

OBAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ZOOM MEETING 27th JULY 2020 at 7pm.

PRESENT: Marri Malloy( Chair), Duncan Martin, Keith Miller, Cynthia McKeown, Jessie MacFarlane, Stewart Maclver, Sue Barnard, Laura Corbe.

COUNCILLORS: Kieron Green, Jim Lynch, Elaine Robertson, Roddy MacCuish, Mary-Jean Devon.

Andreas Wolff.

PUBLIC: Colin Cooper.

APOLOGIES: Maurice Wilkins, Andrew Vennard.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

POLICE REPORT: None.

MINUTE OF MEETING 27th JUNE 2020: Approved as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING: Ardbhan Craigs.

MJD: Chamber of Commerce for Inner Hebrides is being set up. This will be a voice for all islands issues. 11 of the 13 islands have joined so far. Waiting for Kerrera & Gigha. Each will have its own cell and there will be one representative for the Chamber at Scottish Government level. Documents are being drawn up at the moment but it may be 2 years before they have a voice. Zoom technology has greatly benefited inter island connections.

BIKE STATION: Survey from Argyll & Bute Council. Discussion around whether there may already be plans through BID to pursue this & where it might be sited.  
ACTION - RMacC to update.

SOROBA BINS: a very difficult ongoing issue. There is enough volume but kids are often sent to the bins with rubbish & cannot reach. Recycling is not sorted out. LC has made posters on behalf of OCC & BID to put up in Soroba to try to help educate. More posters were requested to put on all the communal bins around town. JL to look into whether re-siting the bins could be an option. Kids need to be involved in the way that bins should be used.

COVID-19: Argyll & Bute Health & Social Care Partnership put out an excellent statement to inform the public after the identification of a case of covid-19 in Gelatoburger in Oban. Discussion took place about the responsibility for taking contact details in such places. It is entirely voluntary for establishments to do so. Everyone should take responsibility for giving their contact details.

PLANNING: Nothing to report.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS: CC reported local Facebook pages trading animals. This should be reported to administration. Commented that the cliff climbing area at Ardbhan could tie in very well with Kilbowie. Also commented on the issue of face masks for the sensory impaired who need people to wear masks with Perspex for lip reading or visors. such face masks can be obtained from Breathe Easy.

KILBOWIE : It was reported that Argyll & Bute Council had made an offer to North Lanarkshire Council for Kilbowie which had not been accepted. The Area Committee supports the retention of the buildings and facilities. It is a fabulous resource and have requested that the facility be mothballed until an organisation is identified to take it over rather than it be demolished & the site sold off. OCC will express their concern and support for keeping Kilbowie for Oban and the people of Argyll & Bute rather than the site being used for housing development.

Action: A letter will be sent to John Swinney with copies to all msp's and councillors in Argyll & Bute and North Lanarkshire requesting a delay in the demolition of the site until investigations can be made into finding a buyer to keep the Centre operational as an outdoor facility.

#### COUNCILLOR REPORTS:

AV: See end

RMacC: Different uses for Kilbowie. Camper vans causing parking, litter and waste water problems at Ganavan. Good to see picnic tables at Ganavan. More enquiries about benefits because of Covid -19.

ER: Looking at providing facilities for camper vans in town. There had been problems with access for a fire engine at Catalina because of parked cars.

JL: Still trying to get plans from Scottish Water re- water leaks. Confirmed the ownership of the park in Soroba is in private hands but difficult to identify the houses which own it. Dangerous play equipment must be removed. Confirmed that the Remembrance Parade will take place this year in some form.

AOCB: CC: raised concerns about illegal drones.

Report from AV:

#### **Council meetings**

There were no formal council meetings in July, as July is the month in which the Council has its usual summer recess, and the cycle of formal meetings will re-commence in August. The councillors in the Oban, Lorn, and the Isles area have been continuing to have regular teleconferencing meeting to keep in contact and discuss local issues.

As you will be aware, as a result of not being able to have committee meetings, most of the decisions of the council are being dealt with by the Business Continuity Committee (BCC). The BCC meet on Thursday 25 June, and at their meeting, the annual accounts for the 2019/2020 financial year were approved.

The council held a special council meeting virtually on Tuesday 30 June, which agreed that the Area Committees, and the Strategic Committees scheduled for August and September should resume on a virtual basis. This would mean that the OLI area committee meeting should take place virtually in September. Other committees such as the Audit Committee, the Community Services Committee, the EDI Committee should also therefore be able to have their scheduled meetings in August and September. The committees are likely to proceed with their meetings with a restricted number of a agenda items. The Business Continuity Committee will continue to exercise most of the functions of the Policies and Resources Committee for the time being, and the role of the BCC would be reviewed in September.

The Business days for the councillors in the OLI area are also being resumed in August via virtual meetings

## **Spaces for People**

Argyll and Bute Council was awarded £315,000 from the Spaces for People Programme , which provides funding for assisting with people walking, cycling, and disability access. The funding will support temporary measures to assist people social distance and support businesses re-opening in the high streets. A consultation survey was open from Thursday 16 July to Sunday 26 July, and so it would be hoped that the proposals for the Oban area could be finalised fairly soon.

## **Gelato Burger Restaurant**

I am sure you will have seen the coverage in the national and local media, as well as a lot of comments on social media about the case of COVID-19 in a staff member from Gelato Burger Restaurant in Oban. Some of the content on social media was unfortunately ill informed. The individual who was affected is isolating at home as per national guidelines. No other cases of illness have been reported in staff members. The national guidance for contact tracing has been followed and, following this, a number of staff members have been identified as close contacts. These close contacts have been followed up and have been advised to self-isolate for 14 days. As a precautionary measure, testing is being arranged for those identified as close contacts.

Argyll and Bute Council's Environmental Health team is working with the business, which has voluntarily closed meantime. This work will be ongoing to support the business and ensure that it is able to reopen in the future.

A multi-agency Problem Assessment Group (PAG) meeting involving NHS Highland, Argyll and Bute Council and Health and Social Care Partnership met on Friday 24 July to further risk assess the situation and agree any additional actions.

The restaurant did have measures in place for taking customer contact details to support NHS Scotland's Test and Protect service. The risk to customers and to the wider public from this situation is very low. The main transmission route of COVID-19 is direct human to human contact. The member of staff works in the kitchen and has not been at work since Sunday 19 July. There is currently no evidence that food is a source of COVID-19 and it is very unlikely that it can be transmitted through the consumption of food.

It is important for everyone to continue to adhere to physical distancing guidelines, wear a face-covering when in enclosed spaces, clean your hands and surfaces regularly and immediately self-isolate if you develop symptoms.

Information and advice for businesses on how to operate safely is available on Argyll and Bute Council's website at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/coronavirus-help-and-advice>

## **Visit Scotland**

Visit Scotland are due to re-open their tourism centre in Oban this week (Week beginning Monday 27 July)

## **VAT changes**

There will be a temporary reduction in VAT for businesses in the tourism and hospitality sectors, and the VAT charged by those businesses will reduce from 20% to 5%. This reduction takes effect from 15 July and will last until 12 January of next year. You can find out more about the VAT changes at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revenue-and-customs-brief-10-2020-temporary-reduced-rate-of-vat-for-hospitality-holiday-accommodation-and-attractions/guidance-on-the-temporary-reduced-rate-of-vat-for-hospitality-holiday-accommodation-and-attractions>

## **Eat Out to Help Out**

This is another government scheme which has been introduced to help hospitality businesses. Under this scheme, businesses which participate can offer 50% discount on food or non-alcoholic drinks to eat or drink in (up to a maximum of £10 discount per diner) every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday between 3 and 31 August. You do not need a voucher to use this scheme and you can use it at the same time as other offers and discounts. There is no minimum spend. You cannot claim discount on alcoholic drinks or service charges. The discount will be automatically available to you at participating establishments. Establishments will then claim a reimbursement from the government for the discount they've given you. Participating establishments may include: restaurants, cafés, bars or pubs, work and school canteens, food halls. All diners in a group of any size can use the discount.

## **Road Works on the A828**

BEAR Scotland will be carrying out roads works on the A828 trunk road at Ledaig, Benderloch from Monday 3 August, which should take around a week to complete. The work will involve safe removal of loose rock and debris on the rock slope above the Trunk Road. To ensure the safety of the workforce and members of the travelling public, the site will be subject to 2 way traffic signal control for the duration of the works. Out-with the working hours the traffic management will be removed. Please be assured that access to properties and emergency services will always be maintained. Due to the location of the works it will also be necessary to close off the northbound layby to all traffic. The location of the layby is within the traffic management extents and therefore cannot be operated safely for the period of the works.

BEAR Scotland will also be carrying out resurfacing work on the A8282 trunk road, which are planned between Sunday 23 August and Thursday 17 September between the hours of 8pm and 5am. This project requires two different forms of traffic management. Due to restrictive road widths, work is required to be undertaken using a road closure. The majority of our operations allow BEAR Scotland to facilitate amnesty periods for light vehicles only. On these nights, amnesties will be provided at regular intervals of; 10pm, 12am, 2am and 4am. During these times vehicles will be escorted through the site under a 10mph convoy traffic management system. However, two nights of the operations at the A828 South of Kentallen will require a full road closure for all vehicles, operations on these two nights require deep excavation, and unfortunately the on-site geometry makes the passage of vehicles unsafe for our workforce and the public. During all operations, access through the site will be restricted for vehicles in excess of 2.5m wide. A signed diversion route as per the enclosed plan will be in place, via the A82 and A85, adding an additional 42 miles/ 50 minutes to the journey for road users travelling between Connel and Ballachulish. Access will be maintained for emergency vehicles at all times.

## **Councillor Expenses**

The councillor expenses for the 2019/2020 financial year have been published online. You can find them online at:

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Unknown/copy\\_of\\_members\\_allowance\\_19-20\\_final\\_excel.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Unknown/copy_of_members_allowance_19-20_final_excel.pdf)

Total councillor expenses fell from £125,726.57 in the previous financial year to £113,103.59. My own expense claim fell by 26.28% from £96.20 to £70.91.

NEXT MEETING 31st AUGUST 7pm. ZOOM