

Morvern Community Council (MCC) meeting held on
Tuesday May 14, 2024 at 7pm, Lochaline Village Hall

Present Community Council representatives: Henriette Laidlaw (HL), Jenni Hodgson (JH), Terra Grier (TG), Helen Jones (HJ), Miles Welsh (MW)
and Members of the public x 1

1. The chair, HL, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Clara Montgomery (CM), Douglas Taylor (DT), India Boulton (IB)
2. AOB requests were taken by the chair:
 - a. TG raised the issue of poor public transport links to Oban. She said it took 2 hours to travel to Oban because bus timetables do not synchronise with ferry timetables.
HL will raise this with Highland Councillor, Sarah Fanet, who is scheduled to liaise with Argyll and Bute Council in a joint meeting on this issue [and the issue raised in 3f below].
On a related issue Sarah Fanet has asked for interest in a possible Zoom meeting of youth councillors from Highland District Councils.
HL will put forward TG and HJ as wanting to participate in this.
 - b. Torr Na Faire road needs resurfacing.
HL will write to Highland Council to request action on this.
 - c. The community Christmas tree is dead.
HL has already sourced a replacement, pot-grown tree, Grassmen will be asked to help plant it.
 - d. Games and Gala Week programme/brochure. HL proposed that MCC should buy space in it to publicise MCC activities. MCC will also have representation at the stand for the Local Place Plan.
HL proposed action on this, seconded by JH. - to be funded from the Common Good Fund.
 - e. Road under Sand Mine conveyor belt is deep in sand. Mine is responsible.
HL will write to mine requesting action.
3. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising
 - a. Local Place Plan – HL reported funding now available for an associate employee for 100 hours. Thanks to Highland Council, Nc'nean distillery, Ardtornish Estate (final donation to be advised).
Planning Aid Scotland (PAS) have already started work on Local Place Plan (LPP).
PAS and a Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) have invited representation from MCC regarding Live Life Morvern winning an award. HL and Annie Tordoff (AT) will attend Holyrood tomorrow, 15th May.
 - b. School update - JC: No update. TG raised the question of the Summer Fair – organised by the school biennially. The Summer Fair is held in the summer holidays and is a way to introduce new staff and pupils.
HL will follow this up with Heather.
 - c. Village Tidy Update – CM: Litter picking event went ahead on the 20th April. More than 30kg of rubbish was collected.
Village maintenance has been taken on by the Lochaline Grassmen, who are doing a superb job. MCC are applying to Morvern Community Trust (MCT) for £6000 to fund this contract. £785 will be added from Common Good Fund. It was noted that The Grassmen had some startup funding from MCT.
HL will correspond with MCT with minuted request.
The phone box is also looking spruced up with its new coat of paint. The door

and final touches will be added soon. Some discussion of how the phone box will be used, possibly by the Heritage Society.

JH will follow this up with Jennie Robertson.

- d. Air ambulance location –
HL will contact landowners of 3 potential sites regarding accessibility.
 - e. Street lights - CM: Yet to hear anything back from Highland Council. CM will chase up by next meeting
 - f. Public transport costs and logistics - CM: CM actions to contact neighbouring community councils to take this on as a joint effort to roll on to the next meeting. CM action to communicate continuing timetable problems to CalMac and West Coast Motors also to roll on to the next meeting.
See also item 2a above. TG noted that young person's bus card is only valid for bus journeys whereas senior travel cards are also valid for ferries. An anomaly was noted that children paid for school journeys using a ferry but not if solely on bus [*this issue to be included in communication to Sarah Fanet See 2a above*].
 - g. Community calendar - CM: The community calendar is now live and the link to access it as a reader:
https://teamup.com/ks3zvojm66xdhptwmi?fbclid=IwAR3MIICol8DBzLzt6tA4wCq9K0nND8Gfl8Pkv7N35l6TQ99jcCUB_UYAd5l_aem_ARd7A0B7GXzYdHYBCZQY7aa171NyFoCZf8sqkIP8gzOxMCsu7ERcqurcSLsZLyVkWQGGRWtsT39u0TxXaws6j1s6
Link can also be found pinned to the top of the Lochaline and Morvern Community Council Facebook groups. It would be good to also have the calendar linked/embedded into the morvern.org website. Massive thank you to Robert Melohn for getting this set up. Robert is also continuing to help modifiers of the calendar with functions which the calendar has for event organisation. Locations have dedicated logins. The groups:
Community Allotments;
Community Woodlands;
Drimnin Village Hall;
Knock Park;
Lochaline Primary School;
Lochaline Village Hall;
Morvern General (Use this for all other events);
The Hub
To edit/create an event as 'Morvern General' apply to MCC for the link. All groups are encouraged to use this new facility.
 - h. Forestry consultation - CM: Felling has begun on FLS land surrounding Lochaline. Some felling has been paused until the bird breeding season is over following an appeal by Steve Hardy.
 - i. Highland Environment Forum - CM: CM forwarded correspondence regarding Nature Scot initiative on Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) nomination onto local community environmental groups; Scottish Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Morvern Community Woodland group.
4. Youth's update - HJ / TG:
 5. Lochaber Redesign Project –
 - a. HL – New Belford Hospital protest on 16th March in Fort William was well attended.
 - b. JH – architects design for new hospital have reached stage 3. There is some frustration as stakeholders expected NHS Highland to put pressure on

Scottish government to support the project. Stakeholders have contacted Scottish government direct.

- c. Lochaber Strategic Plan for Health and Social Care Group are tackling these issues. An in-person meeting was over-subscribed and future meetings will be on Zoom.
 - d. The possible closure of Dal Mhor will be considered by Lochaber Strategic Plan for Health and Social Care Group, announced by Karen Ann Wilson. Its future is unclear as the building is owned by Highland Council. Chair of Urram, James Hilder, has written to NHS Highland demanding a meeting where stakeholders including Community Councils participate in deciding the future of Dal Mhor. Early discussions are being held between Urram and Highland Council regarding a 'Community Asset transfer' of the building. This will need to be coordinated with Strontian Surgery which occupies part of the building. It was noted that Local County Councillors are absent from these discussions. Discussions would benefit from a joint approach between NHS Highland, Highland Council and local stakeholders.
HL will write to local County Councillors regarding this issue.
 - e. Urram has funding from 'Support in the Right Direction' for a 3-year post to assist potential applicants for Self-Directed-Support (SDS) and other related health and care issues.
 - f. HL suggested that the local surgery be asked to meet with the community to update everyone on the experiences and outcomes of the changes to GP services on Morvern.
HL will contact surgery.
JH will continue to keep us updated.
6. Housing -
- a. HL reports no reply from Scottish Sea Farms yet. Their houses need renovation and repair but are still empty.
 - b. JH Notes there is a disused house immediately East of the ferry queueing area (Unsafe Building 56°32'8.70"N 5°46'33.53"W). It has not been occupied for many years and now presents a potential hazard in this public area.
MW to notify Highland Council.
 - c. HL queries the status of repairs on the old Post Office (West Pier) which Ardtornish said would be renovated.
HL will contact Ardtornish.
7. Planning applications - MW:
- a. 24/01321/FUL Alteration and extension to Rhemore, Drimnin. It was not obvious that this would affect anyone.
 - b. 24/0154/PNO Outline application RSPB Plant Nursery near Kiel Church.
MW to note MCC support for this with Highland Council as it will improve the land use and provide employment.
 - c. 24/01578/PIP Planning in Principle. Erection of house 40M SW Of Upper Mungosdail , Drimnin, Oban , PA80 5XZ. It was not obvious that this would affect anyone at this stage.
8. MCDC Update – HL:
- a. Work on the bus parking place at Hazel Woods is progressing.
 - b. Hub electricity contract has been renegotiated and now has a standing charge of £7/day instead of £20/day.
 - c. Morvolts has had a good year and MCDC expects more income. Priority will be given to building the fund for new houses and paying off the more

expensive loans e.g. Miner's Court mortgage and some of the more expensive Morvolts loans.

- d. MCDC will contract MCTC to run the Hub café. It may receive some subsidy to keep it open as a community resource outside the tourist season. Plans will be finalised once all earlier applications expire. The café is ready to 'walk in'.

9. Treasurer's Report – JH

	Paid	Balance	Notes
Invoice from MCDC	£8		LPP meeting room rental
Common Good Fund		£7550.96	
MCC General account		£1834.88	
		£9385.84	

HL will contact MCDC to suggest that MCDC waive charges for Local Place Plan (LPP) meetings - as their contribution to the project.

10. Other correspondence

- a. UHI trail: the main funding which was applied for to create an audio trail has fallen through.
- b. Speeding issue: Sarah Fanet has passed on reported problems of speeding coming into Lochaline village on to the police, who will come to make speed checks.
- c. Temporary road closure
A884 will be closed at Falls Brae, Morvern between:
09:00 Friday 24th May until 17:00 on Thursday 30th May
with the following schedule:

Road Closed	Road Open
09:00	10:00
10:30	11:30
12:00	13:00
13:30	14:30
15:00	16:00

It was noted that delays at roadworks will probably cause motorists to speed once allowed through, to catch a ferry etc. Traffic is likely to be heavier as it coincides with an English Bank Holiday and the Oban-Craignure ferry route not at full capacity – factors likely to aggravate the problems of speeding in the village.

MW will write to Highland Council and local Police alerting them of concerns.

- d. HL has requested Sarah Fanet to investigate extending the 20mph zone along the Drimnin Road as far as the Kiel turning – as there is a problem of speeding in this area where there is no footpath and residents walk this route to access the church and its grounds.

Upcoming Meeting dates

2024

June 11 (AGM)
July (no meeting)
August 13 - Drimnin Village Hall
September 10
October 8
November 12
December 10