

Isle of Arran Community Council
Minutes of Meeting held 27th April 2021

Due to the current COVID19 restrictions, this meeting was held digitally via ZOOM

Present: Bill Calderwood (Chair), Bob Haddow, Jim Henderson, Aileen Balfour, Julie Graham, Neil Arthur, Colin Mackenzie, Ricky McMaster, John Lamont, Liz Evans and Cllr Timothy Billings,

Also present: Hugh Boag- Arran Banner, Jim Nichols - Minute Secretary

1. Welcome / Apologies

- The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending this Digital Meeting.
- Slow return to new normal with government regulations easing travel, tourism and business.
- Our continued thanks to the Local NHS Ayrshire and Arran Health Board staff, who continue to support the community with an excellent level of care. Other support groups are also continuing their generous services.
- Apologies for absence were recorded from Rosalyn Mills (NAC), Brodie Pearcey, Sgt Douglas Robertson, Peter McMullen and David Murray

2. Minutes from Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held 23rd February 2021 had been previously circulated.

Proposed Neil Arthur Seconded Jim Henderson

3. Matters Arising

- Support letter sent to Pirnmill secretary with copy to Chair and CC rep.
- Final delivery received for toilet provisions. Report submitted and acknowledged by both TBRRF and NAC as satisfying the funding conditions. Action closed
- Aileen has followed up on re instatement for post box. Covid restrictions were being reported as reason for delays.
- Cheques sent for Insurance and receipt received.

4. Correspondence

Bill Calderwood reported correspondence including:

Messages received via “Contact-us” –

- Messages received asking process for establishing a “memorial bench”
- A request to meet with the CC had been received from Vicky Yuill, Senior Lead Officer of the Arran Locality Partnership. This Partnership focuses very much on the health and social care priorities affecting our residents. The request was for a short time on the agenda for a discussion with Ruth Betley, two of the partnerships supporting officers, and herself, to gather your views on the existing priorities (which focussed on addressing inequalities Transport, Social Isolation and Affordable housing).

The discussion would focus on past, present and future state for priorities on Arran to confirm they are still the right priorities, The views of the Community Council would add to the gathering a breadth of opinions.

The suggestion was to meet on 11th May at 6pm via Zoom. This was agreed.

Julie Graham and Liz Evans reported on recent meetings they had attended in relation to Arran Priorities.

Neil Arthur was concerned that there may be a possible overlap with the work the ARG are undertaking relating to the 13 objectives being pursued by the Group.

- Other correspondence received related to:
 - Notes covering a range of topics circulated from NAC.
 - Road closure notices and cancelations.
 - Initial outline from SSE related to Argyll wind farm project.

5. Police Report

Sgt Robertson had provided an update prior to the meeting as follows:

There had been 50 incidents, with 5 crime reports.

4 summer secondees were starting next week.

Advice was to hang up when recorded unsolicited telephone messages were received.

Similarly, scam texts should be deleted.

6. NAC Local Managers report

In the unavoidable absence of Rosalyn, concern was expressed about the lack of white lines at the Junction of the A841 and the String Road. Bill had contacted Brodie Pearcey in regard to this problem.

Brodie had provided information that the road contractors would be undertaking work as soon as weather allowed and that this was being prioritised

Polling Stations would be operating as normal, with a Covid Compliance Officer on site at each.

Speeding was a concern at the South End, and a request for traffic calming has been made. Julie Graham also raised the issue in regard to Newton Shore. Cllr Billings agreed to ask NAC to put speed measurement in place.

7. Reports from Sub Committees

7a Feedback from Ferry Committee March meeting.

- Gourock linkspan trials are scheduled for return of CI and IoA prior to leaving service.
- Turn up and go discussion had taken a lot of the time. Concerns still around procedures and how residents were able to get information on day of travel availability.
- CalMac reported that not all the capacity is being utilised and request made that the percentage is variable over a day. Demand is high in the morning going out and later coming back and this should be recognised.
- Also requested to consider vehicle capacity.
- Access to medical appointments also confirmed as last year when unable to get a vehicle booking you can travel as foot passenger and agree with CalMac for reclaiming taxi costs.
- Allocation of capacity will be changed to 90/10 with the understanding that if this is shown to cause issues we will revert to 80/20.
- Proposal received from CFL/TS to AFC's suggestion related to Campbeltown service which was discussed and counter proposal submitted.
- In respect of repairs to the Loch Seaforth, it was expected the vessel will have sea trials on 14th May, with the Isle of Arran resuming its summer schedule on 17th May.

7b. ARG /AEG.

- Neil had been unavailable for the meeting, therefore there was no formal report.

- Full minutes are published at <https://www.arranrecoverygroup.co.uk/>
- In respect of nominations for involvement in the informal sub-group discussions, Liz Evans was nominated for Health. John Lamont had also expressed an interest.

7c. Arran Locality Partnership

- Next meeting scheduled for 17th June. 4:45 – 6:45 pm.
- LPP papers can be accessed at <http://northayrshire.community/your-community/arran/>

8. NAC Councillors report

Cllr Billings provided the following update:

- A quieter month for formal council business this month. However, it has still be busy with council work with specific focus on:
 - Community Wealth Building - there is a significant team been brought together in the council that will work to develop the council's aims for community wealth building. We as councillors were given an update on that the team has been up to. It is nearly a year since North Ayrshire council announced its CWB aims and a report on the past year is due. That will be the time to review the progress of these plans.
 - Arran Recovery Group - this group has been finalising its visionary plan for a way forward for Arran. This will be going out for all to look and will be a focus for the discussions about the way forward for Arran.
 - Going forward: Consultation on libraries and halls is still ongoing and it is essential that we all engage in that.
- Arran Locality Partnership – there is work going on to review and refresh the local priorities for Arran. Initial discussions have taken place but there will be a lot more work to get input from as many organisations, groups and individuals across the island.
- Scottish government elections on 6th May, and the outcome of that will affect council funding for the future.
- The CC noted that NAC are making a significant investment in terms of a Communications Team for Digital Connectivity. The CC wished to understand who was setting the priorities for this, and who was driving it.
- John Lamont thought a grant of £3k per household might be available to help install faster broadband, and suggested that a joined up approach for some areas may help make it more efficient for multiple households to be connected at the same time.

9. A.O.C.B

- Brodick Hall consultation: A letter had been received from the Brodick Hall committee Chair and Brodick Improvements Chair asking for CC support to their letter. (Appendix A)

- It was noted that Community Asset Transfer Consultation was ongoing, but the CC have had no formal consultation in this regard other than via household circulars.
- Following discussion, the CC agreed to support the Brodick letter.
- It was reported a Hustings would take place tomorrow.

Appendix A

Dear Chairman,

I would be greatly obliged if you could circulate this letter to the members of the Arran Community Council. This is a joint submission from Brodick Hall Community Association and Brodick Improvements Committee and is our contribution to the consultation which North Ayrshire Council has requested from all interested parties regarding the future role of Libraries, Halls, Community Centres and Nurseries within North Ayrshire. Being Secretary of BHCA and Chair of BIC, I believe I am writing with the support of all the members.

Very briefly regarding its history, Brodick Public Hall was created on behalf of the Duke of Hamilton in 1896, gifted to the village and by 1925 was being managed by Brodick Public Hall and Recreation Company, Ltd. Due to financial problems and shortage of volunteers the Hall was sold in 1977 to Cunninghame District Council for £3,000. The sale included the Hall and surrounding recreational grounds. The Hall was more recently taken into the control of North Ayrshire Council, which added to the premises the excellent purpose built Brodick Library which serves all of the Isle of Arran. These premises are widely recognised as more than a village Hall but an ISLAND ASSET.

Brodick Hall Community Association was formed in February, 2008, at the direct request of North Ayrshire Council who sought volunteers to run a local booking system for hall users, which has enabled the hall to be booked locally by users rather than the rather cumbersome system formerly operated from North Ayrshire HQ on the mainland. Until the start of the Pandemic users have been able to book via the locally based booking secretary at short notice and, also, been able to cancel at short notice with no penalty. The Hall Committee frequently finances improvements to the fabric and equipment of the Hall from the Committee's own funds. It is important to note that Brodick Hall has a full-time salaried hall-keeper employed by North Ayrshire Council. North Ayrshire Libraries employs the librarians and there is the mobile library serving the whole of the island. We perceive there is worry throughout the island that the Council may consider closing the Library for economic reasons. This would be a disastrous blow to all the residents of Arran. It is the hub of Arran with the bus service operating to serve the ferry and schools from the whole of the island as there are bus stops adjacent to Brodick Hall.

The Early Years Learning Nursery has been a tenant of the Hall for many years, using the hall during school term mornings. During the 13 months of the Pandemic there have been

no users of the Hall other than the Nursery. Now, with Government funding children between the ages of 3-5 are able to attend the Nursery until 3 p.m. To enable other lets to use the Hall in non-pandemic times, the Nursery had been planning, with the co-operation of the Council and the Hall Committee, to occupy approximately 50% of the Library, which would entail building works, adaptations for toilets, a dining area and separate entrance from the public and access to a play area. This plan would enable the Hall to be free for use by other lets throughout morning, afternoon and evening, thereby increasing the use of the Hall and adding to the sustainable aspect of the facilities.

We believe Brodick Public Hall is integral to the fabric of Island life, and can be used for concerts, craft fairs, charity sales, yoga classes, adult education, Church services, school concerts, traditional summer Ceilidhs for visitors to the island, etc. The uses of the Hall are too numerous to elaborate and is likely to increase in future if the Nursery can acquire its own premises. We remind you that the Hall has been used as a refuge for stranded visitors, flooded out campers and as a feeding station at the time of power cuts. We know the Council and BHCA would gladly grant permission to cope with these emergencies, but if the Hall was run by a privately funded organisation would this be easily and quickly sanctioned?

For those who live in Brodick we cannot envisage life in the village without our village Hall. It is the centre for so many activities. If the unimaginable happened that the Council decided to close the hall altogether for economic reasons, we can only see this as the heart of the village being removed. We sincerely hope that this will not happen. Economies may have to be made and Brodick Hall Community Association would co-operate with the Council to consider steps which could be taken on this.

We like everyone else in North Ayrshire, have to wait anxiously to hear the results of the deliberations by the Elected Members at their meeting in June. It is an anxious and worrying time. We hope that the members of the Arran Community Council agree with our thoughts and give their necessary support to our pleas.

Sincerely

Harry Davidson (Chair, Brodick Improvements Committee).

John Sillars (Chair, Brodick Hall Community Association).

10. Next Meeting: Tuesday 25th May 2021 at 6pm. This meeting will be held digitally. The format will be agreed dependent on the trial to be conducted shortly.