

ARDENTINNY COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

[www.ardentinnycc.co.uk](http://www.ardentinnycc.co.uk)

Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at Ardentinny Village Hall at 7.30p.m.

**Present:** John Brint (Convener) Mark Rowthorn (Secretary), Keith Wood (Treasurer), Bill Tierney, Helen West, Danielle Markey and Brian Hillesdon.

**Public:** Elsbeth Brint, Neil Robinson, Jeannie and Jim Urquhart, Douglas Menzies, Colin and Renee Birks.

**1 Welcome and introductions**

JB thanked everyone for attending.

**2 Apologies**

Received from Councillor William Sinclair, Nik Cox (FLS), Steve Gillen (FLS), David McDowall, Marian Norris, Jim and Margaret Robinson and Bill and Anna Williamson.

*Note: No Apologies received from other A&BC Councillors, Police, National Parks Authority and Ardentinny Outdoor Centre.*

**3 Declaration of Interest**

No declarations of interest declared.

**4 Matters arising not covered on the agenda**

JB confirmed the following items to be covered under AOB:

- Toilet charges
- Community Council interim elections
- Updated Emergency Plan
- HeartStart

**5 Minutes of last meeting (5 Dec 2023)**

Formally adopted.

Proposed: Bill Tierney

Seconded: Brian Hillesdon

**6 Matters arising from minutes**

No matters arising.

## **7 Treasurers Report**

A detailed breakdown of the financial activity (for the period from 12th July 23 to Present) was presented by the treasurer, Keith Wood (KW). He stated that the following had taken place from the date of opening the new bank account:

Financial Activity From 12th July 23 to 1st March 24

Lloyds bank opening balance £3314.23

Money Credited to account.

ART toilet contribution £1242.00

ABC Roads toilet contribution £315.00

Totalling £1557.00

*Money Debited from the account*

8 payments to 'Out Of Your Hands' toilet cleaning £1188

2 payments to village hall hire €40

2 payments to 'Hostworld' web costs £52.80

1 payment travel costs for bike racks £44.80

1 payment for Remembrance Wreath £23.98

1 payment for village hall benches £200.00

1 Payment for Parish Online £60

(Elsbeth Brint asked what the payment to Parish Online was. MR explained that it is an Ordnance Survey Mapping tool that the ACC gets at discounted rates that allows for strategic plans to be made of key features in the community and also allows access to statistical data that we would have to pay a lot for if we were to obtain them from other commercial sources.)

Totalling £1609.58

- Closing balance on 1st March £3261.65

## **8 Police Report**

No one from the Police was in attendance and no report had been submitted to be read out to the meeting.

## **9 Forestry and Land Scotland Report**

In the absence of an FLS representative JB read out the report received from Nik Cox FLS:

### *Glen Finart Land Management Plan*

SSE have applied for planning permission to realign the power lines running above Ardentinny. If successful, the permission will allow for the felling of trees in a buffer zone of approximately 50m either side of the proposed line. Map M1 shows the existing and proposed lines and the buffer around the latter.

These proposals compromise FLS ability to manage the land, in particular to the north of Ardentinny. We are therefore, seeking permission from Scottish Forestry to amend the current Land Management Plan to allow us to fell those areas shown in Map M3 and to modify the original restocking proposals. The work will include early removal of timber above and around the proposed line which will become difficult to access once the line is in place. The main change in restocking is to replace Sitka spruce with a mix of native species, by either planting or natural regeneration. Sitka spruce will be controlled within acceptable limits. Proposed restocking is shown in Map M6.

This work will generate an additional 14,000m<sup>3</sup> of timber (equating to about 400 lorry loads) some which is immature. We are liaising with Argyll Council in regards to the movement of the additional timber and are proposing to use the haul road in order to minimise the impact on the local community.

### *Ardentinny Picnic Site*

We are planning a tidy up day around the Ardentinny Picnic Site ready for the upcoming visitor season. We'll be doing a litter pick and tidy up around the site and are planning on replacing some of the picnic benches which have suffered weathering and damage.

We have been investigating the options for restoring and ideally improving the water supply to the toilet block at the picnic site. We are pursuing the option of a borehole to provide water in the long term - this will require an initial investigation on site to explore its feasibility.

Our buildings team held an onsite meeting with contractors this week and have identified a short term solution - we are hopeful to see this implemented in the next couple of weeks.

We are liaising with the council in order to replace the two smaller bins with two larger ones to increase their capacity which should alleviate the need to as many additional pick ups and help everyone to keep the site tidy.

### *Wildlife Hide*

We have been made aware of the storm damage to the wildlife hide — we have no plans to replace the hide and will be tidying up and removing the debris shortly.

### *Civils/Pothole repairs*

We have been liaising with our civils team in regards to the pothole repairs and are awaiting confirmation of a date. I will update you as soon as I have a date.

MR then confirmed that the ACC would be writing to FLS to clarify whether the access road was going to be upgraded with passing places and improvements to deal with the continual flooded road outside of the Old Stables as previously promised or whether it was only going to be patched up again.

Neil Robinson expressed concern regarding the revised route for the power cable replacement. He said that it runs only about 10m away from Coul Cottage. He was also concerned that the Oak copse under the existing cables would be felled. He asked if the community could object to the route being proposed for the overhead power cable replacement. JB said that he was fairly sure that that SSE had Statutory powers to install these without having to go through the normal Planning Approvals. He said that he would investigate this to determine our options.

### **10 National Park Report**

No report had been received from National Parks Authority.

### **11 Councillor's Report**

William Sinclair had planned to be at the meeting to deliver his report but had been delayed at the last minute and unable to attend. No written report was available.

### **12 Review of Ardentinnny Residents Survey**

#### **i) Road Safety**

JB explained that our existing request to the Roads and Infrastructure Team for improved traffic calming measures, improvements to the road, marking etc remain as logged in the system since September. No remedial actions have been made to date. The ACC had invited the new Road Traffic Officer to the meeting (at the suggestion of the A&BC Liaison Officer) but no response had been received. JB confirmed that ACC will continue to pursue the Roads and Infrastructure Team to establish their plans and timescales etc.

#### **ii) Defibrillators**

JB confirmed that ACC are still progressing getting another Defibrillator installed at the Beach Toilet Block.

#### **iii) Emergency Plan**

JB reported that he has been investigating getting better quality Walkie Talkies for use in an emergency. The problem is in getting sufficient coverage to be able

to reach from one end of the village to the other. He explained that they cover different distances – typically 3km, 6km and 9km but that the price increases significantly as the distance improves. Walkie Talkies that would stretch the required distance could cost in the region of £745 per set. Ideally, we would need enough to be able to distribute to those in the village who are likely to be at the greatest risk of becoming isolated in the event of an emergency and also provide them for key members of the Emergency Response Team.

Jim Urquhart suggested that if a suitable base station could be provided centrally then that could serve as a relay to be able to pick up messages from either end of the village. This was noted and JB confirmed that he will continue to review the matter.

#### **iv) Bus Shelter**

JB reminded the meeting that a significant number of people had requested the installation of a Bus Shelter in the Residents Survey. He said that after investigation the Church Car Park seemed the most likely location to site one as there were restrictions at other locations. He said that he is still trying to find out who to contact about this and also other items such as the blocked culverts and broken fencing around the Car Park.

#### **v) Beach Appearance and Waste Bins**

DM explained that she has produced a number of plans of areas of the beach that she intends to publish on the Ardentinny Residents Forum (on Facebook). She said that the areas were as follows:

I have broken Ardentinny into areas:

Area 1 Glenfinart Bus Terminal to the Village Hall

Area 2 from Village Hall to the Beach

Area 3 from Village Hall to the Church Car park

Area 4 from church car park to after Ardenfield

Area 5 Ardenfield to end of village

DM asked if people could do a litter pick of the various areas when they are in the vicinity and then confirm the relevant areas that they had covered on the Facebook page.

Regarding Waste bins she said that she had put in a request to A&BC for Dog Waste Bins at 3 locations around the village but had no response. She did however confirm that all of the rubbish at the Glenfinart bus terminal had been picked up but it was unclear who had done this – she said she hoped it was the council because that would mean that they have actually taken this issue on

board and therefor might continue to collect any future rubbish. A new Green Bin has now been put there by local residents but DM was unsure whether the Council would empty it as part of their regular waste bin collections.

**vi) Charge Point/Climate Change**

DM said that there is currently nothing further to report on this item at present.

**vii) Community Council Web Site**

HW stated that regular additions are continuing to be made on the Ardentinny Community Council web site, Facebook and Instagram pages.

Please have a look.

<https://www.instagram.com/ardentinnycc/>

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=ardentinny%20community%20council>  
!

HW said that she had mocked up proposed Emergency Contact details on a credit card size laminated card. She distributed some to the meeting and explained that once the revised Emergency Plan details were finalised it was intended that these could be produced in quantity and distributed to every residence in Ardentinny so that people would have them readily to hand in the event of an emergency. It was confirmed by the meeting that these would be very useful and should be progressed.

**viii) Report on the Gourock Ferry**

BH updated the meeting on the situation regarding the proposal for an additional new vehicle ferry between Dunoon and Gourock.

*Background:*

Prior to 2011 there was a CalMac vehicle ferry service between Gourock & Dunoon town centre. Since 2011 this has been a passenger only service.

DGFAG believe the car ferry service should be reintroduced for a number of reasons including:

1. Vehicle ferries are larger and more capable of running in poor weather - so much more reliable than the smaller passenger only boats.
2. With no competition to Western Ferries, their fares are higher than other similar ferry routes, especially for commercial vehicles (for example, 6.5 times more per mile than the Rothesay ferry)
3. This in turn encourages commercial vehicles to use the longer Rest & Be Thankful route, which is far less sustainable and impacts the cost of goods and deliveries in Cowal.

4. DGFAG believe the unreliability of the current service has led to a dramatic fall in the number of passenger carryings, having a serious impact on businesses and the local communities.

DGFAG would like a vehicle passenger service to be reintroduced in addition to the Western Ferries service and have secured the support of 7 community councils in this, including Ardentinny CC.

#### *Update*

On 14th Feb DGFAG invited all 6 local councillors and representatives of the 7 Community Councils that have pledged support, to a meeting, which I attended. The agenda was:

To join in discussing the proposal with the Local Authority Councillors and to encourage them to have Argyll and Bute Council:

1. Agree in principle to offer the harbour facilities in Dunoon on a long lease, at a fair profit, to a ferry operator.
2. Encourage CMAL to do the same for the harbour facilities in Gourock.
3. Seek to have Scottish Ministers "test the waters" by asking for expressions of interest from ferry operators willing to take on the leases and operate a vehicle ferry service between the two towns.

However, the meeting did not go as planned.

Two Local Authority (ABC) Councillors had declined to attend; a third accepted but did not turn up. The remaining 3 councillors did attend.

Early in the meeting two of those Councillors expressed dissatisfaction about the way the meeting had been called, for which the Action Group convenor apologised.

Things then seemed to progress. However, a Community Councillor, clearly stating that he was expressing his own views, began a lengthy description of those personal views and refused interruptions.

The views were a tangent to the agenda for the meeting and made the Action Group and Community Councils appear disjointed.

This provoked an outburst from an individual member of the action group. These were not the views of the action group.

At this point the Community Council member left. So too did the three ABC Councillors, although the reason they left was not stated.

#### *Going forward*

The DGFAG are not sure how next to progress. Unofficially they have suggested the Community Councils take over, with DGFAG supporting as required. Ardentinny CC have said they would support this, but not lead it (the more obvious lead CC would be Dunoon).

Nothing has been agreed as of yet but he will update the meeting when something more is known.

#### *Scottish Government Ferry Survey*

Separately to the above, the current Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Service contract (CHFS2) ends on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 after 8 years and will be replaced by a new contract (CHFS). The Scottish Government are currently developing the new CHFS contract and would welcome the views of communities and service users on their expectations for the service, via the survey.

This is a good opportunity for us to voice our opinions and we would recommend Ardentinny residents complete the survey. The survey covers all CalMac ferries, so be specific that you are referring to the Gourock-Dunoon ferry.

Closing date for the survey replies is this Friday 8th March, so be quick.

The link to this survey was included in the Ardentinny Community Council News email last Friday. BH confirmed that he had completed it personally and encouraged others to also fill it in as it is our opportunity to influence future decisions.

#### SEPA Radiological Conditions

BH said that there was nothing to report at present.

#### **ix) Donation Boxes**

MR reported that he had investigated the external donation boxes and the cost appeared prohibitive. He said that installing a small box internally in each toilet appeared the most cost-effective solution. He did however say that in his opinion the external box had a much higher profile and would also make visitors to the car park (who didn't use the public toilets) aware of the need to give to support keeping the toilets clean and open. Neil Robinson said that prior to



Covid there had been just mugs in each toilet and the contributions had been about £30 per week so it is well worth doing.

MR to identify preferred option for internal boxes with sign.

**x) Beinn Reithe Fish Farm appeal update**

MR read out a report from David MacDowall to the meeting:

The DPEA Reporter submitted his report to Scottish Ministers on 15 February. We have contacted the Scottish Government asking when the case report will be made available to the public, however they could only confirm that Scottish Ministers will issue a decision as soon as possible. The report will be made available to interested parties at the time of the decision.

**13 Local Place Plan**

JB explained to the meeting that the expression of local people's aspirations in a Local Place Plan can influence local planning policy. National Parks had encouraged us to produce one because it would be linked to National Framework 4 and potentially could influence the likes of say SSE in any future proposals. National Parks had suggested a joint Local Place Plan with Dunoon, Sandbank, Kilmun and Strachur Community Councils however all but Kilmun had decided against doing one. Kilmun CC is currently undecided and will make a final decision at their next meeting. If they decide to go ahead then we will do a joint one with them but if not we feel that we have a significant amount of information on residents aspirations as a result of carrying out our Residents Survey last year to progress our own. This information could be used as an initial basis for our plan. In this respect we are significantly more advanced than many other local Community Councils who haven't consulted their local residents.

We will report back when Kilmun CC have made a decision.

**14 AB&C Additional Waste Bins**

JB said that our requests for additional waste bins appears to be being ignored at present.

**15 Updates.**

**Ardentinny Renewables Trust**

Douglas Menzies reported that since his last update funds had been granted from ART as follows:

Ukulele Club for Speakers microphones etc £200

Bowling Club for refurbishment of the external cladding to the club house £2500 which was matched by £2500 from the Bowling Club.

He reported that ART currently have over £20,000 in the ART Fund which is available for projects. All applications welcome from the local Ardentinnny community.

Neil Robinson said that there are 5 hydro schemes in Ardentinny with the potential of supplying 420+ homes. Currently Rob Brakes is looking at a pilot scheme with the possibility of supplying cheaper electricity to residents of Ardentinny. More information available in due course.

### **Ardentinny Hall Management Team**

Neil Robinson reported that the Village Hall management group are looking for folks to join the team, including a Chairperson, Secretary and ordinary members. Currently at the AGM Guy Elder is standing down as Chairman, Neil is also standing down, Dee will be staying on and Olwyn will remain as Treasurer. Rather than having the obligatory minimum of 3 on the group, it would be better to have several members which means the workload is spread. So, they are looking for active volunteers to come on to the management group to assist with fundraising and organising events. The AGM will be held in the Village Hall at 7.00pm on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

As was mentioned last week, without a management group, the hall, according to the constitution, would close and need to be sold. Any money generated by the sale will go to another charity or organisation within the village which will more than likely be the Ardentinny Renewables Trust (ART).

The hall is currently in a very good position financially due to funds raised already and we are looking at funding to install new heating and an internet connection and some work on the kitchen area is also planned to enable the hall to sell food again.

*Note: The Weekly News updates are available on the ACC website:*

[www.ardentinnycc.co.uk](http://www.ardentinnycc.co.uk)

### **Ardentinny Community Trust**

Jeannie Urquart reported that currently Bill and Anna Williamson and Linda Naismith are unable to have a lot of input so she is having to take the lead at this time. Currently they are organising for Easter and are asking for cakes for 31<sup>st</sup> March and preparing for the children's Easter Egg hunt. Previously they have given away around 150 easter eggs but unfortunately the cost of these have risen significantly. They generally have a good response from volunteers offering to help and regularly have young adults coming to work in the garden.

### **Argyll Conservation and Heritage Group.**

JB read out a report that was submitted by Marian Norris of the Argyll Conservation and Heritage Group:

It was very sad news that the bird hide had been destroyed in the recent storms. Forest and Land have said that they will remove the debris. The bird feeders and the seat were intact, so these will be left and we will keep the trail open.

We will purchase plants and have a day for planting out the tubs in the church car park shortly., and also continue to maintain the Coronation Wood. Many thanks to those who tend the tubs at each end of the village, and to Jo and Geoff Carr for looking after the war memorial and keeping an eye on the Lairds Grave.

The saga of the noticeboard which used to give information on the humpback bridge continues. Forest and Land still have it in their possession and have promised to reinstall it on the other side of the bridge, with a seat or a picnic table, at their expense. Having been negotiating for this for almost three years I wait with anticipation. Watch this space.

Hopefully the Community Council will join us in arranging a beach clean for April. I will get in touch with the details later.

## **16 AOB**

### **Community Council Interim Elections**

MR read out to the meeting notification that had been given by A&BC Chief Executive Pippa Milne of her decision to hold interim elections for people to be able to stand as elected Community Councillors in empty slots of their respective Community Council, Ardentynny will have two positions available. This will in turn trigger the requirement for all co-optees to cease being community councillors as of the date of the by-election and apply for election.

The key dates are as follows:

Nomination process commences on 7<sup>th</sup> March and closes on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March at 4.00pm.

The ACC has now received the Nomination packs and A&BC has requested that we display the Election Notices publicly from 5<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Heartstart**

MR informed the meeting that Heartstart had written to ACC asking if they could attend the next ACC meeting to talk about their future plans. The consensus was that this would be a good thing to do. MR said that he will write to them to confirm this for the next meeting.

### **A&BC Public Toilet Payment Meters**

HW informed the meeting they she had noted a number of locations where A&BC had installed 50 pence payment meters at public toilets and was concerned that they made decide to install them at the Ardentinny public toilets. JB however told the meeting that as the Community Council manages the toilets in Ardentinny these had been removed from the A&BC public toilet list so it is unlikely that this will happen.

### **Emergency Base/Plan**

JB advised the meeting that he is currently checking the Emergency Plan contacts to validate that all those listed as contacts are happy to continue being included. He will update and reissue the list accordingly.

### **Scam Warning**

Jim Urquhart advised the meeting that he had recently been made aware of a scam. He had been selling an item on Amazon Marketplace and when someone had responded that they were interested in purchasing his advertised item they said that they would be sending a courier to collect the item but wanted £50 paying for insurance to the courier. He wanted to warn other to be aware of this potential scam.

### **Shore Safety Barrier**

Douglas Menzies asked if ACC could contact the Council and request that the existing metal safety barrier is repainted as it is now very rusty and becoming an eyesore. JB confirmed that he will notify the council to try to get this done.

### **Gardening knowledge**

Neil Robinson made a request for someone with good gardening knowledge to be able to advise his on a personal project that he is hoping to undertake. Both Elsbeth Brint, Danielle Markey and Helen West offered to help.

## **17 Future Meetings**

JB confirmed the dates for future meetings as:

Tuesday 11 June 2024 – AGM – 7.00pm followed by Ordinary Meeting – 7.30pm.