays the Ferryman"

Roy thanked M.J.D. for her invitation and the MCC for hosting the talk. He introduced himself as a maritime consultant and part time author.

There are 2 philosophies in building and operating ferries, first with CalMac and CMAL (who own the ships) to have large ships with 25-30 live on board crew, heavy link span, side loading for passengers, 9 personnel for docking. The second, more modern theory operated by Western Ferries, the Norwegian ferries and others is to have smaller, simpler ships with 4-6 crew, a lock on link span also used for passengers and only 1 person needed for docking. This is much quicker

and more efficient. An example of this is Pentland Ferries in Orkney which has no subsidy and makes a profit while Northern Ferries, with £10 million subsidy on the same route but with a bigger boat makes a loss.

At the moment the proposal for Mull is to have larger ferries with a large development at Craignure, with a large marshalling area which would have a considerable visual impact.

Roy's suggested model would be to have 2 eighty car ferries providing an hourly service in the summer, 2 hourly in winter. A supplementary passenger only service on a fast 35 knot catamaran could run from Oban to Craignure, Lochaline, Tobermory. The Craignure pier could be upgraded with a new lock on link span and facilities for a reasonable sum of money. Copy the Western Ferries outlook, it is not necessary to have large boats and piers, keep it simple and so profitable. MJ.D. said that the CC had organised meetings all over the Island to get people's views, 99% had supported a proposal for smaller Ferries, how do we get Transport Scotland to listen?

R.P. advised a petition to the minister, Michael Matheson, work with other CCs and to hold our Ferry Summit as soon as possible. Also write to Kate Forbes, minister for public finance.

B.M. said that Robbie Drummond, CalMac had been supportive and we were in a good position as it was still early days, nothing has been decided. We need a commutable service and as phase 1 to restore/rebuild the pier.

A.S. noted that A&B Council had severe financial constraints. They should liaise with Transport Scotland to plan the way forward at Craignure.

Martin Caldwell said all Councils faced cuts. The Council's financial report was due out soon with a plan for the development of infrastructure. They have the potential to borrow £50million for pier and harbour improvements over the next 2-3 years. Some of this could go to improving the piers at Craignure and Iona, they could manage reasonable projects but not the massive one proposed by the STAG report.

A full report of Roy's presentation will appear in Round and About.

Councillor's Report

MJ.D. had an inconclusive meeting about Campervan parking at Ledaig during the Music Festival. Visitors should be provided with safety leaflets to raise awareness of fire danger. Space should be left between Campervans for access and to prevent risk of fire.

A workshop on shared transport is to be held at An Roth on 13th March which she would attend.

TRO, Mr Sneddon, Chief Executive of A&BC has been asked to look into setting up an Island Impact Assessment but although the Islands Act had been passed there were no instructions as to how it should be set up. He would write to the Minister and set up a pilot scheme.

A&B C had received a grant of £1.2 million from the Scottish Govt. for town centres. We should ask for new railings, flood defence and better pavements in Tobermory.

Medical, an advertisement made by the community had been placed in the British Medical Journal. There had been positive feed back about the proposed plan by the Locum Doctors.

AOB

N.S. said MICT would like the support of the CC for their recycling project. This was agreed.

The meeting ended at 10pm. Next meeting will be on the 3rd April.