

North Knapdale Community Council

Minutes of the North Knapdale Community Council meeting held at Tayvallich Village Hall on the 16 May 2023 at 7.30 pm.

In Attendance: Iain Ritchie, Richard Stein, Cllr Dougie Philand, Sgt Matt Shaw, Savanna Murdoch, Alan Hutchinson, Mike Macintyre, Martin Mellor, Ewan Halley, Bill Dunkley, Vicky Dunkley, Catherine MacLennan, Norma Kelly, Mike Kelly, Alka Foster, Peter Burrell, Kathie Baer, Martin Mellor, Kate Walker, Jan Aksnes, Ann Shand, Christine Richards, Andrew Milne.

1. Welcome: Iain Ritchie welcomed everyone.
2. Apologies: Jean Whittaker, Paul Chadderton, Sue Hillman, Chris Purslow, Andy Grant, Lynne Milne.
3. Approval of minutes of last meeting: The minutes of the meeting on 17th November 2022 were approved, subject to the following corrections:
In attendance: – ADD Andy Conato; Apologies: ADD Heather Williams; 8.i REPLACE FLS with SC; 9.iii REPLACE SC with FLS.
4. Matters arising/ Correspondence
 - a. Crinan bottle bank – All sorted. Cllr Philand has resolved this issue. We should have a bottle bank in the Canal Basin very soon.
 - b. Bins at Tayvallich Pontoon - Despite pressing for a Council funded bin in the centre of the village, including a complaint to the ABC Chief Executive, payment by the Bay Association is still being required. The meeting agreed that this was a most unsatisfactory response from the Council. We agreed to write to the TBA to find out what steps we could take next.
 - c. Community Budget Simulator – we noted a Council press release announcing the creation of a budget simulator. Given that there will be an estimated £10m cut in the Council's budget in 2024-25, difficult decisions will have to be made as to where to cut services. The simulator will allow members of the public to input ideas about which services to cut to see how the budget would be impacted. A copy of the Press Release is attached. It will be available on the Council website from 19 June. Cllr Philand is pressing for an opportunity for public involvement again once a draft budget has been prepared.

- d. Argyll & Bute Council Leadership Engagement Meeting – we are invited to send 2 representatives to a Teams meeting for Community Councils with the Leader & Executive Leadership Team at 1-3pm on Monday 26 June. Agreed we would see if Andy Grant could attend with one of Richard Stein & Iain Ritchie.
5. Police Report: Sgt Shaw referred to the April Police Report covering our wider area (copy attached) and gave us an oral run down of police activity in our community council area over the last three months. There have been eleven calls. They involved mainly planned shoots (which are always advised to the police), one dangerous dog incident and one anti-social campervan nuisance. He referred us to a Police Engagement Survey and encouraged members of the public to complete it to make their views known about policing priorities. Here's a link to the survey: <https://consult.scotland.police.uk/strategy-insight-and-innovation/your-police-2023-2024/consultation/intro/>.

6. Argyll & Bute Council update

All matters covered elsewhere on the agenda.

7. Scottish Canals:

Our communications with Laurie Piper at Scottish Canals (SC) have improved. We were reminded that there are quarterly meetings with SC to discuss any issues that arise. Regular email updates are also circulated. Anyone who wants to be added to the email circulation should contact laurie.piper@scottishcanals.co.uk

This year's winter works have now been completed and we are now pressing for the dates for the Canal closure this autumn to replace the Crinan Sea Lock. Agreed we will press forcefully for the closure to be delayed until the end of October.

Concerns were raised that the car park at Lock 13 and the hard stand by the Crinan Basin have been greatly extended without planning permission, which we believe is required as the sites are within the conservation area. Alan Hutchinson will write to SC for an explanation.

A working party is finally being formed to explore options for the repair or replacement of the Dunardry Rolling Bridge. Along with SC representatives it will include Richard Stein, Iain Ritchie, Conny Graf & Alan Hutchinson. It should meet early in June.

The long-awaited community benefit scheme is about to be formally announced by Mackenzie's. Apparently, all projects already notified to them will be considered & don't need to be resubmitted.

8. Forestry & Land Scotland (FLS)

We have had an update about the planned felling of the Dunardry Ridge. Surveys are currently being carried out and we should be advised of firmed up plans around June. It is anticipated that 'recreational infrastructure' will be removed in late July, with pre-works felling commencing in late August, to create space for harvesting tracks and facilities. It is anticipated that harvesting will start in October and carry on throughout the winter, stopping in the spring. The plan is for the work to be carried out in 3 phases, over the next three winters. We want to understand whether it is still intended to fell healthy beech trees on the misapprehension that they are non-native. Agreed we will invite John Sutherland to our next meeting and, if possible, an FLS archaeologist.

Despite the widespread unhappiness at the introduction by FLS of car parking charges, the scheme has commenced. Cllr Brown has organised another meeting with FLS. As a result of the introduction of the charges, it was reported that several local people are no longer going to Barnluasgan. Others are parking along the road outside the car parks.

9. Tayvallich Initiative - Martin Mellor informed us that as of today Highland Rewilding (HRW) will be the owners of the Tayvallich Estate. Tayvallich Initiative (TI) have acquired parts of the estate which were gifted by the previous owners. The TI Scottish Land Fund application will be decided shortly – which they hope will enable them to purchase further plots from HRW. TI have signed a memorandum of understanding with HRW which will develop into a framework for the relationship between them. A copy of Martin's note is attached. The meeting congratulated TI on its excellent work.

10. Planning Issues

Bellanoich Brae – we received an update on the unauthorised scraping and levelling the area. Unless a planning application is lodged by 26th May, it is likely that an enforcement notice will be served requiring the reinstatement of the site to its original condition. There was a great deal of concern at the meeting about sale advertisements which could mislead

a purchaser into buying the land thinking it could be used for glamping etc. Unfortunately, nothing can be done to prevent the land being advertised or sold. It would be hoped that anyone interested (or their lawyers) would contact the planners to find out the position.

Land SW of Tigh Beag Leac Na Ban Applicn No 22/02261PP - concerns were raised about the FLS planning application to create a bellmouth and forest access track on the road at Arichonan. We are unhappy at the prospect of many very large heavy lorries using this single-track road. Residents and Cllr Philand have already objected on a number of grounds. We agreed that the Secretary would lodge an objection to the planning application on behalf of the Community Council.

11. AOCB

We noted that all mobile phone companies intend to switch off the 3G network during 2023. Vodafone plan to switch it off in June. In much of our area, where there is any mobile phone reception it is only 3G. Cllr Philand agreed to find out whether Argyll & Bute had objected, given that in much of the county this would have a serious impact. Sgt Shaw agreed to investigate whether there would be any impact on calls to the emergency services.

12. Next Meeting – 7.30pm Thursday 31 August 2023, at the Crinan Coffee Shop.