Community Council Meeting

Date: 10th June 2025 Location: Cove Burgh Hall, Small Hall

Minutes

1. Fire Alarms and Housekeeping
2. Present

John Auld (Convenor), Kenny Barlas, Susannah Conran, Nick Davies, Derek Fowlis, Sheena Lamont,. James McLean Lynda McKenzie, Ellen McVey, Ali Mills Christine Murdoch, Sheelagh O’Reilly (Secretary), , Anne Strachan (Treasurer),

**Apologies:** Kathy Gostick, Cllr Shonny Patterson; Cllr Mark Irvine

5 Members of public including one member of the press

1. Declaration of interest (financial and non-financial interests):

No update to the Declaration of Interest table circulated to Community Council members. Attached

Derek Fowlis indicated that he is a licensee in Kilcreggan (re Sailing Club license application)

John Auld (Convenor): As the convenor I have had discussions with the Governance Officer at Argyll and Bute Council regarding my ownership of land that is identified for possible development in LDP2. LDP2 forms part of Argyll and Bute Council’s statutory plans for the area and has now been adopted by them. As the landowner for one parcel of land I would follow the current guidance on Declarations of Interest and would not chair the section of any CC meeting dealing with issues specific to that parcel of land.

During the meeting additional issues relating to Declaration of interest were raised:

* James McLean has formally submitted an objection to Auchengower retrospective planning application;
* Susannah Conran had written to A&B Council planning re the work in the grounds of Knockderry castle (this item only added during the meeting)
* By Anne Strachan that Paul Strachan has had informal discussions with A&B Council planning regarding Knockderry castle (this item only added during the meeting). Verbal information given only.

**[Note that two items were taken at this point as involved input from the public but the minutes are under Agenda Item 12]**

1. Police Report

No one in attendance and no written report. Agreed that Secretary would send the dates for the next period as agreed at the AGM along with the new start time. Then a week or so prior to the meeting Vice Convenor will send out a reminder. Written reports are very helpful and can provide information even if officers are not able to attend the meeting itself.

The CC noted the recent thefts from Cove Sailing Club.

1. Minutes of the CC meetings as follows:

* **Agreement of Revised Minutes from 11th February 2025 and signature**

Revised minutes (following agreement of process at meeting held on the 8th April). Issues raised by two CC members, but the revised minutes were agreed and signed.

**Agreement of the revised minutes was proposed by Nick Davies / Kenny Barlas.** There were two dissentions:

1. James McLean - Item 6 minutes.
2. Anne Strachan – objected to the minutes as not being a fair or accurate record of the meeting.

* **Agreement of Minutes from 8th April 2025 and signature. Proposed Christine Murdoch / Sheena Lamont.** No objections.

1. Convenor

* Argyll & Bute Council Proposed Amendments to the 2022-2026 Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils (particularly Appendix 5 re administrative grants). Rather than go through item-by-item Anne Strachan and Sheelagh O’Reilly to revise the current draft and send it to A&B Council on behalf of the Community Council.
  + The CC raised concerns regarding the Annex 5 schedule of administrative grants given the rising costs for Community Councils and the increased work that is required.
* The Community Council noted the proposed timing of CC elections in 2026 – June / August 2026
* Road closure of Argyll Road / Donaldson Brae from 2 June to 8th August. Work by Scottish Power.
* Playpark – working on procurement with a number of other sites. No update available on preferred bidder etc.
* Report from HLCPP. Useful for meeting other local community councils and service providers. Provides a route for C&K issues to be raised e.g. the Radiotelemetry switch off and BT landline switch from copper to digital.
* Request for £100 to support the Beer Festival (Paul Strachan) – funds available . This was agreed and the Treasurer will inform. .
* Helensburgh Leisure Centre: Oral update from Cllr Corry – also Director of Live Argyll. Currently the repairs work is going through procurement with 3 tenders received. Priority is to get up and running. Examining possible opening of the swimming pool / ground floor as soon as possible. Timeline between month and more than one year – depends on process / insurers etc. Question raised on liability – currently in litigation and NDAs in place (non-disclosure agreements) which limits discussion. Issue of redundances from Live Argyll raised – process being put in place.

1. Treasurer

Annual accounts for 2024-2025 all signed off– note expenditure exceeds income (CC was warned about this last October).

Start of a new year now – currently little expenditure at the moment and no grant received yet.

**Accounts (see attached)**

Projects – Money outstanding is part of the grant from the Supporting Communities Fund to be spent later this year.

Anticipate further expenditure this year, if no change, it is about £820.

Did the CC commit to purchasing a new bench, and if so, was the money earmarked? – see later discussion under item 12 on street furniture.

* The Community Council **agreed** that it would apply to A&B Council for its administrative grant for the period 2025/26. .

1. Update on Our Community Project

* No update from the OC team.
* The CC noted the proposed Highland Boundary Fault Walk on the 11th June.
* Update on Invasive Species Management from Kathy Gostick: 2 people have been trained through OC funding and discussions will be had via the Green Grp on priority areas for spraying of JKW [Japanese Knotweed] which will occur early Autumn. Any input on areas that we could consider for spraying is welcome from the CC and the community. The OC footpaths & Green Group are liaising with the farmer to also tackle the large amount of JKW on the Green Isle route which he will be commercially spraying this Autumn. **Note that the lead of the OC Green Group (Anne Strachan) indicated that it was only the OC Footpaths group that was in dialogue with the farmer.**

1. Community and Household Emergency Planning update

* No progress recently (except around sandbags) but planning for winter 2025/6 to begin.

1. Ferry and Pier (ND)

* No update on Pier / Ferry.
* Issue of risks to service due to breakdown of the Dunoon ferry which is not yet back in service. The Kilcreggan ferry is ‘relief’ for the Gourock / Dunoon route.
* Significant number of service disruption alerts noted.
* Convenor reported on a service users group meeting held in Dunoon / online. Issues of new boats / designs / timings / berthing etc raised. No decisions made yet.

1. Roads / Paths / Lighting / Drainage etc

* **Tigh Dearg** –: Work is coming to an end and Georope are working through a snagging list. Issues of traffic signs / lamp posts still ongoing. Issue of ‘ramp’ at bottom of Tigh Dearg / Shore Road and need to ‘smooth out’ to make safer. John Auld has work to do in the fields above Tigh Dearg.
* **School Road:** Cllr Corry reported this is now with Hugh O’Neil.
* **Craigrownie Gardens parking issues:** Two members of Craigrownie Gardens presented the issues raised with parking and A&B Council changes to ‘parking on pavements’ and ability of wardens to find people for so doing. A petition from the residents was presented to the Community Council for consideration and support. The Community Council will forward to the appropriate section of A&B Council as well as elected Councilors. A related critical issue is the lack of suitable disabled parking bays in the area. This is urgent and despite applying for inputs there has been no response. At present local residents have their own approach to this issue. Cllr Corry indicated that the CC should raise this issue with Hugh O’Neill in A&B Council (Secretary) and two members of the CC (Derek Fowlis / Ellen McVey) will communicate with the residents. Cllr Corry indicated that this issue has been raised in other village locations and A&B Council have asked for traffic wardens to ‘be sensible’. There are related issues of number / size of vehicles / size of garages and ‘drop-down’ pavements for vehicle / wheelchair access.

**Meikle Aiden:** The issue was also raised by a CC member / resident of Meikle Aiden concerning ticketing by a warden without any warning. The issue of whether Meikle Aiden is an adopted / private road was unclear, and the current convention is that pedestrians normally walk in the road as residents park on the pavement.

* **Drainage:** Gulleys, ditches and regular maintenance to minimize including plan (not yet made available to the CC) –
  + **Leaking Sewage near old tennis courts reported through A&B Council Report it site.** Response has been to refer to ‘Property’ team. A post meeting note suggests they are to examine the problem. But there are no contact details for the relevant department and the software used by the Road Department (generally positive) does not enable them to put ‘notes’ into the response!
  + **Sewage on the beach** should be reported to SEPA as most is from private outfalls rather than Scottish Water. **.**
* **Overhanging trees / mossy pavements.** To be included in the updated ‘works list’ as A&B Council can inform owners of their obligations and if work not undertaken can then be contracted out and billed to the property owner. Additional areas to be added are Temperance Brae and Donaldsons Brae.
* **Kilcreggan Bus Shelter:** Sheena Lamont to send through again the details to Cllr Corry from the accident that were previously shared. From A&B Council arcgis.com website the shelter if a Land & Property Asset Point 000125085952/Site UPRN PT11114430001 Kilcreggan Shelter At Pier. Secretary will forward details to Hugh O’Neill
* **‘Works’ List:** To be regularly updated with concerns and forwarded to A&B Council (Hugh O’Neill) and copy to CC members for information. Derek Fowlis updated meeting with Tom Murphy (Amenities) in recent village. Very helpful and has led to grass already being cut twice! Having a clear ‘works list’ and regular meetings with officers aid planning of work on a rolling basis for key maintenance and other issues. Likely follow up meeting in August.
* **Street Furniture (Benches, Notice Boards, Phone boxes etc)**.
  + **Presentation by Richard Reeve concerning historical water fountain / lamp post**.

Paper circulated to CC members prior to the meeting.

**The water fountain** has been in the care of Tony Bell since the mid 2000s when he rescued it from damage during the sewage works along Shore Road. The CC thanked him for his 20 years of care for the fountain but **agreed with the proposal from Richard Reeve that this important piece of local heritage should be re-purposed as a modern water fountain at a suitable location.**

**Lamppost from top of Tigh Dearg:** At present it is not sure if the lamp post will be replaced at its original site – there is 1 year post completion of the work on Tigh Dearg for a decision to be made. **The CC agreed that this is an important part of the local heritage and a suitable site for installation should be found.**

**The two items could be considered as part of wider work with the RPW-CDT including the possible ‘take-over’ of red phone boxes and management of relevant street furniture.**

**CC agreed to support the project and examine, with others, suitable sources of funding (e.g. through A&B C Aspire website) and a resolution to consideration of issues such as** health & safety, access, location, ownership and footfall etc.

* + **Red Phone Boxes:** Secretary contacted by A&B Council planning to discuss the 3 phone boxes in the area. BT applied to close down one near Cove Shop and Fairfield. Cannot be removed as in Conservation Area. Phone box in Kilcreggan also discussed as could be a suitable site to retain one working box (coin / card?) for emergencies. RPW-CDT have applied to BT to ‘take over’ these phone boxes. **CC agreed to support this work and, at this stage, leave with the RPW-CDT to pursue.**
  + **Noticeboards (Nick Davies).** Replacement noticeboards for Cove and Kilcreggan on order and paid for. Awaiting delivery. Will then require a working party to install these in both villages.
  + **Sheena Lamont reported on the application for a disabled bench for Cove from A&B Supporting Communities Fund.** In discussion with the team a capital proposal for £490 was submitted. Now awaiting an interview by the assessment team. Likely to be placed adjacent to the bus shelter in Cove Village. Awaiting a reply from C&K Trust regarding the location of the bench on their land.
  + James McLean raised issues regarding drainage issues (multiple sites) on **Barbour Road.** The list of sites identified in relation to flooding / undermining the road to be sent to the Secretary for inclusion in the rolling ‘Works List’.

1. Licensing

* **The Community Council had no objections to the licensing application from the Sailing Club.**
* Christine Murdoch will report the CC decision to the licensing board.

1. Communications

* Christine Murdoch highlighted that guidance regarding CC communications with the press is given in detail in the A&B Council Community Council handbook. All members should read and understand.
* James McLean offered to explore lottery grant finance to support the CC website. Focus on having a professional website (as we have now) rather than a self-managed one.
* No further CC members details submitted for update to the website.

1. Community Council Planning Policy

* **C&K Trust Land Management:** James McLean indicated that he had twice written to the C&K Trust but no response. Aim is to set up a trust working group. Feedback at next meeting. Kathy Gostick requested an update around invasive species (by email) and this will be taken into consideration by the working group once established.

1. Planning Applications (details of applications on A&B website)

* **Update on Fish Farm appeal.** No decision been taken – rests with Scottish Government Ministers.
* **Flamingo land.** Whilst the reporter for this appeal was minded to accept with 49 conditions it has now been called in (10 June 2025) by Scottish Government ministers.
* **Giants Burn**: No additional inputs since the exhibition. Ongoing discussions with NATS and NatureScot regarding site. Gourock CC has indicated their concerns. C&K lies within the distance for possible community benefits but this would probably be managed through an organization such as Foundation Scotland (<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/>) and not directly to each community. **The CC will continue to keep a ‘watching brief’ on this.**
* **Planning Applications and ongoing communication with A&B Council:** 
  + **Auchengower 25/00516/PP:** The CC have been in correspondence regarding Auchengower and the 3 new units on several occasions. The CC notes again that a failure to act on complaints from members of the public and the CC when the new units were delivered has now led to a large retrospective planning application. There was a detailed discussion of this issue and the following was agreed by the Community Council:

**The Community Council (majority decision) object in the strongest possible terms to this large retrospective planning application regarding the ‘siting’ of what are new caravans outside the area designated in initial planning permission 11/00984/PP.** **The granting of this large retrospective planning application would appear to people in the community that non-compliance with statutory requirements is ‘rewarded’ with ex-post planning permission. The CC and members of the community feel this is unfair and has a potential ‘knock-on’ effect for other sites where developers and can evade normal systems and processes and still achieve their individual aims. The use of the discretionary powers that rests with A&B Council are, in this instance, possibly inappropriately applied given the level of complaints at ‘delivery’ of the new units to the site when enforcement action (to a site with a history of planning issues) could have been easily taken.**

**We are also mindful that we understand that 2 of these units are residential and the third is more holiday accommodation. Therefore, the CC requests that should the decision regarding the 25/00516/PP be to remove the 3 units from their current location that the relocation, to other sites within Auchengower, is undertaken at the expense of the site owner and not those who appear to have purchased their unit in good faith**.

**In the event that A&B Council grants this planning application the Community Council wishes to see significant amelioration of the current site to reduce the visual impact of this development**. **This would include issues of vegetation management, resolving the drainage issues which cause significant flooding on the B833 and more appropriate colour schemes for fencing etc.**

The above will form the basis of the response to A&B Council.

* + **Ardpeaton 24/01321/PPP****.** Discussion held and decision to again correspond with A&B Council planning around this development as follows:

**We recognise that this area is designated for settlement but note the MOD response on the A&B Council website re the ‘explosion area’ for Coulport and would be interested in learning more about this in relation to development economics in this area.**

**Key concerns for this site remain:**

* + - **Access to the individual properties to/from Barbour Road or a single access point?**
    - **For construction / removal of debris that the road through to Peaton hill be upgraded to have solid passing places to remove the risks of damage to verges, ditches / gulleys etc;  This is a single track road without proper passing places and the increase in larger vehicles and numbers of traffic movements during construction are of concern.  Barbour Road is also a Core Path and is used extensively by residents for walking / cycling.  That drainage is carefully constructed to reduce risk of down-slope flooding either to the properties in /around Loch View and further downstream onto the B833.**
    - **Whilst not normally a direct issue for planning the Community Council wishes to recognize the need to build new properties to the highest standards in relation to energy to aid the implementation of Net Zero within Argyll & Bute.  This would also include appropriate design standards for the houses themselves.**
    - **Ensuring that the standards of housing put on this site are in line with NPF4 and LDP2 policies.**

The above forms the basis of the email to A&B Council and includes the request regarding a meeting: The CC would also like to know if it is possible to arrange a meeting with yourselves and the developer to talk through concerns regarding this development – to include local residents as well as CC members.

* + **Knockderry Castle: Wall / tree work next to Shore Road.** This item was added to the agenda given the situation ‘flagged’ by members of the community and community councillors regarding the wall and extensive tree felling adjacent to the road. One CC member has written to A&B Council in a personal capacity regarding this matter and a number have checked that no planning permission has been granted for this work in the Cove Conservation Area. It is acknowledged that there was some small storm damage earlier in the year but the extent of the current work is not in line with the localised damage. The pavement is closed off immediately after a blind bend.

**The community council discussed this matter and agreed that there are grave concerns over the work around the wall, trees and drainage which appears to be taking place without planning permission in place.** The CC would like to request an update on the situation from A&B Council so that the public are aware of whether the proper processes regarding planning permission are being followed (as per issue with Auchengower). Whilst accepting that limited emergency work may have been required following the storm damage the extent and type of the work seems disproportionate to the problem .

**Agreed that the Secretary will write to A&B Council planning in relation to this matter.**

* **Letter on ‘legal gap’ regarding notification of land ownership change to the local authority when it has extant planning permission:** Following on from discussions by email with the A&B Council planning authority and discussions with a legal person at the Environmental Rights Centre Scotland (free as Secretary is member) a formal letter was sent to our MSP (circulated to CC members). This has now been forwarded to the relevant minister in the Scottish Government. We will await a response but ensuring that the e-planning system containing this type of update would enable the CC and residents to more carefully track land / developer ownership and who may be responsible for implementing existing planning permissions and their requirements.
* Community contribution process of A&B Council. Raised by James McLean and postponed for further discussion.

1. Any Other Competent Business

Sheena Lamont reported on the use of the OC Lottery grant for flowers and related material at the top of the pier.

James McLean raised the issue about non-attendance of Cllr Irvine, despite apologies and reason being given at the start of the meeting i.e. that he had been detained on A&B Council business.

1. Date of Next Meeting proposed as 8th July with a 1915 start

**C&K Community Council: Declaration of Interest in relation to trusteeship, directorship, membership of bodies** **that may have a bearing on CC agenda items**. **10 June 2025**

|  | **Community Councillor Name** | **RPW-CDT Director** | **OC Steering Group** | **OC Management Group** | **OC Working Group (Name)** | **Cove and Kilcreggan Trust Director** | **CBH Director** | **Professional or business group** | **OTHER – name organisation** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | John Auld |  |  | X | Business |  |  | NFU | KVA |
| 2 | Kenny Barlas |  |  |  |  |  |  | Taxi |  |
| 3 | Susannah Conran |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Nick Davies |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Derek Fowlis |  |  |  | Business |  |  |  | Creggans |
| 6 | Kathy Gostick |  |  |  | Green |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Sheena Lamont |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Lynda McKenzie |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | James McLean |  |  | X | X | X |  |  |  |
| 10 | Ali Mills |  |  | X | Arts |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Christine Murdoch |  |  |  |  |  |  | Minister Craigrownie Church |  |
| 12 | Ellen McVey |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | Sheelagh O’Reilly |  |  |  | HET |  |  |  | C&K RNLI  KVA |
| 14 | Anne Strachan |  |  |  | Green |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | Vacant |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | Vacant |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Accounts for June 2025 meeting

