

# North Knapdale Community Council

Minutes of the North Knapdale Community Council meeting held at the Tayvallich Village Hall on the 27 February 2024 at 7.30 pm.

In Attendance: Iain Ritchie, Richard Stein, Alan Hutchinson, Martin Mellor, Ewan Halley, Catherine MacLennan, Alka Foster, Sgt Matt Shaw, Jean Whittaker, Sue Hillman, Chris Purslow, Andy Grant, Peter Burrell, Kathie Baer, Andrew Milne, Ulla Hammervig, Dulcie Raynor; Mike Raynor; Cllr Garret Corner, Savanna Murdoch, David Logue, Dave Shand, Pete Creech, Allen Carr, Libby Butler, Siobhan Canavan, Chris Browne, Sheina Chiavarini.

1. Welcome: Iain Ritchie welcomed everyone.
2. Apologies: Norma Kelly, Mike Kelly, John McArthur, Paul Chadderton.
3. Approval of minutes of last meeting: The minutes of the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023 were approved.
4. Matters arising/ Correspondence  
Grant for Ukrainian refugee school student paid.
5. Mink Control Project  
Pete Creech from the Heart of Argyll Wildlife Organisation spoke to us about his work on an important project to control the spread of this invasive non-native species. Mink are the principal cause of the eradication of water voles and reduction in populations of ground nesting birds locally. They are recruiting local landowners either side of Loch Sween to allow trapping and humane eradication of mink on their land. Funding will then be obtained for the live traps which have a sensors that alerts remotely when they are occupied, and the dispatching of the trapped animals.  
Agreed that we will write in support of HIE funding of this important work. Pete will provide us with more information that we will circulate with these minutes.
6. Police Report: Sgt Matt Shaw referred to the March 2024 Community Council Police Report for the whole MAKI area (copy attached). Our community council area is included within Beat LB42. More locally, Matt

reported the actions/calls involving police since December. They included 2 crimes. A driving without insurance offence, and a fraud.

#### 7. Argyll & Bute Council update

Cllr Corner updated us on a couple of important developments. A by-election has been called for all community council vacancies in Argyll & Bute. We have three vacancies to be filled. In the event of a contested election, the vote would be held on **Thursday 2 May**. Nominations open on 7 March & close on **Thursday 21 March at 4pm**. Details are attached and nomination papers are on the Council website.

The Council set a budget last week, increasing Council Tax by 10%. Cllr Corner explained that this was necessary to ensure that services could continue to be delivered. Copies of the two budget proposals - one from the Council majority (which was adopted) and the other from the opposition, are attached.

#### 8. Cairnbaan Community Trust

Siobhan Canavan addressed the meeting about the newly formed Cairnbaan Community Trust. They have obtained funding for a feasibility study to take over Forestry & Land Scotland buildings for the community. More details and a membership application form (including for associate membership for those not living in the Cairnbaan area) are attached to these minutes.

#### 9. Scottish Canals (SC)

*Winter closure update* – as a result of substantial, unforeseen, works required to the dummy lock next to the Crinan Sea Lock, which cannot be carried out until the sealock has been replaced, reopening of the canal will be delayed until the last week of April. We will press SC to reopen the Crinan Basin car park for Easter.

*Dunardry Bridge update* –No progress. We will keep up pressure on SC to move this along.

*Mackenzie's Community Benefit Scheme update* – Mackenzie's have done an excellent job clearing round the Crinan Harbour car park. This will help in dealing with congestion in the summer.

A contract will be let in May/June for the replacement of the gates to Lock 7. The meeting planned with SC Chief Executive John Paterson & our MSP, Rhoda Grant, has been postponed to a diary clash.

#### 10. Forestry & Land Scotland (FLS)

Harvesting of Dunardry Ridge has been delayed until the autumn. This work is extremely complex due to the terrain, proximity to the road and the size of the trees to be felled. Modern equipment & techniques are designed to deal with trees up to 35cm in diameter. Oversized trees are more complex. In Dunardry, some of the trees are over 60cm in diameter, even over 90cm. There are problems felling, moving and selling them. FLS are reluctant to fell them just to leave them to rot. They are now looking at an autumn start in September/October this year.

To facilitate works, the car park at Glean a ghelehan, near Arichonan will be closed in July for 4/5 months.

John Taylor, Environment Forester at FLS has offered to put on a 'walk and talk' event. Details & date to be arranged and included with the minutes.

We will also arrange another meeting to follow the very informative public meetings with FLS in the next few months.

11. Tayvallich Initiative - Martin Mellor informed us about the extremely positive developments with Tayvallich Initiative. A copy of Martin's note is attached.

#### 12. Planning Issues

*Bellanoch Brae* – Unfortunately, a third person has been misled into purchasing one of the plots of land subject to the enforcement action by the Council and has again lost thousands of pounds. The good news is that Trading Standards are investigating possible offences under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations.

##### *Balliemore*

Cllr Jan Brown is investigating why this planning application was difficult to find on the Council website.

##### *High Brenfield Windfarm*

The scoping exercise has been completed and we now await a planning application to the Scottish Government.

#### 13. Highway/Transport issues

*Acid Quay – Crinan Harbour* was damaged by the storm in January. The Council Piers & Harbours Team have requested repairs to be carried out and will inspect for damage to the sea wall.

14. AOCB –

*Waste Water management*- Savanna Murdoch attended a seminar on this issue which raised issues which might help to deal with the pollution of Tayvallich Bay by untreated waste discharges. She will pass on the information to the Tayvallich Bay Association.

15. Next Meeting – 7.30pm Thursday 23 May 2024, at the Crinan Coffee Shop