

Morvern Community Council meeting 12 May 2026, Drimnin Village Hall, 19.00

Present: *Henriette Laidlaw (Chair - HL), Tom Frazer (Coran Ferry - TF), Rowan Willis (Youth Counsellor - RW), Rebecca Jones (Youth Counsellor - RJ), Rob Capell (Roads & Things - RC), Cara Bentley (CB), Douglas Taylor (Planning - DT), RSPB (4)*

Apologies: Jenni Hodgson (Treasurer - JH)

Declarations of interest: None

Quorate: Yes

Members of the Public 12 – including Allistair, Dan and Ruth from the RSPB.

1. Welcome & apologies
2. AOB (Any Other Business) Requests
 - None As Yet
3. Minutes of last meeting (approved) & actions arising
 - A. Maintenance of land in Kirk Brae
 - i. No Update – Highland Council has not replied.
 - B. Clearing of Shrubland in Lochaline
 - i. Tom: No Update – Ardtornish visited the day after our last meeting and cut some of the Himalayan **shrubs**. I've sent them an e-mail asking, and there has still been no reply. However, I expect that they may suggest that nothing can be done during the bird mating season.
 1. Action: At the beginning of next week TF will request to schedule a meeting.
 - C. Roads (RC)
 - i. The cattle grid has been resolved.
 1. Action: RC will keep an eye on it.
 - ii. We've been told that Drimnin road is at the top of the waiting list and now awaiting the next budget to come through.
 - D. Corran Ferry (TF)
 - i. The *Maid of Glencoe* has gone off for its annual maintenance – no major repairs are necessary, however they want to have a look at the ramp because it was too steep for cars and damaging some car bumpers in the front and back. They hope that it will be back pretty soon which will give us a back up fairy. Note: The steering committee is tonight, and I'm not there because I'm here, but they will be sending the minutes and at the moment it's all looking pretty positive.
 - ii. Fare went up on the 1st of March, it is now £13 for a car with 4 adults. As foot passengers remain at £. . The highland council is

approaching CalMac to ask if they would be interested in taking it over.

- E. Village Verge Maintenance (HL)
 - i. It's now two months since we last met, and while it looked like it may not happen it now appears that with the 3k that the MCT has pledged toward it HL has an agreement with MCDC that they will pick up another £5k to apply toward it so this year it will happen. For a more long-term plan for this recurring issue, the goal is that MCC, MCDC and MCT will meet and sort out a long term sustainable plan.
- F. MCT Update (HL)
 - i. When we had the last meeting in March it was suggested by the public that they would prefer the MCT to tell the public about the priorities and they would like to attend a future MCC meeting. I have given them the dates for this year so that they can lay out when to attend and what their current strategy is.
- G. Local Place Plan (HL)
 - i. This has finally been added to the Highland Councils (taken over a year) and been approved, so now you will be able to find it on the Highland Council website. What we can hope for now is that the Highland Council will adopt some of our suggested plans for Morvern. Today it was confirmed that a master copy will be supplied to us and that this will be put in the Hub for the public to access.
- H. Live Life Morvern Update (HL)
 - i. This was the precursor for the LPP (above) and over the last year we have worked with Angus Robertson and Keith Adams to see how we are progressing toward our goals and what we have actually achieved. A special newsletter will be released within the next week or two so that you can see how things have progressed – the Live Life Morvern mailing list that MCDC manages will receive this e-mail. Contact MCDC to join this list.
- I. SSEN Clearing of Shrubland in Lochaline
 - i. Brought by members of the community – every three to four years they clear for the power lines so that if the trees blow over they won't take out the power line (must be below a height). The question raised was whether they had permission to do this at the time of year due to the nesting period. The workman had no idea. It's a problem to be doing this outside of the October-March window (especially in May)
 - 1. Action: HL write to them and ask as what provision is in place to ensure that birds are as little as possible disturbed.

- ii. (Public Concern) The problem also seems to be that they aren't doing enough as every storm there is a power loss. Response TF: They ensure that the lines won't be taken down by the trees.
- J. Short Term Let Control Area
 - i. (Public Concern) This legislation has been proposed in terms of limiting short term let in the Highlands and Morvern is a part of that. This will include holiday lets – anything under three months. They are having a consultation for members of the CC and believe that later there will be something for the general public. Public Comment: It's a huge area that they have selected, isn't it? HL: Confirmed this will apply to all of Morvern.
 - 1. Action: DT will attend this meeting (19 May at 18.30) to determine the impact of the number of housing available for folks to live in and the impact of those who currently have short term lets. If anyone in the public is interested, go and look what they are proposing.
- K. Crofting Proposal for Drimnin
 - i. (Public Concern) There is a proposal to create crofts in Drimnin– there has been nothing come through the official planning. Generally we do not do anything until it comes through officially. It was raised because someone living close was concerned about it> MCC is is not a planning authority but we review what is put forward and discuss and make any appropriate comments, currently we have nothing concrete to comment on, however in the local place plan it has been stated that Morvern in general is supportive of cofts on the peninsula.
- L. Support Letter for RSPB
 - i. (Public Concern) The RSPB requests a letter of support regarding funding that they are applying for slightly different projects within Morvern that will continue some of the works they have already started although the approaches may vary based on current best practices for those goals as well as a more ambitious net of goals for the natural region here. This letter is necessary by the end of May. August is the next CC that the RSPB can attend to discuss in more depth about the plan.
 - ii. As a precursor to the in-depth conversation to come in the future, we discussed that we have previously provided a letter of support and that we believe the RSPB has been a good employer for work in the peninsula over the past three years to the peninsula and has also has a big impact on improving local ecology. The RSPB provided that the next contract is for five years (from January 2027) for seven

jobs if they get the funding. Before the in-depth details can be relayed to the CC, the RSPB needs to have a few internal team meetings to discuss our plans for the project (what worked and what didn't). However, in the meantime, the application is already out there and will be reviewed by July, so even though the project will be slightly different, it will still include Rhododendron-removal work and developing the tree nursery, and a letter of support that acknowledges how we feel about the impact of the project so far (by looking at the impact on the rainforest across the wider peninsula). The public suggested that we can include a letter that says that we like what has been done so far, and that we would like more community involvement in the future project so that we can understand more in-depth what the impact of this project is and why it matters. Action : HL to write letter of support.

○ M. New Powers for Community Councils

- i. (Public Concern) There are many CCs which have gotten together and said that they wanted more powers, such as they have in England. We have been asked if we want to join this movement. HL: Feels that we are stretched enough and she would really like to see that it includes funding as well, as just the current workload in such a small community stretches our resources. TF: Would it bring us closer to the HC and what their proposals are? HL: I'm not sure, at the moment I think it's more about whether we would be in support of the idea which would mean supporting the idea. TF: If it would be possible to attend the council meetings, that would be beneficial, especially to discuss things such as when the Corran Ferry goes off to find a way for them to communicate this information to the public that use it regularly (perhaps similar to the NHS/Pharmacy alerts) as they put it on facebook at this point which isn't the most accessible. HL: It would be nice if there was better communication of everything we had sent them and that the burden of responsibility did not fall on CCs to hold the list of outstanding issues that require action. We can say that we would like to support the cause, with the intention to learn more – as we are already doing a lot and we need to consider the demand for additional volunteer time. TF: Reviewing the potential of this cause is positive, even if we decide against it.

1. Action: TF will review and attend some of the meetings to learn more.

4. Planning applications

- Three applications with neither the Public nor CC felt necessary to comment on.

5. MCDC update (HL)

- We are waiting for the official press release as due to the election there has been a hold on any information. The major thing is the housing project which is very much kicking off. Wood chips are available to the public if they would like to pick it up at the site. The next thing would be to discuss what the process for applications will be for this housing. Some minor projects: We've received funding to screen the three bins at the ferry port, as they are the first thing you see when entering the village.

6. Treasurer's report (JH)

- The bank standing currently standing at £7992.12.
- I have just paid Blackbox-AV for the materials Calum needed to fix the audio post at Inniemore, with the total bill of £223.20.
- Other expenses since last meetings were bank service charges £4.25/month and the Village Hall rent is £7.50/month.
- Next meeting will also be our AGM. We are working on getting the registration completed with SSE for our share of Kingairloch Comm Fund but are waiting for Carol Masheter to get back to us.
- We would rather the money go straight to us. We have also requested an increase, but unfortunately this increase was denied. Several years past – but we will be getting it all backdated, as the information was lost by the HC. This funding is going to have a report issued on the basis of what we use it for – anything in the community that we see fit is acceptable. Approx. 800/year, but there will be more this time due to a backlog.

7. AOB

- Sam: If anyone is interested in the woodland croft there will be a meeting on the 25th of May at 18.30 LA village hall and it will be a consultation on the allocation process.

Meeting closed at 20.00

Upcoming Meeting dates for 2026

June 9 (AGM) – Lochaline Village Hall

August 11 – Drimnin Village Hall

September 8 – Lochaline Village Hall

October 13 – Lochaline Village Hall

November 10 – Online

December 8 – Lochaline Village Hall