

Morvern Community Council meeting 08 September 2026, Lochaline Village Hall, 19:00

Present: Chair - Tom Frazer (TF); Treasurer - Jenni Hodgson (JH); Roads - Rob Capell (RC); Douglas Taylor (Planning - DT); Minute Secretary - Cara Bentley (CB)

Members of the Public: (8), including: Daniel Bentley (DB) RSPB, Stephanie Cope (SC) RSPB

Quorate: Yes

Community Council Meeting – Commence 19:00

1. Welcome, Apologies, Declarations of Interest

- a. Welcome & Apologies from *Council Members* - Henriette Laidlaw (HL)
- b. **Declarations of Interest:** JH - Urum

2. AOB Requests

- a. Urum, Grit Bin outside Lochaline Village Hall

3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

- a. (TF) Clearing of Shrubland in Lochaline – including in front of the High Street
 - i. TF has had words with Henry Dobson of Ardtornish, and they're looking to start next month in October to trim down the trees. Leaving the Hazel, removing Sycamore and other bigger and especially non native plants.
 - ii. TLS has begun clearing works on the land opposite the school, as MCDC now own that land and they are putting in the waste water works for the new council estate because that's where the main sewage will run down the road.
 - iii. TF was asked how MCDC/TLS can clear the scrubs, and Ardtornish have said they can't because although it isn't illegal at any time of the year, it is illegal if there is a bird's nest there and it gets disturbed. Henry is speaking to George Louge and he is going to start next month on clearing the shrubbery and sorting out the sycamore.
 - iv. Ardtornish will be paying for that work.
 - v. **Action ():**
- b. (RC) Road Closure Notice
 - i. Gus has provided us with a map to show that on the 15th from 9-11:30 and 14-16:30 the road will be closed. They're re-tarring it where the bridge is. The highland council timber forum has provided money – quite a lot of money – where they are going to widen the roads for the wood lorries. One is being shut this evening.
 - ii. **Action (TF):** We have already put the times on the Lochaline Facebook page – but we'll repost this information.

c. (TF) Corran Ferry

- i. Discussion Point: We've got the Maid of Glencoe back, and they've done a trial run running both ferries side by side, like a relay, so that when it's busy they can put two ferries on to keep the traffic numbers down.
 1. The problem they have there is that they only have two crews, and they work one crew on and one crew off interchangeably, and bringing both in would require paying overtime.
- ii. They're talking about the new ferry, and there is a person in charge of pricing it – who happens to be in charge of CalMac. They're thinking of a joint venture with CalMac, or CalMac taking it over totally.
 1. It's not a lifeline link, so there isn't a cheaper price.
- iii. They're going to do away with paper tickets, and everything will be done online. It gets downloaded to your smartphone (if you don't, you can still have a paper ticket). You can still bulk buy the voucher packet online, they just exist in a digital form. Foot passengers will have to do this as well, but disabled badge holders will not need to do this. It's a trial period, and nothing is happening imminently as they're trying to work out how to do it.
- iv. Question (JH): If you don't have a smart phone, will you be having to buy smaller booklets at less of a discount? (TF) I don't think they know this information yet.
- v. Question: (JH) A lot of questions need to be asked about this. When is the next meeting? (TF) They're doing it every three months now, so the next meeting will be in November.
- vi. Question (MoP): Can you pay by cash then? (TF) Unknown at this point.
- vii. **Action ():**

d. (DT) New Powers for Community Councils

- i. (DT) I was meant to watch a webinar last month, but I was unable to and have no update at this time.
- ii. **Action ():**

e. Memorial Bench

- i. The family of a woman who came into Lochaline often has purchased a memorial bench that they would have placed near the Hub (on Ardtornish land on the grass across the road). (TF) I have been in touch with Henry Dobson, and they don't have a problem with it, but if at any point they want to remove the bench they have that right.

- ii. **Action (j):** The authorisation being passed now, the buyers would need to be informed of this of the retained Ardtornish control beforehand.
- f. Village: People Passed Away This Month
 - i. As a community council, we extend our thoughts to all of the friends and families involved. It is a big loss to the community.

4. RSPB - Presentation (SC)

- a. The RSPB is going through organisational change, and we have an obligation to offer roles internally first but will then open roles up to the local community and other external applicants.
- b. We're coming into the next major delivery phase now, just finishing up two grants that have now been completed. We have a planned funding gap, while the next project was due to start in January, however we have successfully secured another grant fund to cover this gap. Towards the end of September we'll know if we have secured funding for the next major phase of the project.
- c. We've said goodbye to locals, Kez and Ellen, and both will be missed.
- d. As far as work that has been delivered, we've exceeded our expectation – over 300 hectares of rhododendron clearing. Initially we planned to move from west Morvern to east Movern, however the infestation is more challenging than originally estimated and the designated sites require more focus. This includes the Isle of Carna, which although not part of Morvern, is a major seed source, so essential to clearing the Morvern area of the invasive species. On Carna, 19 resident volunteers joined us earlier this year.
- e. The Tree Nursery – we are very grateful for the volunteers who join Helen on the project there. We have over 6,000 trees on the go, and we're hoping to have final ground works and a toilet on site completed shortly.
- f. Alistair Firth has done quite a lot of rainforest mapping, and attendance of knowledge sharing events and also leads guided walks and events.
- g. I'm conscious at times that it's been difficult to keep open lines of communication within the community, and there is work to be done there, and we are pleased to improve on that and want people to be involved in the work that we're doing. This is meant to be more community-centric than previous. At the end of this period (next 4 years under ORF funding), we should be able to have created more opportunities for community involvement in the project, leading to a potential handover/transition of the project.
- h. Questions (JH): In terms of the rhodie clearing – how are you actually doing it? Then if whacking them down, they just come back, how do you combat this. (DB) It depends on the Rhodie – there's not an effective one fits all

approach. We mostly do a combination of lever and mulch, hand-pulling seedlings, and targeted chemical use (drill and fill) where necessary. This is only done on the larger plants, and we also particularly use it as a low impact measure when there are protected species nearby to minimise habitat damage and disturbance. We've also been practicing with winching recently on removing large previously cut stumps.

- i. Questions (TF): Is the tree nursery where the poly-tunnels are? (SC) It's taken some time to get everything off the ground, and with just having one main staff member, Helen is undertaking the task of seed collection, and it's a great time to get involved. The thanks of RSPB in the project to the volunteers, land owners and land-access. We wouldn't be able to deliver the work without the support of the community.
- j. If it was possible to get a map that demonstrates who owns what of the land for permissions in order to do work around the village. This would be useful to the RSPB.
- k. **Action (Seed Collection FB Page): Check if this has been posted recently, and if not to refresh the post.**

5. (DT) Planning Applications

- a. Two applications for forestry road extensions – these are located up at Bar Hydro, and down by Morvern Schoolhouse, by Rahoy. Both for restocking and deer management. One application for a new dwelling (a four-bedroom house extension) at Savory, just beside Peggy Sampson's house. Right beside the river bank. A balcony going up in Drimnin.
- b. **Action ():**

6. (JH) Treasurer's Report

- a. Balance in Account: £10,188.87
- b. Payments This Month: We've spent some service charges.
- c. We resolved the issues with the Kingarloch fund, which was 2,398.85.
- d. Organising the meeting RE: Grass Cutting
 - i. Where this will come from. RC was asking whether the Attic would be covering the grass cutting.
 - ii. **Action (TF): Will try and arrange a collaborative meeting.**

7. Any Other Business

- a. (JH) The Grit Bin – Someone with mobility issues has noticed a problem with the placement of the bin, he was leaning on to the railing, but had to let go to get up to the slope, so accessibility should be considered, although I recognise that it's there to grit that particular icy slope.
 - i. **Action (RC):** Send an e-mail to the Highland council.
- b. (JH) Urram – They have lots of electric cars, but down here we don't have a charge point that's exclusively for Urram. We have approached the Fire Station, Social Club, GP Practice and the Hub. We still have some money

which would pay for it, however we're looking to suggest whether the Hall's Car Park could support this. The West Pier could potentially be a site, and there is power there. The Old Pier association has Bob, however he is the only member, so this would be challenging. (TF) The public one at the hub is actually the most expensive point in all of Scotland.

- i. Action (JH): Determine who owns the land for various sites, and get back to the individual who is trying to organise this.
- c. (TF) Ardtornish Invite
 - i. Discussion Point: Event, Connecting People & Animals - Friday, Sept 11 at 17:00-19:30. All welcome.
- d. Hard of hearing accommodations that don't require hearing aids for council meetings (Action: CB).

Upcoming			Meeting		Dates	
13	October	2026		Lochaline	Village	Hall
10	November			2026		Online
8 December 2026 Lochaline Village Hall						

Meeting closed at 20:05