

**Dunoon Community Council**

 **Meeting of the Dunoon Community Council held in Queen’s Hall, Dunoon on Monday 12th February 2024.**

Present:

Tom McCowan (TM) (Secretary) Bobby Good (GB) (Vice-Convener)

Paul Greysmark (PG) Lindsey McPhail (LM)

Frauke Thornton (FT) David Clough (DC)

ABC Councillors Attending:

 Councillor Ross Moreland (RM)

Members of the Public: Police Scotland:

 Chris Martin (CM) (Dunoon Observer Not in attendance

Apologies:

 Tom Warren (TW) (Convener) Amanda Graham (AG) (Treasurer)

 Yvonne Love (YL) Jim Anderson (JA) Abigail Apps (AA) Councillor Audrey Forest (AF)

 Councillor Daniel Hampsey (DH)

1. Bobby Good (The Vice-Convener) opened the meeting at 1900hrs and welcomed everyone to the meeting. The vice 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 11th March 2024 and the minutes have been approved. He invited anyone not happy to be recorded to leave the room.
2. **Recording of members attending and apologies received.**

Recording of attendance at meeting is as above. DC had to leave the meeting at 2000hrs to attend the Dunoon Rally meeting.

1. **Declaration of Interest**. Tom McCowan has resigned from the Board of Directors of PA23 Ltd (BID)
2. **Minutes of previous meeting were discussed**; The vice convener asked if there were any amendments required to the previous meeting. No amendments were made.

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

**Proposed: DC Seconded: PG**

**For (5) Against (0) Abstained (1) Result: Passed.**

1. **Appointments/Resignations**.
2. **Police Scotland Report** – No Police Report Received.

The vice convener said that the report had been sent to all members last week. He asked if there were any comments or observations that needed to be raised. FT said that she thought the report was disappointing as it was less informative than previous reports. The vice convener asked if this was the standardised report. The secretary confirmed that this is the new format that is being used throughout the area. He said that Sgt McGunnigal had requested feedback after the last meeting. DC said that the report was fine and still allowed him to collate our spreadsheets. The secretary also said that there is now a new Police Inspector in charge of the Area, Inspector Bart Simonis. The Vice-Convener asked when compiling the reports did DC notice any trends forming. DC said that he had not noticed any trends. The secretary said that Sergeant McGunnigal had no established a good working relationship and that Sergeant McGunnigal would inform us if he noticed any trends forming. DC said that for the next meeting he would provide a breakdown of the report. The vice convener said it was important to note that nothing was indicating Dunoon was a dangerous town to live in or that there were any serious crime issues. LM who said it would be interesting to know how many cases actually made it to court and resulted in a prosecution, she also said that she is aware that there are many cases that have been going on for a very long time and still had not made it to court. CM said that in his experience it is taking an average of 18 months for a case to reach the courts. PG said that this was outside of our current remit, the secretary also said that this information would come from the procurator fiscal and not the police. The vice convener said that there was a report published in the local paper but did not know the extent of the reporting and whether it was every case that was covered. CM said that it was not all cases that were covered and that the paper could only publish those with a guilty verdict. The vice convener said that there were various methods of finding out what was going on in the courts such as the court rules that are published online, he also said that this would create an awful lot of work and did not know whether this is something that we should be looking at. PG said that this was not our remit, and this section of the meeting was down for the police to update us with crimes and incidents that were happening within the town. The secretary agreed and said that the police's job was to investigate and arrest individuals and it was down to the procurator fiscal to put them in front of the court. We should not be going down this rabbit hole. CM agreed that this would be very difficult to coordinate due to the time frame between arrests and going to court. DC said he would investigate and see if it was feasible to collate all the information.

1. **Presentations –** No Presentations were given this month.
2. **Action points from Previous meeting –**
	1. **West Coast Motors** - The vice convener requested that in future the paragraph title for this topic should be public transport and not West Coast Motors as it is perceived that we are directing our frustrations at West Coast Motors whereas in fact it is Argyll and Bute Council who are responsible for the bus service. He also wanted to reiterate the point that we are not having “a go” at West Coast Motors. The vice convener and members discussed at length the content of the response received from Martin Arnold from Argyll and Bute council. The vice convener spoke about the section where it mentioned about the children having to stand because there is no capacity on the buses and Martin Arnold blames it on the children. He also spoke about the section where the children at the new primary school are having to be brought out of class 15 minutes early in order to catch the bus the vice convener said that Martin Arnold had made out that we were lying. LM said that the school needed to supply one member of staff who was taken out of their role to take four children down to the bus stop. She said that the bus is at 1503hrs and there would be no way of getting the children to the bus on time if they were to leave class when school finishes at 1500hrs. She also said that there were over 200 children within the school all leaving at the same time and therefore it would be impossible for the children requiring to catch the bus to make it on time unless they leave class early. The secretary said that he had worked it out that if the children are leaving class 15 minutes early every day over the entire school year the children are missing eight and three-quarter days of school a year. This is completely unacceptable. The vice convener said that in the response Martin Arnold had clearly said that this is not happening. LM set that in the response it was stated that the bus would wait for the children. LM went on to say that the school staff had never been late for the bus, but they have on occasions experienced the bus not turning up at all. The vice convener also spoke about parking on Hillfoot St, he said that there is no issue with parking on Hillfoot St as the traffic warden is there frequently and takes action against offenders. LM agreed that the traffic warden is continually on Hillfoot St at the time the school closes and at other times throughout the day. PG said that he had been advised if we were not happy with the response from the council that we could escalate the issue to the traffic commissioner for Scotland and is this something we could consider pursuing. The vice convener said he was doubtful that this would come under the remit of the traffic commissioners. They are more concerned with whether the buses are turning up on time or indeed turning up early they also look at whether the buses are actually turning up at all and are sticking with the route prescribed. The vice convener explained how West Coast motors would have applied for a PO licence and what the process for this application was. The vice convener said that pre COVID West Coast motors did have a timetable that did meet every single ferry that came in and also operated buses late into the night. The vice convenor pointed out that Kilmun community council are trying to get the late-night bus service reinstated. The secretary said that Strachur District Community Council are also fighting with the council to get a Saturday bus service reinstated as the one that is in operation at the moment is totally unsuitable for their residents. The vice convener said these services were all cut when COVID hit and have not been reinstated. He also said that we are now being told that these cuts have been made because there simply is not the budget for it and he wanted to know why the budget has changed as it was already there prior to COVID. PG said that we have written to the leader of the council, and he has just passed it over to Martin Arnold. The secretary pointed out that the protocol was to write to the council officers first and if we did not get a satisfactory resolution, it could then be escalated up to the leader of the council and or the chief executive of Argyll and Bute council. PG said that the response was not satisfactory and had not been resolved and therefore we needed to escalate the matter to the leader of the council and the chief executive. The secretary read out a paragraph from the letter received from Martin Arnold where it stated that the bus service had returned to 98% mileage pre COVID across Argyll and Bute despite operating in a challenging and financial environment. The vice convener said that they are obviously using the mileage elsewhere across Argyll and Bute and therefore the budget has been taken away from the Ardentinny and toward route at night and used elsewhere. DC asked if West Coast motors had the contract for all of Argyle and Bute, this was confirmed by the vice convener. FT said that after the recent flooding in October the bus services had been severely disrupted and that they were having to take on different routes which was longer, could this not account for some of the mileage. The vice convener said that in emergency situations there is additional funding available for West Coast motors to operate. The secretary said that he would happily write a letter to the leader of Argyll and Bute council and to the chief executive of Argyll and Bute council as this community council felt that we had been fobbed off by Martin Arnold. He requested that LM and the vice convener provide some factual context that he could include in the letter as the only facts that he has access to is what has been minuted in our meetings. LM said that this was not a catchment school issue and that this was a public service bus and would rather not have her name included. The secretary reassured her that he was not after naming names but needed facts and figures so he could write an accurate letter. The vice convener said he could not understand why the service we had prior to COVID was not back in place and this was causing some frustration. He said that because they are citing budget constraints this leads him to believe that the budget has been moved elsewhere. PG said that the right outcome for the issue regarding the children at the school would be for the leader of the council to get the timetable revised to allow time for the children to leave school at the correct time and still have time to catch the bus home. RM said that there was no need to amend the contract, what was required was for the council to ensure that West Coast motors were sticking to the timetable and the agreed contract. DC set at the last Cowal transport forum meeting in December there was an action point to arrange a meeting between all the stakeholders, Transport Scotland and the transport minister where these kinds of issues would be discussed and hopefully resolved. He said that it is a shame that DH is not available tonight to give us feedback on the progress of this meeting. The vice convener asked if CM had sight of the letter received and if not could the secretary make sure he gets sight off it.
	2. **Playpark Update** – In the absence of the treasurer and AA, the secretary read out a report prepared by the treasurer. The report is below.

AA and the treasurer had a meeting with Ann Campbell (AC) and discussed various ideas going forward (AA might be able to give more info)

Discussed various fundraising efforts (Santa’s sleigh) and also monies that CLANN might have (caveat for new equipment only)

Discussed applying for grants from the Landfill Trust

Also, discussed presentation ideas to the public.

Next meeting set for 14th 12:00 Room 3 QH

June / July 2023 survey results received from Hugh at ABC in regard to parent and user’s views.

Also combined with survey results DCDT gained from a wider survey in regard to Dunoon in general.

Sent a number of questions to Hugh in regard to timeframes and post installation responsibilities. Answers have been shared with Ann and Abigail. (Available to anyone who would like to see them)

Requested some financial estimates on the cost of individual equipment and repairs- awaiting response.

Hugh has stated he is happy to come to a meeting/ hold a meeting to discuss play park funding.

AC has made contact with Katrina from West Bay Play Park Facebook page and has invited her to join meetings in regard to the way forward.

The secretary said that he had spoken with the treasurer who asked if he could make a proposal to allow her to apply for a £2500 grant for the West Bay play park. The grant would come from the supporting communities fund, the treasurer also set that Craig from Ingram's Bar has contacted her and informed her that they have some money that has been raised for the play park, this is currently sat in Craig's personal account, and he wishes to give it to dinner in community council to hold in our bank account, so it is accountable. If we agree to take on the money this would then be ring fenced so it can only be used for the purposes of the West Bay playpark. DC said that he is more than happy for the treasurer to pursue this however he strongly advises that she liaises with AC from DCDT as she has a wealth of experience when it comes to applying for grants and funding. He went on to say that he is more than happy for us to take the money from Craig as he totally understands why Craig does not want this money in his personal bank account and agreed should be ring fenced. The vice convener questioned whether we as a community council are allowed to apply for grants. The secretary confirmed that this was the case and DC reaffirmed that we could apply for grants as we are a constituted body. DC also said it would be very good if Dunoon Community Council got the funding as it would short to the public that we are actively engaged with local issues. The vice convener raised concerns that other local groups may be applying for funding for exactly the same thing which could then reduce the chances of us getting the grant. The secretary said that as far as he is aware the treasurer and AC were collaborating with the other stakeholders in the area. He said that he would hate to see another group apply for funding only to be rejected because we have applied for funding. He said that there was an awful lot of work that goes into applying for these grants. LM said that the West Bay playpark Facebook group run by Katrina had been raising money for this project. It was suggested by the vice convener that all the monies from these various groups should be held in the one central place, and this is something that the treasurer should investigate at the next meeting off the playpark subcommittee. DC said that again this comes down to us being a properly constituted body.

**Proposal. The Treasurer be allowed to apply for a grant for up £2500 from the Supporting Communities Fund in collaboration with Ann Campbell from the DCDT**

**Proposed: TM Seconded: PG**

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

**Proposal. The Treasurer be allowed to accept money from Ingrams Bar and hold it in our bank account ring fenced as West Bay play park.**

**Proposed: TM Seconded: DC**

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

* 1. **Community Engagement** – the secretary spoke about community engagement and the need for us to be able to carry out surveys off the public to allow us to gauge public opinion. As discussed at a previous meeting community engagement would fall under the remit of the secretary. The secretary spoke about the need to find a suitable survey provider, we had previously looked at Survey-Monkey, but it was decided that the cost was too expensive. The secretary spoke about Microsoft forms that he has access to through his own Microsoft subscription. This is the platform he used to carry out the active travel route survey that has just been completed and we will be discussing later on in this meeting. He said that it was a good platform to use as it was easy to work around and collected all the analytical statistics for us, the only issue is that because it is on his own personal subscription no other person from the Dunoon Community Council would have access to it unless it was shared by him. He said that he is more than happy to use his subscription to facilitate this as there is no point in paying money out twice. He asked the members present if anyone had any objections, none were raised. DC asked if we had that subscription with our Microsoft account through the website. The secretary said that the Microsoft package provided with the website was only the very basic Microsoft package which literally included Microsoft Word Microsoft Excel Microsoft Outlook and a few other basic operating functions. He also said that there were others who had the Microsoft 365 subscription and if need be, they would be able to create their own surveys in the event off the secretary being unavailable.
1. **Convener Update** – There was no update from the Convener.
2. **Secretary Update** –
	1. **Website Update** – The secretary said that since the website has been launched, we have had 1639 views, 436 of these views have been within the past 28 days and of the 1639 views, 694 of these have been redirected from our social media site with 276 being in the past 28 days. The secretary said he was still waiting for Bio’s and a photograph from JA.
	2. **Diary** – The secretary went through the diary for the next two months. He asked if anyone was available to attend the DGFAG meeting being held on Wednesday 14th February at 1830hrs. DC said that he would make some tentative inquiries with his wife when he got home and would let the secretary know on Wednesday morning. RM set that himself and DH would be attending. The vice convener asked if he would be able to represent the Dunoon Community Council. RM said that unfortunately he was not allowed to represent us but would be more than happy to provide an update.
3. **Treasurer Update** – In the absence of the treasurer the secretary informed all members present that the treasurer had sent out the financial report via e-mail to all members last week. He read out the financial report. PG asked how much the annual grant was for and asked when it would be allocated. The secretary said that he could not remember the exact figure however it was in the region off £1200 and that we traditionally received it in June. We have to have our accounts audited annually, these are then presented at the AGM which is held on the second Monday of May, these are then voted on and accepted by the community council. The minutes and the audited accounts are then forwarded onto Argyll and Bute Council’s Community Liaison Officer who then ratifies the accounts and issues the annual grant to the community council.

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

**Proposed: TM Seconded: FT**

**For (6) Against (0) Abstained () Result: Passed.**

1. **New Business** –
	1. **Active Travel Route** – The secretary said that a survey had been conducted via our social media platforms and our website. The survey started on the 31st of January 2024 and ended on the 12th of February 2024 at 12 noon. He said that during this time there had been 76 responses from the public. The idea of the survey was to provide the new community council a snapshot of public opinion regarding the proposed active travel route. The secretary then went through a presentation that he had made with the results off the survey. He then went on to discuss the final statistic and the fact that 56% off those who had responded to the survey had attended the consultation and 44% had intended. He said that it was evident in the comments who had not attended the consultations as they were still talking about cycle paths and fixing potholes etc. He said that he felt that only one consultation that was held for four hours was insufficient to inform the public of what is a major project within the town. He said that there were some very positive and constructive comments made and then the normal comments that had nothing to do with an active travel route such as repairing potholes. It was clearly stated in the posts to keep to the specific topic off the active travel route when completing the survey however on numerous occasions this had not happened. The secretary said that he will e-mail all community councillors with the results of the survey, he would also include Argyll and Bute councillors and asked if RM could forward the survey results on to the council officer at the meeting. The secretary said that he would also publish the survey results on our website and social media platforms. CM requested that he be copied into the survey results. PG said that the survey was very good however it was not long enough and asked if it could be extended. The secretary responded and said that this was only a snapshot off public perception to allow us to discuss the active travel route at tonight's meeting. He will be attending a meeting next month to discuss the active travel route in more detail but needed to have something to go on rather than just hearsay. Currently there is a slim majority in favour of the active travel route in its current form. DC set that we need to be very careful, looking back to the incident with the play parks being reported by the observer of on Facebook within two hours there were 75 responses all putting their tuppence into the debate when they were actually short off the correct information. He said that it is too easy to just make a short comment on Facebook, but these people are the ones that will not make the time to go and attend public meetings or consultations to be correctly informed. RM said that he totally agreed with DC and said that the fact that 44% off respondents had not attended the consultation. The secretary said it was quite evident in the comments who had and who had not attended the consultation. He said that it had happened to himself with regards to the active travel route, he said that he had read somewhere that the parking from corn church towards Hunters Quay was being removed and all the residents of the flats where losing their parking, it was not until he attended the public consultation that it was made clear that this was not the case. The secretary said that the consultation was very informative and allayed a lot of his fears regarding the proposed plans. The vice convener said that basically just under half the respondents had taken attended the recent public consultation and we're possibly filling in the survey on the original plans. RM said that the plan had changed drastically since the original concept and that the people responsible for the plans had listened to public opinion, taking away the suggestions and revised the plan into what it is today. The secretary said that there was an awful lot of confusion to what was actually being proposed, he was not sure how to get around this issue, he suggested maybe that the paper could run an article with the correct information and that Stantec could hold more consultations, possibly one a week over the period of a month to allow everyone the opportunity to attend. It is quite feasible that people were unavailable to attend the short 4-hour consultation that was held a couple of weeks ago and are relying on hearsay to form their opinions. The voice convenience said that there is also an issue with people having this idea of a cycle route in their heads and they are comparing it to the cycle route that has been installed over in Greenock. The secretary also said that people had visions of the “cycle route” being used by those cyclists who tend to cover huge amounts of distance in the shortest possible time and tend to cycle in groups, whereas in fact the cycle route is designed for mum and dad to go for a walk along the prom with their three-year old child who is sat on a push bike with stabilisers getting pushed along by dad or a family out for a walk with their dog. The vice convener said that in his opinion it is a tourist attraction, it will bring people into the town. RM highlighted one comment where it said that it was not coming from the council's budget, he said that it would be a massive shame if we let this money slip through our fingers, we are not going to lose anything bye getting the active travel route, it happens time and time again in Dunoon where we lose out on funding. He also said that the Scottish Government want 10% of the transport budget to be utilised on active travel routes. This is a substantial amount of money. He also said that this project could bring between £1.3 million and £1.5 million end to the town. He said it was not just a case of doing the active travel route but the whole plan would improve the visual look of the town especially along the front. PG asked whether we had to approve it at this stage. The secretary said that there was no requirement for any approval from the community council at this point, but we did need to discuss the topic. The vice convener said something similar happened during COVID when he was an elected member of Argyll and Bute Council. There was a plan to pedestrianise Argyll St only during COVID, there was 2 surveys conducted, one involving the local businesses and the other involved those who actually used Argyll St. The users were all in favour of the changes however the local businesses put up significant objections, ultimately the plan never happened, and the money was allocated to another town, we cannot let this happen again. The secretary said that this will not really have any effect on any of the town businesses and the only impact will be for those businesses in Kirn. The secretary also said there was a large number of objections to the removal of the plants from along the East Bay and in Kirn. RM said that they would not be allowed to just destroy the plants and they would need to be relocated elsewhere. LM said that there was a dedicated group called Enviro-Kirn who were responsible for the planters along the East Bay. RM said that he will raise the issue of public consultations and the requirement for needing more of them with Sustrans when he forwards on the survey results to Colin.
	2. **Statue** - FT said that on the 12th of January 2024 that was a post on a local Facebook group called Dunoon in photos this was posted by a group called Canned Haggis, FT went on to say that they recently posted a picture of “wee Annie” with her bucket and spade whose statue stands opposite Gourock pier to commemorate the heyday of going “doon the water” it has since been discovered that Wemyss Bay has a similar statue of “wee Bobby” with his toy yacht inside the train station at the pier. She went on to say that Dunoon has vast numbers of holidaymakers and that the annual call games has now been going on for 130 years. It would be fitting if Dunoon had something similar, maybe a statue of a young piper to commemorate the highland games or indeed a young highland dancer since Dunoon still hosts the world highland dancing championships annually. The areas that could be considered for citing this statue are outside the “Burgh Hall”, outside the “Queen's Hall” or next to the “Welcome to Dunoon” archway in the castle gardens. FT Said that she had contacted the person who made the statues to get an approximate cost to have one made for Dunoon. There are three cost elements to having a statue made, the first cost is the design cost then there is the construction cost and finally the sighting cost. The total cost for this statue would be in the region of £38000. She said that with this cost there would obviously need to be community engagement to find out if the residents of Dunoon would want a statue, we would also need to find out what type of statue they would want whether it be a piper or a highland dancer and then we would also need to know where they would want it located. We need to look at ways of fund raising whether it be through crowdfunding, lottery funding, or grants, or indeed find a rich local who could sponsor the whole project. The vice convener said that he thought that this was a great idea, PG agreed and said this was a fantastic idea it may be worth bringing in Claire Hallybone or Ann Campbell as these two ladies have huge experience when applying for funding and grants. FT said that there was certainly some fund raising that was required. She said that since the Queen's hall had recently been done up that could be a possible site as there is currently no artwork outside. PG said that whilst we are on the topic of statues, the Highland Mary statue is still standing but needs some work doing to it which was discussed at previous meetings, and nothing has happened. LM said that the Highland Gathering committee should be involved, the vice convener said that the BID is another organisation who should be sitting around the table. RM said he agreed that this is something that the BID could assist with but was not sure how the Highland Gathering committee could help financially as they rely on grants from the council and other sources to operate themselves, they could however assist with fund raising. The secretary said that he would liaise with FT and come up with a date next week to start working on a public survey where we could gauge public opinion on such an idea. The vice convener said that he did not think that getting support for this idea would be that hard but said that getting funding would be the battle. LM said that we need to be clear off the cost of this project from the outset, she said that we may even get people willing to come forward with donations. The secretary suggested that a crowdfunding page be set up and this could be advertised on our social media platforms and websites. FT Said that there are a number of local philanthropists and businesses in the local area who may be able to help. RM asked if anyone knew how the other two statues were funded. FT said that she could go back to the other people and ask and will report back to us. The vice convener said that this whole project was an exceptionally good idea, he went on to say that it is very important that we get the entire community involved with raising the funds so this can truly be a Dunoon project. LM Said that we needed to look at the two huge statues in Port Glasgow and that these could not have cost anywhere near the £40000 price mark and that we may need to look at other options and designs. The secretary said we still should include Ann Campbell into the discussions as she will be able to guide us with regards to funding. The vice convener asked if we needed to set up a full subcommittee to move forward with this project. It was agreed that a subcommittee was not required and that just one person to take the lead and run with the project just as PG has done so with the benches. The vice convener asked if FT would be happy taking the lead. FT said that she was happy to take the lead in this project however said she has not done anything off this magnitude before but was willing to get stuck in. The vice convener said that she would not be alone and would be supported by all members. He suggested that we get started on the survey as soon as possible once the secretary and FT had worked out what questions to put into the survey. LM said that if a crowdfunding page was set up, we could speak with the Cowal gathering committee and ask if they would be able to publicise it as they have far reaching connections. The vice convener said that he personally liked the idea of a highland dancing girl as this had a current local connection through the world's highland dancing championships. LM said that she agreed with the highland dancing girl, she also said that there is a strong highland dancing community within Dunoon.
2. **Planning Applications** – The secretary went through the licence and planning applications in the absence of YL. He said that there was only one application this month and that was to erect a residential dwelling in Nelson St. He did say that the date had however passed and there was only a short time frame for anyone to raise any objections. He said that he was concerned that as Dunoon Community Council are part of the planning review process there is always insufficient time between our meetings to review any applications thus giving us absolutely no say in a planning application. He said that we hold our meetings on a monthly basis however sometimes there is only a one-week window for us to reply resulting in applications being made after our meeting but closing before our next meeting. RM said that this is unacceptable and will approach the planning department to ascertain what is happening and if there is anything that can be done to rectify the issue. The secretary said that he did not know where to look for current licencing applications so therefore could not provide any update.
3. **Update from Argyll and Bute Councillors –**

**Councillor Moreland:**

* 1. Hanover Street Car Park - Councillor Moreland said that correct signage is now in place and enforcement action will commence shortly.
	2. Rubbish Removal - Councillor Moreland said that he has spoken with DC and informed him that he was still awaiting a meeting date.
	3. West Bay Written Management Plan - Councillor Moreland said that he has discussed this with the convener offline.
	4. Dentistry Update – Councillor Moreland said that it was Councillor Hampsey who was responsible for this, and he has no updates that he could provide.
	5. Bishops Glen Responsibility – Councillor Moreland informed us it was Argyll and Bute Council who were responsible. He said that DC had reported fallen trees over a footpath which was further up around the reservoir, this work to remove the trees was as far as he was aware is currently being undertaken and may have even been finished.
	6. Housing Aspirations for Cowal. Councillor Moreland said that he had emailed AA. He went on to say that the council had been accused of not building houses. He said historically the council used to build houses on occasion however now it is always done with third parties such as ACHA and Fyne Homes with the council taking a role. He said that is unfair to say that the council no longer build houses, there is not the money in the pot for the council to just chuck up a row of hoses hence why there is now always a partnership with outside agencies.
	7. Plasterboard at the Recycling Centre – Councillor Moreland said plasterboard is not on any of the council’s hazardous waste lists and therefore cannot see any reason why it should have been turned away.
	8. Road Surface in Valrose – Councillor Moreland said that he had received notification that the potholes in the road at Valrose would be repaired by the 22nd of February. FT said that she went out this morning and when she came back this afternoon the holes had been filled with tarmac this time rather than gravel. The vice convenor asked if the council were the ones responsible for the road surface as he thought it was ACHA. Councillor Moreland confirmed that it was indeed the council's responsibility.

**Questions to Councillors:**

* 1. PG asked if there was any update on the wall by the burn and the Clyde cottage nursery. Councillor Moreland read out a report that he had received, the report said that soil samples from around the area had been taken away and had now been completed, costings for the work were being carried out from the week beginning the 5th of February by a local company John Brown of Strone. If the costings are acceptable, it is anticipated that work will commence at the beginning of March 2024. No end date has been supplied. PG asked why the process had taken so long. Councillor Moreland replied and said that he suspects it was done to the soil samples ask this can be a lengthy process.
	2. PG also asked for an update on the birds nesting in the bandstand at Argyll gardens. Councillor Moreland said the council had been making inquiries with a specialist company who will employ the use of acoustic sounds to move the birds on from the nest. He said that all birds are protected under the wildlife act of 1991 and the council had to ensure that it complied with this act when removing the nest. He went on to say that the council do not carry out board control taskings and as such do not hold any stock for such jobs it is always put out to private contract. To comply with the law the contractor must hold a specialist licence. PG said that at this time of year he very much doubted that there would be any birds nesting. Councillor Moreland said that this was checked very recently, and he can confirm that apparently there are still birds nesting in the bandstand. PG set that the mess these birds are making is terrible and needs to be cleared away.
	3. PG said that there were still a few issues that were not being resolved such as blocked drains. DC and the vice convener asked him if he had used the “report it” system. DC pointed out to PG that he needed to go onto the shared drive and update the shared spreadsheet that the councillors used to keep track of things that have been reported because there are currently a number of duplicate jobs listed and this makes it impossible for the elected members to keep track.
	4. DC said that he had emailed Councillor Moreland regarding the drains on William Street as the council still haven't come back to him said that there was a new issue further up the street with the road bulging at the junction of William Street and Alexander Street. These are both going back as far as October.
	5. The secretary asked Councillor Moreland if he had a chance to look at the e-mail, he sent him regarding the public car park at the rock café. He said that he had parked in the car park recently and an employee from the cafe came out shouting and screaming that he could not park in that Bay despite having a disabled badge showing. After moving away, a member of the public informed the secretary that the same woman had screamed at her recently. The secretary said that he had checked the asset register and according to the council's asset register it is owned entirely by the council and therefore how can a private company force people out of a public car park. Councillor Moreland said he had the opportunity to have a look at the TOR and it shows a small gap in the area of the car park which would suggest that this ground is privately owned. The vice convener questioned the TOR and confirmed he thought that the whole area was owned by Argyll and Bute Council. Councillor Moreland said that there should be adequate signage put up and having the word private painted on the road is not suitable.
	6. LM wanted to raise the issue of the street lighting in the town. She said that it is not in one specific area but throughout the town where the lights are just not working, and the streets are exceptionally dark. She said that there are some areas that she is actually scared to walk down as it is so dark. The vice convener said is it just that there are no lights or is it because they are very dim. LM set that on John St there is a light that is on but very dim and doesn't light up until you are underneath it. Councillor Moreland said that he is aware of the one in John Street because YL has previously raised this issue. He said there are some lights that are on a motion sensor and will get brighter as you get closer and dim down as you move away; he said that there is also an issue with some of the lights just not working and this is possibly down to underground cabling and he is aware of some of these issues. LM said that may be the case but the whole area is still very very dark. The secretary said that he had noticed on the way to tonight's meeting that whilst going along Victoria Rd the area between Hanover Street and hill street was in complete darkness, as he was attending this meeting, he has not yet had a chance to report it via the website. Councillor Moreland asked if we could e-mail him with any specific lights that are causing a problem as this is an ongoing issue that he is trying to deal with. He did say that all lights in the next 10 to 15 years would have this lower light emitting bulb fitted. The secretary said that there was a woman on one of the local Facebook groups talking about the lack of lighting in Kilbride Road and the fact that the entire Street was in darkness. Someone commented on the post and said that there was currently an issue with the cabling in the area and was being worked on.
1. **Any Other Business.**
	1. **Rally Update** – DC said that as he has just come out of the meeting, he has not had a chance to put a full report together however he wanted to give us some brief bullet points that were discussed this evening.

The approval process for the rally is still with Argo and Bute council but they are not expecting any issues.

They have a meeting coming up very shortly with a Nigel Cox and a Mr Lawson regarding the routes that are being used there is currently an issue with the route down at the head off Loch Striven where the temporary bridge has been put in. This is normally used as a part of the stages however with this temporary bridge there are being questions raised whether it is safe to use this section or not.

The letters that get distributed to the residents will be finished off this evening ready for distribution. The vice convener asked who was responsible for the distribution. The secretary said that Dunoon Community Council had been approached to ask if we could do it, this was discussed at previous meetings, and it was agreed that providing there was no liability placed upon us that we would assist. DC confirmed that mall car club assumed all responsibility and no responsibility lay with Dunoon Community Council. DC said that he had to liaise with someone at Mull Car Club and would be sending out an e-mail to everyone very shortly. He said that the only people who would not get a letter where the people who lived near that bridge that was discussed as they are still not sure of what is going to happen. He did say that if there are any comments arising from the letters that these must be directed to Mull Car Club, and we were not to take any role in responding to any form of questions. He also pointed out that if CM needed any clarification could he speak to Sam Woodcock and if needed he could provide the correct e-mail address.

DC then spoke about the new addition to the weekend and that the proposal is to put up one of these arches across the road by the triangular section that connects Argyll Street with the road running along the shore. He said that the competitors would then drive down from the stadium to a rallying point at the ferry terminal where they would be released to drive along Argyll Street back up to the stadium. The rally cars would be integrated with the traffic flow and that there were no requirements to close the road at any point. No businesses would be affected by this procession. DC said that the plan was for the first car to set off at 1650hrs and that the whole procession should take no more than two hours. The vice convener said that it would be rather nice to see the cars driving by at a slow speed to allow spectators to view the cars. LM asked what day that this event was planned for. DC confirmed that it would happen on the Saturday.

DC Said that all the regulations should be published in April and the next meeting of the Mull Car Club is on the 18th of March 2024.

He said that last year there was a complaint made by the businesses stating that they had not received any of the letters, DC said that this year whilst we are delivering to the residents, we will also cover the businesses as it will make little to no difference as we will already be walking past the businesses.

* 1. PG said that he needed more money for the benches. The community shed said that the benches were £40 per bench which was totally false. He said that they have one bench in pieces, and it has to be put back together hand painted. He said that there are three others that need wood replaced. He said that the planks that needed to be replaced would cost £52 and that was with a 20% discount from Fyne Woods. He said that he has already spent £135 on paint. He said that the paint would be spread out as far as it goes and currently there are 10 benches that need work including the four that are in the community shed needing wood replaced. He said that he has been to John Tyres on George Street to price up the bolts and this will come to £62.40. The cost to repair the four benches comes out at approximately £249.44. What he would like Dunoon Community Council to do is to go back to his original proposal of granting £300 and then he can get all 10 benches refurbished. DC asked if the bolts were for one bench. PG said that the bolts were for all 10 benches. The vice convener asked what was approved prior to this, the secretary confirmed that it was a sum of £100 was approved for one bench. PG said the paint alone for the four benches was £135, he said that the paint was top quality tilex paint and he had purchased that himself and the bolts were £62.40 and only come in a pack of 100 bolts. The vice convener asked PG how much it would cost to fix the four benches that are currently in the community shed. PG replied it would cost £249. The vice convener asked PG to clarify is it an additional £249 on top of the £100 already granted or is it a total of £249. PG said that it was a total of £249. The secretary asked if he was only asking for an additional £150 on top of the £100 already granted. PG said that would cover all four benches and he would still have paint leftover and would continue until he run out of paint. PG said that he either needs to get a budget or stop dead where he is. The vice convener said that the money already granted, the £100 is going to complete one bench. PG said what he is asking the council for is to increase it by £200 taking it to £300 granted. He said he would then present the bills for everything spent and if it came to anything over, he would personally absorb the costs. DC said that this was a relatively minor amount of money in comparison to the replacement of one bench. The vice convener asked for everyone's input, the secretary said that he was a bit unsure as the treasurer had previously said money had been ring fenced due to the uncertainty of where our money had come from, some of the money in the bank was awarded during COVID. We have asked the CLO for clarification on what this money can be used for, but until then it has been ring fenced to stop it being used. This is a significant portion of our finances and runs into the thousands of pounds. Without the details in front of him or the treasurer available he cannot tell the members how much it is, and he is loathed to start spending money because if we have to return the COVID grant our finances will be vastly depleted. PG asked where that had been minuted. The secretary confirmed that it was minuted in the January meeting. The secretary clarified that going through the previous accounts it is unclear where this money came from, and this is why we have asked the CLO for clarification before this money is spent and we end up having to pay it back. The CLO is unsure if there were any conditions attached to the grant as there are in many cases and if there are conditions attached that would mean the money could only be spent within these conditions and could not be used for general purpose for day-to-day running costs, indeed if there are conditions attached in all probability we would have to return the money to the council or whoever allocated it to us. PG asked how long Dunoon went without a community council, LM said it was less than one year. PG asked if this was an accumulation of the annual grants. The secretary said that is the outcome we are hoping for and would mean that the money could be retained by us and used for our purposes however at this moment in time there is still a big question mark over where the money came from and what it can be used for. PG said he got that but all he is asking for is an extra £200 to allow him to get on with the project that he has already started. He said that he is struggling to find workers to carry out the job as the original plan was for community shed to do it, this is now not the case, and he is having to do the work himself. FT suggested that we have a vote to agree this in principle until the treasurer can provide us with some facts as to what is happening with the money in the bank. PG said that this would just kick the project further down the road. He said that he was not aware of this financial problem, and he has been trying to deal with these benches for nearly a year now. LM asked where we stand as a community council if it is PG and a couple of his friends doing the work and a member of the public injures themselves on the bench. PG said that once the work is completed the benches will be handed over to the council who will inspect the work carried out and then refit the benches to their original locations. DC said that he had faced similar public liability issues when the flags were put up throughout the town, he said that he was in direct correspondence with a member of the council's legal team and that he would be more than happy to contact this person for clarification on our liabilities with regards to the benches. The vice convener said that this would probably not be necessary as the council will be the ones inspecting and installing the benches therefore the liability will be with them. The vice convener said that if we are going to get 4 fully refurbished benches and the other six benches repainted, he thinks that we should continue and get this work done as this project is now dragging on.

**Proposal. That the total budget for the repair of the benches be increased to a maximum of £300.00.**

**Proposed: PG Seconded: DC**

**For (6) Against (0) Abstained () Result: Passed.**

1. **Questions from the Public.**
	1. CM said that the dentistry update was on the agenda, and nothing could in the absence of DH this could go not go ahead but he asked if we had heard anything else. RM set that the issues he was aware of is the lack of qualified dentists within the entire country. He said you can build all the fancy dental suites you want however if you don't have a dentist to use them, they are useless. DC said that in the news this week that was an announcement regarding more money being thrown at the issue and wanted to know if that was just for England and Wales or would Scotland be benefitting from this money. RM said that he was not sure, but he imagined we would see some consequentials filtering down. FT said that there were some big incentives being put out to try and attract new dentists.
	2. CM said that he wanted to address the active travel route, he said that almost every resident he has spoken to in Kirn including the businesses are very much in favour of the active travel route, this is in complete contrast to the first consultation where they were all against it. He said that he has learned that Councillor Sinclair is still against the entire project however Councillor Sinclair is not a Dunoon Counsellor and asked for a comment from Councillor Moreland. Councillor Moreland said that Councillor Sinclair’s area does encroach into a small section of the active travel route as I go on Bute councillors their areas of responsibility are slightly different from those of the community councils and some of them overlap. As for why Councillor Sinclair objects to the active travel route he suggested CM speak to him directly.
	3. CM asked if we had read last week's paper where there was an article regarding the couple who live up Glen Massan who have now been totally isolated due to the collapse of the bridge. There are currently legal disputes going on as to who actually owns the bridge and asked if anyone at Dunoon Community Council new anything or indeed knew who owned the bridge. No members of the community council knew anything regarding the ownership there were a few suggestions put forward too CM on how to resolve the issue.

The Convener brought the meeting to an end at 2100hrs and thanked all those who attended. The next meeting will be held on Monday the 11th of March 2024 in meeting room 1, Queens Hall, Dunoon at 1900hrs.

Distribution:

All DCC Councillors

Cllr Moreland

Cllr Forrest

Cllr Hampsey

Melissa Stewart

Police Scotland

Chris Martin (Observer)

Queens Hall Reception

Library

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