

Morvern Community Council
Notes of meeting held on Monday August 14th 2023 at 7pm Lochaline Village Hall

Present: Angus Robertson (chair), Annie Tordoff (sec), Henreitte Laidlaw (treasurer), Janette Cameron, Douglas Taylor, Councillor Sarah Fanet and
45 members of the public. Apologies Morvern Gemmill

1. Welcome, Apologies, Declarations of Interest etc.
2. AOB requests
3. Community Council [Election timetable 2023](#) - Council will be dissolved 10th October. AR encouraged nominations by the council deadline of 3rd October. AT and AR offered to speak to anyone who might be interested in secretary and chair role as both Annie and Angus will be standing down.

Minutes of last meeting agreed. Matters arising

- a. Housing - Ardtornish discussion paper made available. HR introduced paper and outlined 6 potential sites ([see document on Movern.org](#)). All agreed as noted in Live Life Morvern Plan that housing is a top priority along with associated infrastructure - transport, water, sewerage etc. AR stated that we wish to commission a place based plan from Live Life Morvern Plan. **ACTION - AT** to contact PAS and ascertain cost and apply to funding to make this happen. Question asked how the community plan can be delivered - noted that it gives a steer to future direction reflecting what the community wants.
- b. HR opened discussion and said that not all sites will be developed depending on public opinion and statutory planning process. Sites are - Quarry at Cadha Ruadh, Ardtornish (2 sites with up to 13 house plots), Rowan bank west of the houses of Morvern Crescent. Area towards Kirk Brae with rare butterflies and flora would remain protected, Land west of Kirk brae (prime agricultural land), area along Drimnin road beyond Boylan's house and land above telephone exchange. Also land SW of Kirkbrae behind the west pier. There are also 2 remaining plots at Achabeag. Ardtornish houses are being refurbished to make them habitable hopefully by this time next year for estate staff. Question was asked about 'luxury plots with good views' and why these were thought to be necessary - HR responded that this might help with financing infrastructure for other plots. It was noted that Live Life Morvern plan highlighted affordable housing need but not luxury second homes. HR said that if luxury/second homes were not popular this would not be pursued. Digital infrastructure needs to be considered with any new build as along the Drimnin road BT provision of this is still poor. Alternative methods of broadband provision are now more available than were previously. Question asked if Ardtornish was funding their own proposal. HR assured that there would be no competition with MCDC planned housing for grants etc. Point raised about light/views currently available at Kirk Brae as good for living and mental health and that Savills suggestion would compromise the current character of Kirk Brae. Definition of affordable housing raised and we need to understand what this is for us as this is currently unclear. Question asked if plots at Achabeag could not be developed first - they are managed by Highland Communities Housing Trust and designated as self build plots. **ACTION AT:** Community council to contact Highland small communities to check if this status can be changed which would mean it more likely they would be used (economies of scale with building 2 houses at the same time etc). Self build is not affordable at present.

- c. School update - JC gave an overview of numbers in the school this year which will be 8 children this year with 0/1 or 2 in each year apart from 4 in this years P7 who will be leaving next year. Nursery role is 5. There are 4 babies in pre nursery. Some parents have also opted for Gaelic medium education. We do not have minimum numbers required to have a Gaelic teacher. Andrew Raven trust are facilitating a meeting which will be held on August 26th - time tba in Lochaline Village hall.
 - d. Primary care update - public meeting requested with Health Board to understand new service offered by amalgamated practice as was offered by Will Nell at previous meeting in Spring 2023. Health Board offered a meeting with MCC only which was deemed not to be appropriate and a request to Will Nell Clinical Lead and Jill Mitchell (manager) has been sent again. Date tba
 - e. Village maintenance - being carried out according to plan. AR highlighted the need to secure funding to continue this work in the future.
 - f. Snack bar notice board - AR outlined instability of current board. Materials have been costed for replacement. Councillors agreed to fund this - Emily offered to pick these up to reduce delivery costs. 2 previous plastic notice boards were destroyed in the recent fire at the harbour. **ACTION AR** Whilst included in the insurance claim it may not materialise
 - g. Dail Mhor - Jenni Hodgson spoke to the meeting about this item. NHS manager said that 3.2 wte applicants are required to reopen the care home. Urram are aware that the recruitment process is extremely slow and are offering to support applicants to speed up the process. It was also noted that the NHS is reluctant to explore more care at home and flexible working patterns. Urram are starting a care at home service in Morvern with flexible working. **ACTION** - Jenni Hodgson will send info for MCC to distribute.
 - h. KL stated that CalMac have support at Lochaline for Mull Rally.calmac have advertised for two port assistant jobs that will be in place for the rally and beyond, there will be the MV Loch Riddon and Lochinvar offering a shuttle service, the Loch Riddon unfortunately will have to stay in Oban due to berth availability closer to Lochaline so her operational day on the run will be from about 0900 to 1700. Extra crew are also being placed on the ferries too to expedite loading.
 - i. Trees are in the line of sight of telephone exchange which can interrupt line of sight to satellite on Mull - **ACTION AR** to investigate and pursue thereafter.
4. Corran Ferry. MCC has requested through FOI correspondence relating to return of MV Corran - return date 3rd October. HL outlined an update meeting with Kate Forbes published on Lochaline FB earlier this week. A ballot to ascertain what communities want in the long term ie fixed link or ferry has been agreed but not delivered as yet. Notes agreed from meeting with Kate Forbes on 7th August below

Short term:

- Highland Council to ask the present yard to dedicate their entire workforce to the MV Corran repairs – if this is not possible then enquire about the boat moving elsewhere to get the work done quicker
- Highland Council to erect signs on the A861 encouraging convoys to be broken up
- Highland Council to accept Police Scotland's recommendation of a blanket 40mph speed limit on the A861 until the MV Corran is back in service
- Tar the existing passing places/complete outstanding roadworks on the A861

Medium term:

- Highland Council to appoint an independent project manager with a marine background to oversee future Corran Narrows projects
- Conduct a survey on long-term options at the Corran Narrows

-Create a mini-local development plan at either side of the Corran Narrows to prevent overdevelopment and restriction of future options

-Order a new diesel ferry

Longer term:

- Work with HITRANS to update their figures for the business case for a fixed link to better inform the survey on long term solutions.

I have also sought an urgent meeting with the chief executive and deputy chief executive, and will report back progress on the above very soon and trust the council will treat it with the urgency it deserves.

Questions from the public included - understanding money available for ferries, longer and short term options. There was also a suggestion about having a text message that can be subscribed to like CalMac have on all routes. It was also asked what has happened to contingency money that has been allocated to cover ferry costs over the years - it was suggested to pursue this point. Cllr Fanet is continuing to try and pursue better communication from Highland Council. Cllr Fanet noted that an outline business case for new interim diesel ferry is likely to take a year to 18 months and there is no obvious funding. The meeting attendees noted that Highland Council appear inadequate in any planning process. Question raised about twitter feed - this is run by the ferry crew and therefore instant regarding the status of the ferry which is useful but it was deemed that this should be official eg when contingency measures need to be put in place. Promised weekly updates from HC are still not forthcoming. New CEO has been asked to participate in steering group meetings. The status of the ferry as 'life line' was also discussed and deemed imperative. - **ACTION HL**

West Pier - meeting was requested with Callum Wilson of Iggesund and has not materialised as yet. The company has offered community participation to plan how best to tidy up the pier - **ACTION JC** will liaise with Annabel L to take this forward.

Planning applications

- j. Scottish Sea Farms Fiunary Fish Farm expansion - Mooring buoys are intended to come into the shoreline. All noted that jobs in Morvern and housing occupancy as a minimum should be part of the planning process - **ACTION AT to write again** stating these points.

MCDC Update

- Housing being pursued and contact with local employers continues
- July was a good month for Hydro - finances satisfactory despite dry months in early summer
- Village hall hoping to get Wifi
- Treasurer's Report. See below

MCC Treasurer's report for period		£
Opening Balance at:	1/4/2023	£8,934.62
INCOME	Highland Council Annual payment 2022-23	£448.67
EXPENDITURE	Village Maintenance - 4 cuts up to 6/8/2023	-£3,000.00
	2022-23 Accounts Audit	-£100.00
	15-01-2023 MCTC hub room hire for Ardtornish meeting	-£8.00
Closing Balance at:	6/8/2023	£6,275.29

2023 Meeting dates

11th Sept - in person

9th October

13th November

11th December