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**Dunoon Community Council**

**Meeting of the Dunoon Community Council held in Queen’s Hall, Dunoon on Monday 11th December 2023.**

Present:

Tom Warren (TW) (Convener) Tom McCowan (TM) (Secretary)

Abigail Apps (AA) Treasurer Amanda Graham (AG) (Treasurer)

Jim Anderson (JA) Lindsey McPhail (LM)

Frauke Thornton (FT) David Clough (DC)

Yvonne Love (YL) Bobby Good (BG) (Vice-Convener)

ABC Councillors Attending:

Councillor Ross Moreland (RM)

Councillor Audrey Forest (AF)

Councillor Daniel Hampsey (DH)

Members of the Public: Police Scotland:

Alison MacQuarrie (AQ) Not in attendance

Brian Chennell (BC)

Tom Morton (TMO)

Riona Morton RMO)

Chris Martin (CM) (Dunoon Observer)

Apologies:

Paul Graysmark (PG)

1. Tom Warren (The Convener) opened the meeting at 1900hrs and welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Convener told those in attendance that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of taking the minutes and the recording would be destroyed after the meeting scheduled for Monday 8th January 2024 and the minutes have been approved.
2. **Recording of members attending and apologies received.**

Recording of attendance at meeting is as above.

Councillor Forrest has to leave the meeting at 2030hrs due to prior engagements.

1. **Declaration of Interest**. All previous declarations of interest still stand.
   1. Tom Warren is now the elected Chair of the Community Development Trust.
   2. Amanda Graham has a personal bank account with our current banking provider.
   3. David Clough is now an Honorary member of the Cruising Association.
2. **Minutes of previous meeting were discussed**; TM said that PG had asked for an amendment in Para 15 (F) to reflect that only one bench has been removed, not ten. This has now been amended.

**Proposal. The minutes from the previous meeting are correct and are a true reflection of the meeting subject to the changes discussed.**

**Proposed: FT Seconded: YL**

**For (5) Against (0) Abstained (5) Result: Passed.**

1. **Appointments/Resignations**.

Resignations.

* 1. Abigail Apps has notified the Convener of her intention to resign as Treasurer of Dunoon Community Council with immediate effect.

Appointments.

* 1. Treasurer. Amanda Graham has volunteered to take over the position of Treasurer of Dunoon Community Council.

**Vote to elect Amanda Graham as the Treasurer of Dunoon Community Council.**

**For (9) Against (0) Abstained (1) Result: Approved.**

* 1. Vice-Convener. Bobby Good has volunteered to take over the position of Vice-Convener of Dunoon Community Council.

**Vote to elect Bobby Good as the Vice-Convener of Dunoon Community Council.**

**For (10) Against (0) Abstained (0) Result: Approved.**

The Convener thanked Abigail Apps for all her hard work during her time as treasurer and welcomed Amanda and Bobby into their new roles.

1. **Police Scotland Report** – Police Report emailed to all DCC Members Prior to meeting.

In the absence of any representative from Police Scotland the Secretary read out the comments received in the report and spoke about his frustration at the response given by Sgt McGuanigal. The Secretary said that Dunoon Community Council had always worked well with the local Police Station and these curt responses were completely unexpected. He also said that the questions raised were valid concerns of the community, He went on to say that to be told to do a FOI request was out of order and unhelpful as we would be required to do an FOI monthly and would not be able to get answers quickly. He offered to raise the lack of cooperation from the local Police Station further up the chain of command. The Secretary has submitted a FOI request regarding the question of Probationary Officers and will update this Council when he gets a response. DH interjected and said that as the chair of the Cowal Transport Forum, Police Scotland would be attending and that if the Community Council wished anything raised with them, he would do so tomorrow. The convener thanked him for his kind offer however the issues raised at this meeting would not be relevant in a transport forum. DC asked that although he has said that he will not give us a break down of the incidents, will he still provide us with the monthly figures. The Secretary is unsure at to what will be provided in the future. The Secretary will email Sgt McGuanigal for clarification as to what will be provided in the future. JA said that the Police are forgetting that they are public servants and part of the role is to advise the public of what is going on in the community and does not think that the response given is acceptable. He went on to say that they give us these figures but are they being analysed and if so, what are they being analysed against? He also wanted to know what their statutory orders are, on how they are supposed to respond. This is to enable us to see if they are preforming correctly. He also said that the question regarding probationary officers was a fair and reasonable question and couldn’t understand why they were not giving answers. The Vice-Convener asked what reports he supplies to the other Community Councils. RM said that he has not seen the reports but is sure that South Cowal Community Council receive a report from the Police. It was agreed that the Secretary would contact the other community councils and ask what support they receive from the Dunoon Police Station. The Treasurer said that whilst she was the secretary, she had a conversation with other community councils and that they received no reports from the Police. AF said that the police used to attend the South Cowal Community Council meetings, but they have not done so for a long time. The convener suggested that the secretary contact Sgt McGuanigal in the first instance as we have traditionally had a very good relationship with the Police. If we do not get a response, he is happy for the secretary to escalate further up the chain of command. The Secretary said that the response was completely unexpected.

1. **Presentations –** No Presentations were given this month.
2. **Items from Previous meeting –** 
   1. **Amendment to Standing Orders.** - The Secretary spoke about changing our Standing Orders from “items from previous meetings” to “action points from previous meetings” as item 8 on the agenda.

**Proposal. Vote to amend Dunoon Community Council standing orders dated 14th October 2023 to include “Action points from previous meeting” as item number 8 on the agenda.**

**Proposed: TM Seconded: TW**

**For (10) Against (0) Abstained (0) Result: Passed.**

This is subject to approval from Argyll and Bute Council

* 1. **Emergency Resilience Planning** – The Secretary said that himself and DC had for the past couple of weeks being going through the old emergency resilience plan and have made numerous changes to the plan to bring it up to date as the previous plan was written in 2014. The Secretary has emailed all Community Councillors with the new plan and asked for feedback. It was at this point that Chris Martin arrived. The Secretary pointed out that this document needs to be reviewed on an annual basis and as we have now been quorate for 12 months, this document needs to be reviewed now. The Convener suggested that maybe the annual review should take place in the summer months, possibly around the same time as the Annual General Meeting so that the document is not being reviewed in the middle of the winter or bad weather. DC said that this was discussed with the Secretary and the word winter was removed from the document. FT raised a concern that Valrose Terrace has not been included and since Valrose Terrace was sadly affected in the recent flooding it should be included. The Secretary pointed out that Valrose Terrace was included. All the areas in town had been broken into districts and the boundaries are annotated on the document. DC suggested moving the maps of the areas from their current position to where the description in the document is. This was the general consensus of the meeting and will be updated. DC clarified that the streets listed were the external perimeter of the boundaries and that everything inside the perimeter would be included in that area. The Secretary showed FT on the maps. DC Suggested that rather than reviewing the document annually, the subcommittee formed to create the document should meet quarterly and review the document thus keeping it up to date and would send negate the need for approval from 12 community councillors. This is why the subcommittee was formed and was given delegated powers. This could then be brought back to the council meetings and adopted annually. DC suggested that he take the lead on the subcommittee rather than the Secretary, as he already has enough to do, and this would share the workload.
  2. **Bench Update** –In the absence of PG, The Secretary read out the short e-mail received regarding the refurbishment of the bench that has been removed from the West Bay. The e-mail requested that £75 be allocated for the refurbishment of the bench. DC added that the way that the community shed operates has changed significantly and that where they used to repair all the benches, they will no longer be doing so. PG has joined the community shed to carry out the work on the benches. DC said the estimate of £75 was unrealistic and, in his experience, would not cover the cost of the wood required to refurbish the bench. DC suggested upping the request to £100. DC said that this was a more realistic figure and that there was no point on trying to do the job on the cheap as it would require repairing again sooner. The Secretary said that his only concern was that originally PG had told us the bench refurbishment would cost £40 and that there were 10 benches that required refurbishment, this figure has now jumped to between £75 and £100, and he does not feel that the Dunoon Community Council can afford to refurbish all 10 benches. The Convener asked if the figure quoted would cover the entire refurbishment including repainting and remounting the bench, DC said yes, this is the total cost per bench. The Convener asked DC to clarify if this money was for the bench that had been removed already or is it for another bench. DC told the Convener that the money was for the bench that has already been removed. The Convener said that he was happy as he had previously mentioned the liabilities involved in removing the bench, and as this had already been completed there was no liability towards Dunoon Community Council. FT suggested that we could use our social media platforms to request donations from the public an order to refurbish all the benches. The Convener pointed out that it was not necessarily the cost to refurbish the benches, but it was getting people to do the actual work which was the hard part. Alison MacQuarrie entered the room. The Secretary then read out the new proposal with the amended figures.

**Proposal. Dunoon Community Council allocate Paul Graysmark £100 for the refurbishment of one wooden bench from Alexandra Parade.**

**Proposed: PG Seconded: TM**

**For (10) Against (0) Abstained (0) Result: Passed.**

d. **Rally Update** - DC gave his sincere apologies as he completely forgot about the rally meeting until it was too late. He said that he has since spoken to Mull Car Club and only one other Community Council attended the meeting, and it was therefore cancelled. He said the next meeting has been scheduled for the 15th of January which he will be attending, and he will brief the community council on its completion. He said that the only area that was still being discussed and needed input, it was regarding the car parade through Argyll Street on the Saturday. He said that they were still in discussion as to whether the competitors wanted to the event or not. DC asked if he had any action points still outstanding as he was unsure whether a poll had been carried out. The Secretary said that he had conducted a poll several months ago on our social media platform, he could not remember off the top of his head the exact results however there were possibly around 8 objections and over 100 people were all for the event. The Secretary said he would get back to DC with the exact figures of the poll. The Vice-Convener asked if this event would require another road closure on the Saturday. The Secretary had spoken with Mr. Wilson regarding this event, at this stage of planning they were unsure whether a road closure would be necessary as the cars may just be doing a slow drive through the town centre however this still needs to be confirmed.

e. **Delegation of Responsibilities** - The Secretary said that we had discussed this item last month and it was agreed that Community Councillors would go away and think about what items could be delegated. The Secretary said planning had already been covered by YL, however that was also transport, education, infrastructure, and grants, however the grants would be covered by the Treasurer. It was agreed that FT would take over responsibility for transport, the Convener would, in the absence of PG take over infrastructure and education would remain with the Secretary. DC has the responsibilities of the emergency resilience planning, and The Treasurer has previously agreed to take responsibility for the play parks. AA suggested that we should have someone take responsibility for community engagement. As no member came forward the Convener suggested that we revisit this later on.

f. **Christmas Competition** – The Secretary said that he has spoken with the BID manager regarding the best dressed property competition. The BID has agreed to match Dunoon Community Councils prize of money for the best dressed property competition, and they will cover the businesses in the town. The Treasurer asked what the competition was about, the Secretary said that the competition was for the best dressed residential property within Dunoon Community Councils boundary area, and the best dressed business property. DC asked if people had to register for the competition. The Secretary replied that there was no registration required and the judges will simply drive around the area and judge on what they could see from the street. The winners will be announced and the Observer on Friday the 22nd of December. The Secretary will take pictures of the winning properties and write a small article. The first-place prize is a £50 Dunoon voucher and the second prize as a £25 Dunoon voucher. This is two separate competitions so there is a first and second place prize of for residential properties and 1st and 2nd place prize for business properties. The judging will take place on Friday 15th of December between 1700hrs and 1900hrs for the business properties and the judging for the residential properties will take place on Sunday the 17th off December between 1800hrs and 2000hrs.

g. **Community First Responders** - FT said that she had nothing to update. The Secretary said that he had emailed Scottish Ambulance Service but has not yet had a response. The Convener asked if this could be updated at the next meeting.

1. **Convener Update** – There was no update from the Convener.
2. **Secretary Update** –
   1. **Community Champions 2023** - The Secretary wished to extend his congratulations on behalf of Dunoon Community Council to the Christmas Lights committee who have been named as the Dunoon Community Champions 2023. Two off the Christmas Lights committee are also community councillors, JA and LM. He said that due to the hard work and perseverance of the committee, the town looks absolutely amazing.
   2. **Website Update** – The Secretary said that since the website has been launched, we have had 896 views, 314 of these views have been within the past 28 days and of the 314 views, 114 of these have been redirected from our social media site. The complaints received last month were from people using the e-mail address provided on the website.
   3. **Playparks Representative** - The Secretary said that he had received an e-mail in the past couple weeks looking for a point of contact regarding playparks. He said that he had sent out an e-mail to all community councillors. The Treasurer has now been nominated as our playpark representative and will therefore take the lead on anything to do with any play park within our boundaries.
   4. **Short-Term Letting Complaint** – The Secretary said that he has received an e-mail complaint regarding the process is of the short-term letting applications and Argyll and Bute Council. The e-mail is in relation to the process used by the council. The complainant says the process is unfair as people with previous short-term lettings had over one year to submit their applications but choose to leave it to the very last minute causing a huge backlog for the planners to deal with. The complainant bought her to the property in September and spent huge amounts of money ensuring it complied with all the regulations required of a short term let. She submitted her application to Argyll and Bute council in October where the website says applications are taking up to six months. She has since received a further e-mail after communications with the department stating that the application may take up to nine months. Her main concern, like many other applicants is that the new applications are being put into the same pile as all the other applications. Those with previous short-term lettings are able still able to operate their business and generate an income, however new businesses have to wait until there application has been approved, thus causing them to lose income. This is not fair. She also says that there is a loss of income on all parties, not only is she out of pocket but the council and local businesses are losing revenue as the house is lying empty. The Secretary said that he has forwarded on the e-mail to all the elected councillors. AF has already replied which the Secretary says he has forwarded on to the complainant. AF said that she has contacted the relevant people within the department's but currently cannot say any more than this as she does not have any more information she can pass on. She said that she has asked about the timescales and that she was asking about the prioritisation of applications. The complainant said that she has been told it is on a first come first served basis. AF said she has spoken to several sources within the planning department and the community development department and as soon as she has anything concrete, she will come back to the complainant. She also said that she understands the complainant’s frustration and informed her that there was a huge backlog of around 3000 applications. The department has brought in extra resources to help deal with this backlog. The complainant said she has made a huge investment on this property and is frustrated that whilst others who already had short term lettings were allowed to trade, that she was unable to trade, the penalties for trading without a licence are a fine off £2500 and a ban of 12 months. She feels that the area is missing out on money, as revenue generated from her business is paid via taxation and by people spending money in the local area. RM said that those who previously had short-term letting licences where given grandfather rights and were permitted to carry on trading. The complainant asked if AF would be able to push through a change in the process where new applications were dealt with separately from the existing applications. She said that the whole process will be putting off new applicants. The complainant said that she has spoken to the team dealing with the applications several times, the people she has spoken to have always been very friendly and it was them that told her that it was the Scottish Government who had insisted it was a first come first served basis, she said that this was fine however it was Argyll and Bute’s policy that needs to be changed. AF said that she would raise the question however she did warn the complainant that this would not be a quick fix as there will be several processes is to go through before any changes can be made. The complainant's husband asked if he could make any slight alteration to his wife's comment and pointed out that it was not actually the Scottish Governments policy of a first come first served basis policy. The Scottish Government policy is that those with existing short term let's can continue to operate whilst those who have submitted a new application must wait await the application's approval. He also said that the implementation of that policy was down to Argyll and Bute council. He also said that it was ironic that it was the economic development team that was responsible for this policy. The Convener pointed out that this was an application process and to make the complainant aware that they are not guaranteed a licence. He said he was also mindful of the current housing emergency declared by the council and was aware that the short term let's may count against this emergency. AF said that the sheer volume off the applications for short term let's was huge and it was not just Argyll and Bute who were struggling. The Convener asked AF if short term let's were also advertised in the same way as planning applications. AF said they must be, but the only time that she sees them is when there are objections raised and it comes to committee level. The Convener said that the way of planning application notifications has changed, and we now need to log on to identify any applications. He will investigate this matter further as it would be useful as a community council to know the numbers of applications being submitted. AA asked AF if there had been any changes to the policies since the council had declared a housing crisis in regard to short term let's. AF said that this is a new process, and the council will have to deal with this issue. AA asked if there were being any quotas being set on the amount of short term let available. AF said without looking at the housing strategy she could not answer that question. DC asked if it was the same department that dealt with planning applications that was dealing with the short-term letting applications. AF confirmed this and informed DC that they had brought in extra resources to deal with the back log. DC apologised and said that he had submitted a planning application and the summer, and it has been delayed several times and now expected to be given a decision later on this month. The complainant's husband spoke about the poor communication skills as it clearly states on the website it can take up to 24 weeks to be processed however to receive a subsequent e-mail stating nine months for processing is unacceptable. AF agreed that this was unacceptable. JA said part of the problem was that the department had gone from 8 planning officers down to 2.5 officers.
3. **Treasurer Update** – AA informed everyone that she was still having issues accessing the bank account and therefore TM had assisted in preparing the monthly report. AA said that there was £6564.91 in the bank account and that there had been an expenditure of £14.09 this month. The Secretary pointed out to everyone that the financial report is now available on the shared drive and for the purposes of this meeting it had been sent via e-mail to all DCC members.

**Proposal. That the financial report be accepted as correct, subject to audit.**

**Proposed: AA Seconded: TW**

**For (10) Against (0) Abstained (0) Result: Passed.**

1. **New Business** –
   1. **Resilience Funding** – The Treasurer said that community councils are able to access certain amounts of additional grants for resilience funding. There is a £500 available to community councils from the support communities fund to use towards resilience planning but there is an application deadline of the end of January 2024. She asked if the emergency resilience planning subcommittee had anything standing out that they could use this money for. She also said that SSEN have grants available annually for between £1500 and £2500 and are available to communities for resilience funding projects This money is not for infrastructure but supporting infrastructure. These grants are normally available from around April. This year's grant will be slightly different as there will be an environmental impact added to the grant. Again, The Treasurer said to the emergency resilience planning subcommittee that if there is anything that they need, to let her know and she could apply for the relevant grants. Both of these grants need a current emergency resilience plan. The Secretary asked if these grants were for buying items such as candles and blankets that would be distributed amongst the community. The Treasurer said that this is exactly the type of thing the grants are designed for. The Convener said that he was aware of a possible conflict of interest, however suggested that The Treasurer speak to himself and Ann Campbell from the Development Trust to ascertain whether they would be applying for these grants. The Treasurer pointed out that these grants were only available to community councils and not other partnerships. The convener said that he did not think that was the case and these grants were open to community groups. He said that if Ann Campbell was applying for the larger grant that there may be some opportunity for partnership between DCDT and DCC. AA asked The Vice-Convener and JA if they could remember from their time as councillors if there were ever any disaster emergency response drills carried out as she seems to remember the council used to run disaster drills. RM said that the council do have emergency plans, for example in the recent flooding event although the Dunoon itself was affected there were other areas within Argyll and Bute that were worse affected, and the council opened up some community halls. The Secretary said that during flooding the Strachur Memorial Hall was opened and this was maintained by Strachur Community Council. The Convener asked if the elected members could find out if there is any equipment available, what the equipment is, find where it is stored.

* 1. **Angel Tree** – The Treasurer spoke about the Angel Tree that is being coordinated by Dae it Yersel in Tom-a-hoid Road. In the shop window, there is a Christmas tree that is covered with angels. On the angels there is a child's name and their age and a Christmas present, the idea is for members of the public to pick an angel and purchase that present for that child. This year there are 47 families that the Angel tree is looking at supporting. They also have other angels that have just got food packages on them. The idea of the food packages is to purchase gift cards/vouchers from Morrisons, and these will be attached to those angels. The Treasurer said that the closing date for this was this Sunday and asked that if anyone who could donate one of the gifts to visit the shop and pick an angel before Sunday. She also proposed that the to Dunoon Community Council purchase 5 x £10 vouchers and donate them to the Angel tree. LM suggested that it should be £100 worth of vouchers rather than £50.

**Proposal. That Dunoon Community Council purchase £100 worth of Morrisons vouchers and donate them to the Angel Tree.**

**Proposed: AG Seconded: TM**

**For (10) Against (0) Abstained (0) Result: Passed.**

1. **Planning Applications** – YL apologised and said that due to personal issue that does she has not had time to log in and download the planning applications. There was a discussion about a planning application for 85 Argyll Street where the applicant has submitted an application to have a hotel for dogs. AF said that it may be worth the community council having a look at this application and submitting any objections they have. It was pointed out that the closing date for objections had passed.
2. **Update from Argyll and Bute Councillors –** 
   1. Councillor Moreland said that the signs for Hanover Street car park were due to be in place by the end of November, however this was not the case, and they still have not been fitted. He said he has now escalated the issue as when a deadline is given it should be met and if it is not met then an explanation must be given, so far, no explanation has been given.
   2. Councillor Moreland said that there was no update on the Community Shed rubbish. He said that this is a complex issue and therefore may take some time to resolve. DC pressed Councillor Moreland for a date off when the decision would be made. Councillor Moreland said that he could not give a definitive timeframe at this moment but would keep DC informed.
   3. Councillor Moreland said that there was no update on the West Bay written management plan for the Convener however he would still pursue this issue. The Convener said that this was quite important as it would affect the local place plan when it comes into effect.
   4. JA asked if the lack of response with regards to Hanover Street car park and the Community Shed rubbish disposal was down to lack of resources on behalf of the council. Councillor Moreland said that he understands the delays and the response regarding the community shed as this is a complex issue and does not just affect one business in Argyll and Bute council area. With Hanover Street car park he said that was the original reason, however he does not understand why, as the signage could be put out to a contractor to deal with. He said that the TRO had been completed in 2021 and does not understand why in 2024 that it still has not been completed. He said he has recently checked the TRO and it is quite literally a day's work to put up the new signage. The Secretary said that he was at the car park yesterday and noted that there had been a significant reduction in Royal Mail vans being parked in Hanover Street car park, they don't seem to be along John St.
   5. AA asked if there had been any updates on NHS dentistry in Dunoon. Councillor Hampsey said that there had been an improved package being put together to try and entice dentists to the area but as of yet there has been no uptake. He said that as far as he is aware HSCP are continuing to work on this issue. AA asked if they are looking at increasing the provision up at the hospital for community dentistry as there are currently a lot of people waiting for this service. She also said there is no provision for children to see a dentist unless their parents are paying for the service.
   6. The Vice-Convener asked if there was a TRO for the car park at the ferry terminal, and if so, are they facing similar problems to Hanover Street car park. Councillor Moreland said that it was the same TRO for the entire town centre car parks. The Vice Convener said his concern was with the bus lane as cars keep parking in the lane and the buses are struggling to get past forcing passengers to get off the bus in the road. Councillor Moreland said that the traffic warden had been down to the area but due to the lack of signage his hands are tied, and he cannot take any enforcement action. The Vice-Convener said that this was a shame because all the hard work has been done putting the TRO together and it was being let down by the signage. DC asked what the parking restrictions were at the ferry terminal. He was just concerned that people would not be allowed to park their cars down there after 1800hrs and that the ferries are still running. Councillor Moreland said he could not remember the exact time restrictions but confirmed it was the double yellow lines within the bustling that is causing the issue not the parking lanes.
   7. The Treasurer asked about the new parking restrictions that came into law today regarding the parking on pavements, she asked if Argyll and Bute council we're going to take any action. Councillor Moreland said that as far as he is aware enforcement action would be taken. The Treasurer said that she only asked because it was reported on the news today that only Edinburgh City Council would be taking enforcement action.
   8. DC said that he thought the “report it” spreadsheet would be a regular agenda item so it could be discussed with the councillors. The Secretary informed DC that this was the case however, if there were no items to be discussed then he would not be wasting time by putting it on the agenda. DC said that there were several items that had been added on behalf of PG that needed discussing. Councillor Moreland said that some of the items were very confusing and had been duplicated. He suggested that himself, DC, and PG sit down and discuss these items. The Secretary said that he has raised an item on the “Report It" website and logged it onto our spreadsheet regarding the overflowing bin at the Bishops Glen, it was also reported that there seems to be some type of abandoned shelter approximately 75 metres away from the bin. To be fair the bin was emptied within 48 hours of the report being submitted however, it has now been three months and the shelter is still there. The Secretary has spoken offline to Councillor Moreland regarding this issue.
   9. The Convener said that the removal of the old ticket machine at the ferry terminal was raised last month and asked if there was an update. Councillor Moreland said he has not received any notification and to be honest he has not checked.
   10. FT set that previously she had reported an issue with the steps leading to the Argyll Street surgery to Councillor Hampsey, she just wanted to say thank you to him as the work has now been completed and is making a big difference.
   11. JA asked if any of the elected members knew who was responsible for the maintenance of the Bishop's Glen as it was becoming a disgrace. He said that there is litter all over the place, there are trees that have fallen and are blocking access and the footpaths have deteriorated so bad there are some areas that cannot be walked on. The Convener said that his recollection is that Argyll and Bute Council are responsible for everything below the dam wall. He is not sure who is responsible for everything above it. Councillor Moreland said he would confirm this. The Convener said that the Councils website has an asset map on it that may provide a bit more clarification. AA said since the flooding, there has been quite a lot of erosion to the footpaths.
3. **Any Other Business.**
   1. **Play Parks** – The Treasurer said that she has a meeting on Thursday morning with Hugh O'Neill. The Treasurer explained what the play park initiative is. She explained that it came down from the Scottish Government and as part of this initiative the play park in the West Bay and the skate park at the stadium are included. She said that there has been £40,000 allocated to the West Bay play park and discussions were had about the various options available with regards to replacing the gate, painting the railings around the play park, and to install a wheelchair friendly roundabout, she went on to say that they were looking at removing the wooden equipment, this would include the slide and the climbing frame. This would not be replaced but they would be installing a see saw and a spinner in its place. It would also be replacing the soft area underneath the swings. She said that in her personal opinion, removing the furniture which includes the climbing frame and slide and not replacing the item is wrong. The Secretary said that this was the focal point of the play area and when he has gone past it, there was always children playing on it. The Treasurer asked that when she has this meeting with Hugh O'Neill on Thursday, would there be any objections to her raising this issue and our objections and ask him if they could replace the item with something similar. The Convener asked why the item was being removed. RM set that the item had been deemed unsafe. The Treasurer said that because it is wooden there may be a lot of damage. AA said that when CLAN got funding for this play park, the deal was that Argyll and Bute council would be responsible for the maintenance of this park, she also said that she did not think that the council had done an awful lot of maintenance. She went on to say that the flying fox item is nearly always broken when she has gone down there. She also said that when there was a swing missing, it took years for it to be replaced and she would be very reluctant to allow such an item to be removed without a replacement. She said that it took years to get the funding and now the council wants to take away the best part of the park. RM said that he understands what she is saying and said that this was discussed during the council's business day, and this was discussed along with funding with Hugh O’Neill, and it was deemed as unsafe and a potential hazard. He said that the play parks issue went out to public consultation and there were over 1400 responses, not just about this play park but all play parks across our Argyll and Bute council area. He said the overwhelming response during the consultation was that people wanted accessible equipment. It was pointed out, that this was the most popular play item in the park. RM said we were correct and the item that was being removed was the one that was used the most. He also said that children's safety is paramount and takes precedence over everything else. The Convener asked if it was unsafe at the moment, as the area had not been fenced off. RM said that Hugh O'Neill had concerns regarding the safety of this apparatus. RM said that he would not be worried about children playing on it at the moment. He then said the council were not going to wait until it does become unsafe and therefore becomes an issue. AA said that rather than remove the item and leave the area empty, why not wait until a replacement has been sourced and then remove the unsafe apparatus. The Treasurer went on to speak about the skate park. She said that there had been £25,000 allocated to the repairs. As far as she is aware there will be no new equipment in the skate park. They will also be repairing or refurbishing the fencing as required. She also said that the council are looking for match funding to enable them to buy new equipment. The Convener wanted to add prior context to this discussion. Approximately one year ago Hugh O'Neill, Dunoon Community Development Trust and other stakeholders held a meeting regarding the skate park. He is aware that CLAN still has money left over that they have not been able to use. Ann Campbell will have more details. The Treasurer said that she has a team’s meeting with Hugh on Thursday and will therefore try to get hold off Ann Campbell prior to the meeting. The Convener said that with regards to the skate park there was still an active group of people who were dealing with it. It is a mixture of young people, parents and community organisations. He also said that there was a young chap in the town who had created a petition to get the skate park refurbished which may have triggered this action. He said that there have been some informal consultations done regarding the skate park with users and potential users in relation to how the skate park can be improved in relation to skate safety. He said that Hugh O'Neill was aware of the contents of the consultations. The Convener also pointed out that we need to bear in mind the upcoming redevelopment of the hospital site and that this area will have a lot of site traffic going back and forth, however there will also be considerable landscaping in the area due to this work. LM said that there was a local lady who was very active in the West Bay play park development, she thinks her name is possibly Cat Smith. She also said that when the primary school was redeveloped that the contractor was required to do a community payback scheme, this may be applicable to the skate park and the hospital, and it may be worth exploring this avenue to get extra funding for the skate park. DC said that he thought it was appalling that the most popular item in the play park was being considered for removal because one individual deems it to be unsafe. He wants to know what the actual health and safety concern is, and what would be the cost to replace the item with something very similar but is deemed to be safe. RM said that it is not one individual who has made this decision. He also said that the individual concerned is classed as an expert amongst the council officers. He also said that the individual is very capable and if he says that it is dangerous, then the item is dangerous. He said to bear in mind the worst possible outcome could be a child injured themselves on the apparatus. DC asked where the line was drawn, does that mean the council will have to cut down all the trees to stop children climbing trees and injuring themselves when they fall out. He again asked what the cost of a like for like replacement that meets current safety regulations was. He asked if it had been deemed dangerous because children were playing six feet in the air, he went on to say that people complained that children have nothing to do, and then we take away one of the most popular items in a play park. RM said that they were not just taking it out and leaving nothing in their place, that would be new apparatus installed as a replacement. AA said that if they had carried out a public consultation, most people would have said to add in apparatus that is accessible to all. They would not have said take away the main feature. She went on to say that the council should be installing accessible equipment regardless of what is already in the park. RM set that there was accessible equipment being installed and this was being installed in the other side of the play park. The Secretary asked if the apparatus was being removed due to the materials it is made with. RM said that he believed it was being removed because the apparatus was made of wood, and it was already beginning to rot and that within one or two years it would be rotten and therefore unsafe. He said that the removal of this apparatus is sad, however he said child safety is paramount. He said that if an item is unsafe, it is quite simple, you take the item away, it’s just not worth the risk of a child being injured. The Convener said that looking at the bigger picture, what was needed is a replacement for this item when it is finally taken away. DC likened the removal of the apparatus as to giving a child a chocolate gâteaux but then taking it away and replacing it with rich tea biscuits. The Treasurer said that they will be replacing it with a seesaw or a “swinging something”. The Convener said that this is only due to them working within the budget that is already there, and what we need to do is to look at getting a larger budget. He went on to say that the first thing we should do is work out what people would actually like and then work out how it can be funded, he said that he is aware that the council have limited funding, but this does not necessarily mean that it would all have to come from them. AA said that Inverclyde manages to have fantastic play equipment in their play areas and that there are many more play areas over there, she also said that Argyll and Bute Council do not invest in play areas. The Convener said that Inverclyde council and Argyll and Bute council are not comparable local authorities. AA disagreed and said that they are very similar they have a similar size of population, and they also have large rural areas. She also said that Inverclyde the council also has an extremely deprived population in comparison to Argyll and Bute. The Vice-Convener said that the budgets were totally different between the two councils and that Argyll and Bute had a far larger area to cover. JA said that he was absolutely amazed by this. He asked where the analysis was that showed all these people being injured. He says that he takes his grandchildren there all the time and has never once felt that this item is unsafe. The Convener said that the item in question was not unsafe now, otherwise it would not be in use. JA said the Convener was correct and this was down to budget, however, could those parties involved not get together before the removal is rubber stamped and could they not reconsider their decision. The Treasurer said that is what the meeting on Thursday is about. JA said that if they are saying it is going to be unsafe in the future, they could say that about everything. The Convener said that we should wait to see the outcome of the meeting on Thursday morning that The Treasurer will be attending. JA said that this was a backward step for the council. AA said that seesaws are actually very dangerous. DC said that if it was the case that in two years’ time, certain parts of the apparatus will become unsafe, could we not act now and start giving the apparatus a coat of protective paint, and if there were several bits of timber that were rotten now, could we not put it out to the local joiners and ask if they could help refurbish the apparatus. The Convener said that was all well and good however it would need permission from the local authority. AA that that Argyll and Bute council have an unpaid work team controlled by the criminal justice team, could these people not be utilised to help refurbish the play area with tasks such as painting the railings. The Treasurer said that she was going to go down tomorrow to have a look at the play area and the skate park, so she knows what she is talking about at the meeting. JA said that if this actually does happen, the equipment being discussed comes under the auspices of the most hit department within the council. When the new equipment has been installed, there needs to be some kind of guarantee that it will actually be maintained this time and not take years for items to be fixed or replaced. The Convener said that there were two examples of this, one being the flying fox and the other being the sandpit crane. He said that he knows that they can have had problems trying to source the particular parts for these items. JA said that he was talking about the zip slide and the fact that it was quite often not actually there. The Convener said that as an action point, he would liaise with The Treasurer prior to the meeting taking place and if possible, he would also attend. {see footnote}
   2. FT said that she was attending the transport forum meeting tomorrow and asked if anyone had any items that they wish to raise with the committee. AA asked her if she could raise the issue with the linking up of the ferries to the trends this as an ongoing issue but only been exasperated by the change of train timetables recently. RM said that there was supposed to be a meeting held in here recently with or MSP and the transport providers, however, the representative from Scot Rail was unwell so the meeting was postponed until the new year. DH read out a short preview of a report that will be discussed at the meeting tomorrow. AA also asked if the issue regarding the lack of information from Cal Mac could be addressed. She said that when it goes down to single vessel service there is very little information posted regarding this. She said there is a small electronic board in the waiting room at Gourock saying that it was a single vessel service however it did not give any times of the sailings. The Vice-Convener said that everything Cal Mac do now is digital. AA said that they need to update the digital board in the waiting room then. The Convener said that the electronic notice boards are very good as they keep saying refer to website. Not everyone has access to a smartphone to check the website.
   3. The Vice-Convener wanted to discuss the new law that has recently came into force regarding the parking on pavements. He wanted to know if the enforcement of this law would fall into the remit of the traffic warden. He said that the parking in Dunoon is getting out of hand. He said that he walked past the Queen's Hall a couple of days ago and there were eight cars parked on the pavement, anyone with a pram or a wheelchair would not have been able to walk past them. He said that there are dropped kerbs there to assist those with prams and wheelchairs, yet these were being parked on. He also said that the area they are parking on is our cenotaph and it is extremely disrespectful to be parking there. The Secretary asked how this would be enforced in the evenings as a majority of the pavement parking takes place in the evenings when the traffic warden is not working as he seems to stick to office hours. RM said he would raise this with the relevant department and see if they can do something about altering his hours. The Convener also asked how this would be enforced, would they be receiving a fixed penalty notice of £100 they would do so for any other parking infringement. He also asked if members of the public could photograph and pass on the information like they are able to do with other traffic offences. The Vice-Convener said in the past it was a case of calling the police if they were causing an obstruction, however since parking was decriminalised it is now a council responsibility. Would it be feasible to set up a report page on the council's website similar to the fault reporting system members of the public could send in photographic evidence.
   4. DC asked if West Coast Motors would be attending the Transport Forum tomorrow. DH confirmed that they normally attend. FT asked if DC would be attending. He confirmed that he would be attending with DH. The Vice-Convener pointed out that if it was anything to do with the bus service, that it was a council responsibility West Coast Motors are only the operators. DH said that he has requested the president of the council officer responsible for transport, whether he attends or not is another matter. JA said that there was no excuse for him to not attend as these meetings are now done via teams. There is no longer the excuse of travelling to meetings. He said that the Cowal Transport Forum is a unique meeting and is not operated in any other place than the Cowal peninsula. The Vice-Convener said that every month the bus service gets worse and worse, yet the council are not taking any action. DC read out an e-mail he has received from Stuart McLean regarding forcing council officers to attend meetings. RM said that it used to be mandatory for the transport officers to attend these meetings.
   5. DH said that he has been speaking with the HSCP regarding the lack of dentists in the town, he said that he is aware of a Facebook post several months ago where a gentleman claimed he was coming to Dunoon to set up a dental surgery. He confirmed that HSCP has received no such applications and is unaware of this gentleman. He said there have been a lot of changes since this all started, and he is happy to bring a full update to the next meeting.
4. **Questions from the Public.**
   1. BC that he was with the DYFL and that he had previously spoken about defibrillators up at the stadium. He said that the DYFL had decided against the defibrillators for various reasons. He said that the DYFL did not think that they should be paying the whole cost, he acknowledged that Dunoon Community Council donate £500 towards the cost of the defibrillator, but there are other users of the facility, such as the rugby club, the council, the boxing club, and the shinty club. He said then we would be looking at the realms of shared responsibility and that never worked well. He also said that the cabinet needed to secure the defibrillator needs to be secured and can only be accessed by a code, he said by the time someone gets the code, you would be just as well going to the hospital. He said that if we still want to proceed with the defibrillator the DYFL would consider making a donation of £500, but they would take no responsibility for it. JA said that he fully understood where BC was coming from.
   2. BC spoke about the black park and its poor condition. He said that he initially wrote to JA at least three years ago when he was an Argyll and Bute councillor. He said that the council will not hire out the entire park and only sections of it. He said that there is huge demand for the black park, the DYFL alone has over 260 children on their books he said that the cages are also overbooked he said that the DYFL had considered taking over the black park under the old changing rooms that had been vandalised, he said that they had offered to repair the changing rooms in lieu of any rent due for the use of the park. He said the cost of repairing the changing rooms was in the region of £5800, the offered to them at least however this was only for 18 months. He said that the Scottish Football Association are offering 50% grants to repair football pitches. An expression of interest was declared in the pitches to the black park and a company was sent down to give I'm estimate on costings to repair them. He said that that cost of the repairs and to install floodlighting was £275,000, to do it in an all-weather pitch was £750,000 which the DYFL could not afford. Those grants are still available should the council wish to take it up. He says he finds it very strange that the council have not looked into this themselves. The Convener asked if this grant was open to local authorities to which BC said it was open to everyone. He said it was a simple process and three questions were asked. He said he could not answer the questions himself and asked the council, the council informed him they could not answer any of his questions as the person responsible had since left the role and they could not find any of the paperwork. RM asked if BC could forward him on the details and he would investigate.
   3. CM said that Argyll and Bute council was one of the local authorities that would not be enforcing the changes to the parking regulations as reported today in the Daily Record. He said that given the current state of parking in Dunoon, if Argyll and Bute council were to adopt the policy, how would it be enforced as the traffic warden already struggles to deal with what he has. RM said he would look into the question asked to weather the council were going to enforce the parking regulations. RM said that he disagreed with the statement that the traffic warden wouldn't be able to deal with it. CM said that the paper wore inundated with complaints from people saying people were double parking and parking on pavements. He said people were struggling to get past in wheelchairs and with pushchairs he acknowledged that it was a huge problem within the town. He asked if there would need to be another traffic warden employed. RM said that the issue is that the traffic warden currently does not have any enforcement powers to deal with people parking on the pavement, he also said that if necessary, his hours can be changed. RM said not if he has the powers, he will enforce them, RM said he has been for a walk-through town with the traffic warden on numerous occasions and he is very knowledgeable about the regulations. The Secretary said that as the regulations have only just changed, he previously would not have had the necessary powers to issue fixed penalty notices. RM said he would not rule out the council employing someone else ask technically parking should pay for itself. CM asked if RM knew if the council were planning on implementing these powers. RM said he did not know but would investigate. In his own personal opinion, he thought that they most definitely should as parking is ridiculous. The Vice-Convener said that the traffic warden uses the current regulations and once they have been updated and come into effect and should be quite easy for him to adapt to the changes. JA asked if this would require a full council meeting to authorise these changes. RM said that he thought so, as a required a full council meeting to up the charges from £60 to £100. LM said surely that if it was law, Argyll and Bute council would have no option but to implement the changes. CM said that the council would have the option to adopt the policy. YL asked whether the changes were policy or law because if it is law, they have no option. The Vice-Convener said that the local authorities that are not implementing the law this may be due to them not having the resources to do so, level we already have a traffic warden in place so there is no reason for them not to enforce it. DC said that there should be no issue as it would be self-funding anyway.

The convener brought the meeting to an end at 2050hrs and thanked all those who attended. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The next meeting will be held on Monday the 8th of January 2024 in meeting room 1, Queens Hall, Dunoon at 1900hrs.

***{Note – it would be the intention of Dunoon Community Council to conduct a public survey in the near future}.***

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