

Morvern Community Council

AGM 2024

June 11 2024, 7PM

Lochaline Village Hall

Attended by Morvern Community Council members: Henrietta Laidlaw (HL), Clara Montgomery (CM), Jenni Hodgson (JH), Miles Welsh (MW), Helen Jones (HL), Douglas Taylor (DT)

And x10 members of the public

- 1) Welcome and apologies taken by the chair. Apologies from India Boulton and Sarah Fannet.
- 2) Approval of Minutes of previous AGM, proposed by CM, seconded by JH.
- 3) Chairperson's Annual report and questions from the floor. Thank you was given to the previous councillors and office bearers, and a summary was given of some of the key things MCC has been working on and achieved in the 2023/24 year (attached below). Thank you was given to the community at large for their patience as most of this year's community councillors have been in post for their very first time. No questions raised.
- 4) Treasurer's submission of the Financial statement and questions from the floor. Formal Adoption of the financial statement. Total income of £6,516.32. Main income from Morvern Community Trust (MCT) for grass cutting, which was also the main expenditure, of £5,250, last year. Total assets as of 31st March 2024 are £8,934.62. CM proposed approving the accounts and MW seconded. No questions taken.
- 5) Election of office bearers. MW proposed as secretary by CM and seconded by DT, JH proposed as treasurer by HL and seconded by DT, HL proposed as chair by JH and seconded by CM.
- 6) Provisional date for next AGM 10th June 2025.

Morvern Community Council

Chair Persons Report

June 11 2024

It's a bit of an anomaly, I took over as chairperson after the election in the Autumn, so part of the year I will be reporting on was chaired by Angus Robertson.

I would like to start by thanking those of the outgoing council who did a sterling job, to Angus Robertson for chairing, to Janette Cameron as Vice chair, to Annie Tordoff as Secretary and to Morvern Gemmill as a councillor.

After the election of a new council in 2023 we had a nearly completely new council. I stayed on and took on the role of chair, Indi Boulton took on the role of vice chair, Jenni who has been on the council before took on the job as treasurer and Clara took on the job of secretary. We were very conscious that with only 4 members the council would be struggling to be effective, so we quickly co-opted a couple of members, Douglas Taylor agreed to be co-opted again and Miles Welsh joined. We also had success in co-opting two youth members in Helen Jones and Terra Grier. The Community council agreed that Henriette and Clara will be representing the cc on MCDC.

During the 2023/24 year the following has been worked on by the council.

- 1) The Council was very pleased to learn that Live Life Morvern won the overall 2023 Scottish Planning Innovation Award, and a trophy was presented to us at Holyrood in May. As one of the last decisions by the outgoing council was to move the Live Life Morvern action plan to a Local Place Plan. The council set about applying for funding to enable us to contract Planning Aid Scotland who worked with us to put together the Live Life Morvern Action plan, we also had the ambition to employ a local engagement associate for the project. We are pleased to say with the support from Morvern Community Trust, who guaranteed we were able to confirm the start, since then we have had additional funding from NcNear Distillery, Ardtornish Estate and the Highland council. A steering committee was formed to represent the community in running the project, and we are really pleased to have Annabel Lawrence, Sam Firth, Megan Whyte, Peter Lawson, Douglas Taylor, Sarah Jones and myself. From PAS we are again working with the excellent Paul Ede and have the bonus benefit of Ieuan Rees who will be integrating heritage into our plan. This past week a local associate was appointed by PAS, and we are pleased that Katy will be joining the project.
- 2) Housing and planning applications. This is one of the areas we as a community council is obliged to do, and Miles Welsh has been a start, reviewing and researching any application, we encourage members of the community to join us for the meetings and you will be able to share your thoughts and knowledge on this matter too.
- 3) Village tidy, at the end of the previous council we had a meeting with the residents of Morvern to consider areas we could address to tidy our environment. A lot of great ideas came from this and the wider community was invited to submit their ideas. We now have a very long list of ideas to work with. Some are

bigger and more ambitious than others, and we are still looking for someone to take the lead on this. However you will already see the first improvement locally, the red phone box has been restored to its former glory (though no actual phone) this project was spearheaded by Kevin Laurie and Emily Rosier, and I would like to thank them and all the helpers. Also to enable the project to go ahead the community supported via a lets do lunch event and the Attic has been donating towards the project. We hope this project will be the first of many such improvements and will continue to encourage residents to participate in small and large projects. The local place plan will also be incorporating those ideas that are suitable for a place plan.

- 4) Verges maintenance. The community council has again put in place a contract for maintaining the verges. This year it's back to the Grassmen, and I am sure you have already noticed their work. We appreciate the support MCT has given us over the years to ensure we have been able to provide this service yearly.
- 5) We ran a village litter pick up just before Easter, and just short of 40 kg of litter was picked up, thank you to all that participated. We will look at expanding this to include some of the roads approaching Lochaline and also out towards Drimnin.
- 6) This past Christmas also saw Lochaline celebrating yuletide with a Christmas tree and a lighting ceremony at the Field of Hope. The primary school children wrote poems and letters to the tree and Creina Jackson graced us with her presence at the lighting of the tree. This idea came from Clara, who had just returned from abroad, and felt we needed some Christmas spirit. Though the initial tree did not survive the winter, most likely timing of planting was not ideal), CLAM has donated a new baby tree which has been planted and hopefully will grow up to be our Christmas tree in Lochaline. I know that many commented during December how nice it was to see the tree in the morning. Again thank you to all the volunteers especially Walter, Bob, Kevin and John for making it happen. Clara has been investigating the possibility of Lochaline getting more Christmas light in the future.
- 7) As mentioned above we are pleased to have two youth councillors on the council this year, they have been championing improving transport options for the youth of Morvern. We know this is a particular problem faced by young people on Morvern, Terra and Helen have been speaking to our elected members of Highland Council to see what can be achieved, while we have been talking to Morvern on the Move to see if a local solution can be found. The council has also been engaging with our MSPs to see if possible that young people could have free ferry travel just like old people get.

- 8) During the year the council have been engaging with various bodies relating to health and social care. We are following the new GP service with interest. We have stressed our frustration as a community with the halting of the new Belford hospital and are in continued communication with Highland Council and the NHS regarding Dal Mhor. We are lucky to have Jenni on the council and she has represented us in these matters. We have taken health and social care matters very seriously, and has had some success, I believe there might be some alteration down the line relating to local vaccinations, but we are aware that it will be something we will have to keep a constant eye on. While on the council Jannette Cameron liaised with Scottish Air Ambulances to understand what would be their designated landing fields, and as will have seen 3 fields have now been designated.
- 9) During this past year Janette Cameron has stayed as the contact for the CC on school matters, thank you Janette. The school is vital for the community, and we are pleased that the head is now a permanent position and we have worked together with the school on several small projects. We will continue to review how we can encourage people to relocate to Morvern with young families. On this matter I have been in contact with our local councillors to discuss possibilities for childcare provision in Lochaline. I am hoping Indi when she returns from maternity leave will take on the baton.
- 10) Also thank you to all residents that took the time to write to the Post Office to stop the change in our address, it worked.
- 11) You will have noticed the new speed limit in the village, while we had nothing to do with this, we have been liaising with our local councillor and police to see if something can be done to stop the speeding down the main street, a solution has not been found at this point, but discussion is continuing. We have at the same time asked for the roads office to consider expanding the speed limit on the Drimnin road out to Keil church in recognition of the many local residents that walk on that part of the road.
- 12) Finally I have to mention the Corran Ferry, it has been baptism by fire for me sitting on the Corran Ferry Steering committee. I won't bore you with all that happened last year, you all experienced it. On the Steering committee we have expressed our frustration with THC and their lack of planning and keep stressing that a reliable connection is imperative for the community of Morvern to survive.

Thank you to all who have been patient with me this year, it has been an honour to chair the council and I have been so pleased with all the positive comments

and assistance we have had from the community at large. We will encourage the residents to participate as often as possible in the meetings, and we are always approachable for comments and ideas.