

DUNVEGAN AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING ON Monday 24th February 2025 at 7:30pm

Present – John Laing (JL), Donna Campbell (DC), Sylvia Meyer (SY), Mandy Boswell (MB), Drew Millar (DM).

Apologies – Philippa MacRae (PM), Tim Wallis (TW), Christine Brennan (CB)

1	Chairman's Welcome – JL opened the meeting, welcomed those present and gave apologies.
2	Declaration of Interest – None to note
3	Minutes of last Meeting – - In regard to Kaly Kelp, John said that having seen the minutes to our January meeting he'd been approached by Bruce Hare of Kally Kelp and he had asked to meet with John. They were apologetic for marking off so much of the loch and were revising the area they wished to allocate to kelp farming. There will be a public meeting on 11th March in the village hall and we'll have to see what's now proposed. DM said that he'd attended Minginish Community Council's meeting and they too supported the fishermen and plan to object to the Marine Directorate when plans go forward. The meeting discussed that there were varying opinions on the effect this farm may cause to fisheries and that by having staked claim to such a large part of the loch - especially the entrance to the channel, that they'd done their cause no favours. DM pointed out that planning permission was not required for this endeavour because it was below water, and the Marine Directorate are responsible for permitting this activity. SY proposed the minutes of the last meeting and DC seconded.
4	Police Report – none forthcoming. MB has tried to contact PC Reid and will continue to try and make contact. DM said that the chief superintendent had told him that the police house in Dunvegan was not fit for human habitation but that they can't do anything with it because it is an active police station. The meeting discussed that they are surprised it is in such a poor condition as it is felt that it wasn't that long ago that it was "done up". DM said that the local police "office" might move to the Gaeltec building and at that time the police house would become available. There is also the possibility that there may be office space available in the new school building.
5	Treasurer 's Report – DC – Treasurer's report - three applications to the fund have been made. £650 spent of Trust's ring fenced funds for support, plus an additional £300 via post office. £950 from the £5000 gifted by Dunvegan Trust. £7934.23 in bank - £3900 ours to spend. The meeting talked of outstanding bills - Christmas lights, hall room hire fees.

6	Council Update – DM said the council have agreed to spend another £3 million on Skye’s roads in the coming financial year. Still spending residue of this year’s £3 million. We should be being informed when work is to be done in our area. 5th March to set budget for next year. Papers public knowledge today. If goes to plan a balanced budget with not too many difficult decisions this time. JL asked about funding for the school and DM said that John Finlayson was pretty confident that it would happen – probably with Broadford and Dunvegan projects being run concurrently. DM said he hopes by May or June this year we’ll know when work is to commence. DM said that the school in Broadford is in even worse condition than Dunvegan’s and they should have been replaced six or seven years ago. The meeting discussed the poor state of Dunvegan’s school and the folly of building with a flat roof. The video of the new school is impressive and shows what should be a wonderful community facility. DM to send through a copy of the simulated “fly through” of the new school. The meeting discussed that the major issue is the state of the roads – in particular potholes and road marking. DM said he thought the marking was an “impossibility”. It seems that even the firm that came up to paint the trunk roads (not HC maintained – were having to come back as they’d painted a wet road and the lines are coming off already). DM says HC can’t get a company to come to Skye. The meeting went on to discuss the lack of markings when visitors arrive – they have no idea of where to stop. This is dangerous. SY asked whether we could do our own painting and it was agreed that this was not possible. DM went on to say that the traffic enforcement team can do small areas of marking (maybe 30 yards) – they need to have a dry day. They’re going to be doing some marking of special parking areas in Portree. We asked that the junction at The Dunvegan be painted. DM said his drive from Portree to Dunvegan was very difficult this evening. Lashing rain, no lines for most of the journey. MB asked about passing place signs. She said that there are a couple of places on the Claigan Road where there’s a bad bend to the right, with a passing place to the left (so that as you go around the bend you can use the passing place to see what’s coming). On one there is no passing place sign, there’s no post, so it won’t even get the don’t park sign. DM said to contact Mackenzie Sutherland with a “what three words” location. Some of the other passing places are now labelled don’t park in the layby – so it’s more likely that visitors will be parking in unmarked passing places. MB also asked if there was logic in the reason that the new signs, added to SOME passing places say “Do not park in layby”. It’s not a layby it’s a passing place. Tourists may well think that if there’s no no parking sign on a passing place sign that it’s OK to park – because it’s not a layby? SY agreed it was confusing and neither DM nor the meeting could fathom out why. MB also asked DM about drainage and that if more attention was paid to keeping water off the roads that less repairs would be necessary. DM said it was a lack of manpower. MB said there are
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	places on the Claigan Rd that were recently repaired that are “going” again – because they’re frequently under water. DM said that Mali MacLennan had contacted him to ask HC to uplift the remnants of the very successful volunteer carpark clean up in Dunvegan. DM was arranging this. JL said that arrangements need to be formalised with HC about cutting the grass at the St. Mary’s – previously the arrangements had been that HC would do two cuts and that we would do two. Last year HC did not do two cuts. JL said he’d email Kevin Gordon with a copy to DM. JL said it’s very busy there and needs to be tended. DM said we could put in a bid to the Ward Discretionary Budget to pay for additional cuts.
7	Trust Report – Mali MacLennan was unable to attend SY gave the Dunvegan Trust’s report. Play Park – The park is now completed. The official opening day is 15th of March at 1pm. Sports Pitch – Planning for the sports pitch was continuing, a sports pitch consultant due around 15th of March, volunteers were sought to join the community pitch working group. Police House – The Police Authority are not wanted to talk about the police house at present. Also, see item 4 above. Cruachan Wood – It should be known in June if the asset transfer is to go ahead. There’s a lot of work to do with 45 roadside trees dead or dying. Volunteer Day – An small and intrepid team worked in poor weather and made great progress. MB commented that the car park looks so much bigger now! MB asked whether there was scope to move some of the bottle banks back to allow for more parking. SY will make enquiries. SY asked about car park lines and DM said the traffic enforcement might be able to do that for us. (see council update above). Glass Recycling – The meeting went on to discuss bins outside the old Gaeltec building and asking businesses to use them, rather than the ones in Dunvegan carpark. We still do not know why businesses do not have to provide for their own glass collection. MB asked why hotels, restaurants, etc. do not have to pay for using council collecting their glass waste. Gaeltec – conveyancing is taking a long time. Surveys – The Trust are delighted with the remarkable response to the survey.
8	Planning – JL said that there was a planning access track application at Roag and additional drainage at the school. SY said that this hydro initiative was excellent. It was agreed that no action was necessary for these new applications.
9	25th Anniversary of the Millenium Stone - Saturday, 21st June 2025 (summer solstice) - DC said she spoke with Calum MacPhail last week and he was available to come. He’s got a two piece band which is popular for all ages. It was agreed that he should be invited to provide entertainment for our celebration event. DC to make an application to the Trust for some funds and is to apply for the licence.

	Thoughts include a dance at Dunvegan Hall, the Young Pipe Band earlier in the day at the stone and perhaps an Afternoon Tea. DM suggested contacting the Archive Centre in Portree for photos of Dunvegan.
10	Any Other Council Business Millburn Barrel – Some time ago we were approached about a barrel that had been damaged by the contractors. The meeting discussed whose barrel it is. We agree to purchase a barrel; JL to procure. School Update – Progressing well, enabling works. Roads are looking well. Open day on 25th of March for children and parents to see the school . Littering - Email from Ross-shire regarding campaign.. JL said initiative is admirable but we already have much in place. The meeting discussed that we already have our signage and many initiatives. DM to provide us with email address of someone who may be able to provide offenders to carry out litter picks. MB said that if any additional signage was done please ensure that it includes skye.scot address as it's important that anything that can be done to drive traffic there can only benefit us all. Wrap signs – DM asked if signs were available for additional community councils. MB said that Elgol had approached. Jan's can print more but it would be beneficial to club together and buy in bulk. MB has A3 signs (same content as wrap signs) which Staffin CC arranged. Syke Community Councils Virtual Meeting – MB asked DM if HC had plans to arrange a meeting. DM said that he'd ask for an online forum to be set up. Staffin are keen to join us. Portree CC is being reformed. MB asked that if others wanted some signs whether the Ward Discretionary Fund might be able to find some funds to subsidise them. He said we'd have to apply and see – fund starts again in April. DM said that he'd speak with John Finlayson and arrange a forum (evening), perhaps with two 40 minute segments. It was agreed that a theme was required – Roads and signage.
11	Next Meeting – Monday 24th of March 2025 at 7:30.