

## Morvern Community Council

Tuesday, 10 February 2026

7:00 PM

Lochaline Village Hall

### Meeting Minutes

Present: Henriette Laidlaw (HL), Jenni Hodgson (JH), Miles Welsh (MW), Rob Capell (RC), Becky Jones (BJ), Douglas Taylor (DT), Tom Fraiser (TF)

Apologies: Rowan Willis (RW)

Quorate: Yes

Members of public: TBC

1. Welcome & apologies
2. Co-opt of new councillor, Tom Fraiser proposed by HEL and Seconded by JH.
3. AOB requests: Cattlegrids
4. Minutes of last meeting were approved:
  - a. Maintenance of land in Kirk Brae – HL
    - i. *HL raised it again with Highland Council but has not had any response. Got new contact (David Lamont) which HL is trying to contact currently.*
    - ii. *Same update on providing Highland Council feedback on how difficult it is to report issues with the road*
  - b. Clearing of shrubland in Lochaline - HL
    - i. MCDC update
      1. *Hazelwood has now got a Woodland maintenance plan in place and approved by Scottish Forestry. 13 invasive sycamores removed so far.*
    - ii. Ardtornish update
      1. *Henry Dobson (HD) update – View blocking trees growing up through the hazel trees have been felled on the route down to the ferry. Felling licence not required. Removed some larger diseased trees too. Took cautious approach, as to not modify the view excessively. Considering this work as phase one, with more to follow that will be tailored to community feedback.*
      2. *Community has requested clearance of the shrubbery throughout village. This has been a petition raised approx. a year ago to MCC. This was then raised to the Ardtornish for their final decision as the landowners.*
      3. *HD has raised that he is looking to get a fuller overview of the community views.*  
***ACTION: HL to send HD the map that was put together outlining placement of shrubbery to be removed.***
    - iii. FLS update
      1. *Areas of land owned by FLS (between Allotments to Surgery, and Memorial to Hotel). MCDC working on purchase of this land, so it may be managed by the community.*
    - iv. Sakura Cherry Trees
      1. *Project brought to MCC's attention June 2024. Japanese council project for donating Sakura trees internationally. Donated three to the Mine, to be planted on the Field of Hope. There have been administrative delays, but they have now been planted.*

2. TF queried who owns Field of Hope land. Confirmed to be CMAL. HL confirmed MCC have permission to plant on this land.
  3. TF queries who will maintain them. MCC will be responsible. Sakura confirmed to be easy to prune and maintain.
- c. Roads - RC & HL
- i. Tor Na Faire and Shop junction has been resurfaced. Next areas to be done are Kirk Brae and road to Drimnin, which both should be on the list.
  - ii. Road to Drimnin in serious disrepair. It's been suggested to invite local councillor to Drimnin Council meeting in August, to test the roads themselves.  
**ACTION: HL to invite local councillors to May 2026 MCC meeting in Drimnin**
- d. Corran Ferry – TF
- i. Tom Fraiser (TF) joining MCC, with focus on taking over HL contributions in the Corran Ferry Steering Committee.
  - ii. TF updates from Steering Committee:
    1. Main discussion topic is the Maid of Glencoul ramps, which are cracked and angled poorly to slips, causing issues for multiple cars.
    2. Compensation for damage caused to vehicles by ramps not being considered by Highland Council, as Highland Council argue that
      - a. People were boarding too quickly
      - b. People were not being directed on by ferry staff
    3. Topic raised that the official report of the Maid of Glencoul did not highlight that the ramps were not suitable for the slips and questions raised on why the Maid is being used when not fit for purpose of the run.
    4. Maid of Glencoul not able to carry dangerous goods, such as hay, causing goods-destroying diverts around the loch, this is being investigated for the future.
    5. Currently Maid of Glencoul is due to leave 8<sup>th</sup> March, but Corran Ferry not due back in time, as awaiting parts delivery from Germany. They currently cannot confirm Corran Ferry's return date.  
There is currently no contingency in place for the gap between ferry services. Steering Committee has said that they cannot extend the necessary licences to keep the Maid of Glencoul.
  - iii. HL – Steering Committee meetings were agreed to be 6-weekly. But since last meeting have been moved to quarterly.  
**ACTION: TF to write to Steering Committee to request, on behalf of MCC, more frequent meetings, and for a copy of the contingency plan for service gap.**
- e. West Pier – HL
- i. MCC were in talks with Iggersund, who own the pier, about tidying up the surrounding area. Pier has since stopped operating. Current owners are now interested in selling West Pier. MCC syncing with MDCD and Ardtornish on potential purchase. FLS also interested in purchase. Discussions are ongoing.
- f. Village Verge Maintenance – HL
- i. Highland Council does limited village verge maintenance. MCC then handles the rest of the maintenance required. This has previously been enabled through Morvern Community Trust (MCT) grants. Quote for work needed this year approx. £8,000. Deadline for contract is March 2026.
  - ii. MCC applied for MCT grant of £7,000 for this year's verge maintenance. MCT have confirmed they will provide £3,000, but only if £1,100 is contributed from MCC funds.
  - iii. MCC annual income currently consists of:

1. £430 from Highland Council
  2. £800 from Kingairloch Hydro Scheme
- iv. A member of the public raised a question on what has changed this year, compared to grants from prior years. Unconfirmed, due to lack of transparency with MCT funds and policy.  
**ACTION: HL to request MCT present at future MCC meeting, to provide community with transparency on budget and decision-making process.**
- v. TF raised suggestion of writing to companies to request donations to cause (particularly companies that rely on use of the roads, such as Shiel Buses and CalMac)
- vi. Possible alternatives proposed:
1. MCDC position for seasonal community gardener.  
**ACTION: HL to enquire with MCDC**
  2. Reduce the number of verge cuts to bring within budget – concluded that this is unlikely to substantially reduce labour costs to within budget.
- vii. AR raised topic to get MCC, MCT and MCDC syncing and coming up with long-term solution for the verge maintenance for post-2026. This to be discussed further between the 3 groups.
- viii. From previous years the community council has had very favourable feedback from the community on the work done, and it has been regarded as a priority.
- ix. Conclusion: currently funds not in place, so we are likely to rely solely on the Highland Council verge maintenance for this year.  
**ACTION: HL to enquire if MCT are open to discuss this for 2026 otherwise grasscutting for 2026 will be cancelled.**
- g. Scallop Dredging – Annabel Lawrence
- i. AL – dredging has been an ongoing community topic. Dredging is allowed in non-protected areas of the Sound. It is difficult to gauge from land whether dredging is encroaching on protected land.
  - ii. Proposed consultation on inshore Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Priority Marine Features (PMFs) was to originally occur in 2025. Now been postponed until post-next Scottish election (May 2026).
  - iii. AL question to community is whether community wants to wait for consultation or move to make changes now.
    1. Shared agreement from meeting attendees is that dredging causes widespread wildlife damage and changes are required. AL confirmed that protected area is recovering over time, demonstrating positive impact on prior policy changes.
    2. Suggested to get councillors and MSPs involved in advocacy for expanding dredging protections.
    3. Timespan till government consultation is also useful for educating and informing local community, to promote local engagement.
    4. Consultation is in May 2026, which is felt to be a short enough timespan to await the consultation's input, and ideal duration for engaging local community, councillors and MSPs.  
**ACTION: AL to set up a local event to engage residents in this problem.**
- h. Morvern Community Nature Alliance – HL
- i. HL participated in meetings with the various local conservation groups, to discuss combined strategies for community comms and engagement. Discussions ongoing.
- i. Local Place Plan

- i. *HL – Highland Council have come back regarding our submission; they are missing some maps.*

**ACTION: HEL to review with PAS.**

5. Resilience

a. *Carry forward of resilience – HL*

- i. *Group development ongoing. Chair: Rhian Members: Bonnie, Bec, Hugh Morris, Jayne Kennedy and Brian Rendall.*
- ii. *Rhian also working on restarting the first responder programme for the area.*
- iii. *HL also discussed with Rhian about getting a first aid certification course booked again for community members. Date to be organised.*

6. Planning applications – DT

a. *Two applications in currently:*

- i. *Plot at Ach-na-ha*
- ii. *Plot above Seaview in Drimnin.*

b. *No issues to declare by attendees*

7. MCDC Update – HL

a. *Housing project moving forward rapidly. Full update on project coming soon.*

8. Treasurer's Report – JH

- a. *No transactions this month.*
- b. *January 2026 outgoings: £174.25*
- c. *Current balance: £8285.77*

9. AOB

a. Cattlegrids

- i. *Query on whether tarring has been improved. Henry of Ardtornish confirmed it looks like there has been a small amount of work done, the work is carried out by Highland council and has as yet not been signed off by Ardtornish. Henry to enquire on further work.*

Meeting closed at 8.39pm

Next meeting: 10 March 2026, Lochaline Village Hall

**Action Summary**

1. *HL to send HD the map that was put together outlining placement of shrubbery to be removed.*
2. *HL to invite local councillors to May 2026 MCC meeting in Drimnin*
3. *TF to write to Steering Committee to request, on behalf of MCC, more frequent meetings, and for a copy of the contingency plan for service gap.*
4. *HL to request MCT present at future MCC meeting, to provide community with transparency on budget and decision-making process.*
5. *HL to enquire about seasonal gardener position with MCDC*
6. *HL to enquire if MCT are open to discuss this for 2026 otherwise grasscutting for 2026 will be cancelled.*
7. *AL to set up a local event to engage residents in this problem.*
8. *HEL to review with PAS.*



Morvern Community Calendar