

OBAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ZOOM MEETING 30th November 2020 at 7pm.

1. Welcome

PRESENT: Marri Malloy (MM), Duncan Martin (DM), Keith Miller (KM), Cynthia McKeown (CMcK), Jessie MacFarlane (JMacF), Stewart McIver (SMcI), Sue Barnard (SB), Laura Corbe (LC), Grant Nicholson (GN), Neil McIntyre (NMcI), Alison Clark (AC)

COUNCILLORS: Kieron Green (KG), Jim Lynch (JL), Elaine Robertson (ER), Roddy McCuish (RMcC), Andrew Vennard (AV)

PUBLIC: Andrew Spence (AS), Ellis Butcher (Oban Times), Rita Campbell (Press & Journal), Naoko Mabon, Seonaidh MacKenzie, Mairi Bryce (MB)

APOLOGIES: Maurice Wilkins, Mary-Jean Devon, Colin Cooper, Michelle Gallagher, Sandra Russel

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Police Report

None.

4. Minutes of Last Meeting

Meeting of 26th October 2020 proposed as accurate by DM & seconded by SB

5. Matters Arising

Update from MM re Lonan Drive & McCaig Rd. A complaint was made to Scottish Water regarding workers coming to Oban (Level 2 from Level 4 area) & an apology issued via zoom meeting. However work has already started & will last for 7 months. DM advises the work is overdue & essential however this is site investigation which does not require specialists from out of the area. KM reiterated concerns from parents of school kids at Rockfield negotiating road crossing during the works. Concurred that, at this stage, bringing workers from Level 4 is unnecessary. NMcI suggests requesting Scottish Water records every name on site & temperature checks for workers as per other work sites especially since the linked Covid cases in Dunbeg.

RMcC advises Rockfield Campus has not had direct concerns from parents regarding school crossing & suggests parents also contact school to formalise concerns.

Ratified that Dougie Graham, Frank Roberts, Michelle Gallagher are now coopted members

New committee member: Alison Clark proposed by JMacF, Seconded by GN

MM stated that Dougie Graham has offered to open & close public toilets at Ganavan to allow them to remain open over winter months however council did not agree. RMcC states the officers have made decision to shut the toilets however funding is available to open it & there is no reason for it to be shut over the weekend. DM will write to officers & councillors on behalf of OCC.

DM has been in contact with Jim Smith @ ABC to continue discussions regarding parking. Was advised a new report will be brought to area committee on the 9th December & he will be in touch in due course regarding Oban. Was disappointed that the response in Oban was not as

encouraging as in Tobermory or Luss, there will be many weeks delay before any real action is seen. ER has requested a written question for the area committee (via Stewart MacClean).

6. Skatepark

Request for funding for feasibility study. Community Councillors agreed to give £500 to meet the shortfall. This will be a one-off payment. There were concerns over the location of the park & there should be more transparency over the location. It was explained that the location will be confirmed by the feasibility study.

7. Oban Link Club

A request for funding to allow the club which promotes better mental health to meet virtually & individually. Community Councillors agreed to donate £300 to meet the shortfall. This will be a one-off payment.

8. Councillor Reports

All councillors gave respect to deceased councillors Len Scoullar (council provost) & Ellen Morton.

Andrew Vennard

Has now been appointed Vice Chair of the Argyll & Bute Harbour Board.

Roddy McC

- RMcC congratulated Andrew & noted it was good to have a local councillor on the board. Town centre planning is relaxed until March but would like to see it extended to rural areas.
- Noted there were too many tourists in town against Tier restrictions & urged Air BnBs & self catering not to accommodate visitors from higher risk areas.
- Pleased that the planning committee had agreed to a new distillery on Islay which brings the total to 10

Elaine Robertson

- All councillors had been involved with free parking in town centre from 11th December
- Budget working group had been considering their options
- There was a visit from the boundary commission. It was noted the islands wanted a councillor of their own however population size may not support this.
- Has been working on environmental project with Jim & Roddy (see report from Jim below)
- Is awaiting date from Oban High School for a seminar on climate change

Jim Lynch

- Good return on Soroba survey, it's important to deliver as soon as possible
- New crash barrier has been installed in Soroba but road safety issues persist
- 9.5 x more claimants of universal credit this year compared to last
- Now responsible for climate, economic development & rural growth
- It's essential to speak to experts & the community regarding climate change & the council must be seen to lead the way.

Kieron Green

- Working on IJB budget options
- Community justice - there is pressure on community payback service due to early release from prison.
- There will be no dedicated climate change group this has been remitted to the policy & resources committee.
- Agreed to an empty house council tax rebate if covid prevents work
- Council has adopted its 5 year housing strategy which includes almost 1000 new houses in Oban & Dunbeg. Almost all new houses in Argyll are aimed in Oban. These houses are not for people in Oban but can be for homeless anywhere in the UK. Concerns were raised by MM that the local job market in Oban will not support so many newcomers.

Questions for Councillors

NMcl enquired what officers are doing for Oban?

ER

- Multistory Carpark - awaiting survey result at Tweedale St re concerns over ground stability.
- Working on Half-way house round about with Scottish Gov, SEPA have asked for Flood assessment which is currently underway. Funding could be available.
- Framework - there is no officer available to at the moment. Kirsten MacDonald has been seconded to another post.
- Airport - utilities are being installed

RMcC - Street sweeping machines. The weather is too extreme to not have cover however funding is limited so budget for wages comes before machinery.

9. Planning

Update from SMcl - No new applications.

The 2 houses refused at Soroba House are now at appeal

The recommendations for the pods at the Lodge hangs in the balance.

Some replacement shop signs & temporary ramps for wheelchair access but nothing of any concern.

MM The signs & seating at Cuan Mohr have attracted several complaints from safety & visual perspectives. Safety concerns should be directed towards roads department, environmental health & disability forum. ER has also had multiple complaints. She has spoken directly to the restaurant with disappointing results & reported same to the planning dept.

10. Public Questions & issues

11. AOCB

Questions for councillors

- JMacF advised that school children had been causing damage near Glencruitten Hostel.
- RMcC suggested a joint presentation from Scottish Water to the Council & Community Council
- DM asked about Lochavullin flooding. RMcC advised a bid went into Scottish Gov but was unsuccessful but there is now a plan in place if an opportunity for funding comes up.
- MM noted bicycle damage in Stafford Street. NMcl stated there were cameras & RMcC would look into this
- MM brought up for Maurice Wilkins concerns that too many trees being felled in Oban. RMcC advised only a TPO can preserve trees, anything else is out of council remit. A reason must be found to protect trees with a TPO. ER had stressed that there must be better tree management as many of the trees in her area with TPO are very mature.
- AS brought up for Mairi Bryce queries as to why the proposal for free parking to Jan 3rd was turned down. Only 2 councillors voted for it, the others had concerns over a lack of information to be able to approve. KG suggested a motion to the area committee in December. BID4Oban may be willing to pay half of cost but council need to come back with proposal for other half. Needs clarification for costs of parking for those few days.
- AS advised that a Camper Service area had been declined by business approached thus far & they were currently considering a garage between Oban & Dunbeg. Next option would be to look at council premises. BID voiced support for local business refusing services to visitors from Tier 3 or 4 areas & England.
- SB noted that bins in the town centre were a mess & gave a very bad impression. AS advises BID have a proposal to build a bin store in Stevenson St. If this is successful it will be rolled out across town. GN agree & suggests better planning for whee new businesses will out bins must be considered

- KM stated OCHDA are currently consulting regarding the boundaries of the Oban Harbour limits.
- SMcI suggested land for shinty park at McKelvie Rd where M&K Macleod vacated as a skatepark location. Council should approach the company to clear the site which was left in a disgraceful condition, a health & safety issue.
- DM asked if there was an update on Oban covid numbers. There had been one case in the last 7 days
- RMcC suggests the location for the skate park should be at Keyline where the porta-cabins used to be. This site already belongs to the council.

12. Date of next meeting 25th January 2021

***Action Items**

DM to write letter regarding Ganavan Public Toilets

DM to write with BID4Oban & councillors to make formal question for area committee re parking

DM & ER to write letter regarding Cuan Mohr signs & expansion onto the street to roads department, environmental health & disability forum

RMcC to request a joint presentation from Scottish Water to the Council & Community Council

RMcC to enquire about camera coverage & damage to Stafford Street