

LISMORE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 24th February 2022 at Lismore Public Hall

Present

Mandie Currie (MC) Secretary; Archie McGillivray (AM) Convener; Donald MacColl (DM); Peter MacDougall (PM); Rosemary Barry (RB) notetaker; Kieron Green (KG) A&B Councillor. Elaine Robertson (ER) A&B Councillor attended part of the meeting remotely by Skype. There were 5 members of the public.

Apologies

Arthur Cross

ER said she wanted to say how pleased she was that Archie was well enough to chair the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

PM said he wanted to declare an interest in the item on affordable housing.

Minutes

These had been circulated previously. They were proposed for adoption by PM and seconded by AM

Matters arising

There were no matters arising that were not already included in the agenda.

Reaching 100% Broadband programme

Julian Wormleighton (JW) said that he had been pressing the R100 programme for the past few weeks for definitive information on which premises will be reached by the programme as some properties had been missed. Some of these were for legitimate reasons in that they weren't there when the tender went in but others seemed have no apparent reason for their omission. He had requested that the omitted properties were picked up. He continued to say that he felt encouraged as there would probably be almost 100% of properties reached (not including the lighthouse islands) and the work should be completed by the end of the year. He was also pressing for the plotting of premises on the OS map to be made available. Postcodes and premises were currently on a click on list. The Community Council can apply for a licence to access this map. MC confirmed that this had been applied for and that it would be useful.

Health and Social Care

GP services - MC explained that she had written again to NHS Highland but she still hadn't received a substantive response. It had been agreed previously that LCC should seek a meeting with the GP; this meeting is yet to be arranged. It was considered better to have a couple of people meeting the GP for a discussion on the issues then the next step might be to get a mediator if necessary. PM was prepared to join MC for an initial meeting. **MC to organise meeting with GP.**

MC explained that bringing over prescriptions was not part of the current GP contract but it was hoped that when the contract came up for renewal this could be added. They were currently coming over with the doctor for the Thursday morning surgery. There was a discussion concerning the need to return to two Surgeries per week as pre Covid DM said that there were more folk going over on the boat to the Port Appin surgery than there used to be. PM said that he felt some people were discouraged from attending surgery. It was felt that although the doctors thought that there wasn't a need it was clear that this wasn't necessarily the case.

Social care services - MC explained that the HSCP were considering a model for a pool of people locally, to provide emergency cover when carers were unavailable but she hadn't heard back for several months. **MC to follow up with A&B HSCP.**

Lismore Community Trust Affordable Housing Project

Andy Hough (AH) described the project for two semi-detached houses at the end of Newfield Terrace for rent to families. There was a requirement for evidence of need and community support. If evidence of need was shown then RIHF (Rural Island Housing Fund) and the Scottish Land Fund would provide a significant percentage of the funds required. The Housing Group were currently gathering statistics and information on the implications of a reduction in population and how the island compared with other islands with similar populations. He explained that he felt that we were heading towards a serious depopulation of permanent residents with implications for services. Other islands had been through this process. There had been a questionnaire in 2021 but it had not been thorough enough. He asked if LCC could express support for the project. He emphasised that A&B Council needed to understand the need with reference to the 2040 initiative. He went on to mention the Drop in Day on March 5th

There was a query about availability of water to service two new houses – a borehole has been requested, which should help to address the problem, if successful. AH explained that there would be a feasibility survey by a professional with a report which could be made available for residents.

MC to write a letter of support.

School leadership structural change

Roxanne McColl (RM) - Chair of the School Parent Council - spoke about the consultation on the collective leadership model. MC explained that LCC had not discussed the issue yet as this was the first meeting since the consultation opened. PM said he felt the proposals should be opposed as it might lead to dilution of education and he had concerns about the way it was presented. DM said it wouldn't save money but just be an extra level of management. KG explained that there was a need to understand where the idea had come from. It wasn't down to money but it was hard to maintain schools locally and various schools e.g. Connel, Kilchrenan and Luing, had been mothballed. There was a need to keep schools in the community and have a high level of education. Once a school was closed it was not likely to reopen. Regulations were changing. Traditionally, the head teacher was responsible for the staff. The idea was to separate out so that the management role could be moved to a dedicated Executive Head Teacher who was responsible for a collective of four or five schools. The Head Teacher post would become a non-teaching Head of School, with teachers teaching and managers managing. Small schools might share a Head of School. Ten years ago the Education Department closed schools to save money, now it was committed to provide education in all communities. There was a query about the feasibility of managing a mixture of island and mainland schools

KG explained that there should be a common standard but the model would not be one size fits all. The model would be rolled out gradually if the decision is made to take it forward, following consultation. The Council committee might decide to go to further consultation once the detail has been developed. Islands might be grouped together or possibly Lismore might group with Appin and Barcaldine. The idea was of clusters. A range of views was being sought until the end of March.

PM said that there was a danger that if schools were grouped together then a headship that was already unattractive would become even more unattractive. RM stated that only 15% of schools had problems recruiting. MC said she felt that in this sort of situation the managers didn't know each place well enough and therefore tended to be less effective and she also queried how they would get to know the parents. KG replied that Parent Councils would remain and have the link with the Head of School as they do now. He took on board the points that were being made but evidence was necessary. RM emphasised the importance of the issue and that she felt there was little evidence to support the proposals. KG said there was a need to see what clusters emerged. RM emphasised the importance of a response from Lismore. AH mentioned the range of skills necessary for teaching in a small school and the potential for a lot of pressure.. He felt it was important that a school is kept and that the proposals didn't say that Heads would be lost.

MC suggested that a dedicated meeting should be organised to discuss the issue fully and KG suggested we could have an Education officer in attendance. **MC to find a date when someone**

might be available and arrange a meeting before the consultation ended at the end of March.

Ferry update

DM said that the new ferry was due to leave on Monday but it was dependent on the weather.

MC said that the consultation on the new winter timetable for Calmac was due to end soon.

PM brought up the subject of Gleaner deliveries and the non- acceptance by Calmac on sailings after dark. There was a query on all the cancellations but this has to go back to Transport Scotland. PM continued to suggest more request sailings in summer like there were on Saturdays but on other days as well when needed. Especially for the transport of livestock.

DM queried why the slip in Oban could not be fixed and mentioned the cancellations due to the tides. KG mentioned that the council were not responsible for the Oban side.

MC to feedback to Calmac on timetable and request that sailings be rescheduled rather than cancelled or additional sailings provided to help with livestock movements etc. Also, to find out if improvements to the slips were planned.

Boreholes update

PM said they were unable to do water divining during the wet weather. Also that there may be a problem with people not drilling deep enough. Some people just wanted back up boreholes and he queried the effect on the pressure if there were boreholes close together. There was a query as to whether residents would get preference and it was confirmed that the priority is permanent residents, then local businesses / organisations then non-residents/ holiday homes.

New correspondence

There was no new correspondence that had not been already circulated.

KG said that ER had lost the connection but she had been listening and emailed him with her comments on a couple of items. She hoped to attend the next LCC meeting even if it was after the May elections.

AOCB

There was a request for update on the graveyard situation. KG replied that they were waiting for the final report but it was hoped that the extension would go forward. Currently, there are seven or eight available lairs but it is no longer possible to secure these in advance, they are made available as required. MC reiterated that the Church of Scotland had agreed to sell land to the Council for an extension. There was a query about some of the existing graveyard at the rear that wasn't being used – no-one was able to identify the reason for this. **MC to enquire if the whole area of ground can be used**

Meeting dates

Meeting to be organised as soon as possible on the collective leadership model.

LCC ordinary meetings: 19th May and 16th of June (AGM). MC explained that the requirement for a minimum of four meetings a year had been reinstated following lifting of Covid restrictions although some of these could take place remotely if necessary.