

DUNVEGAN AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING ON Monday 29th April 2025 at 7:30pm

Present – John Laing (JL), Philippa MacRae (PM), Sylvia Meyer (SY), Tim Wallis (TW), Mandy Boswell (MB), Drew Millar (DM), Mali MacLennan (MM).

Apologies – Donna Campbell (DC) 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 – The minutes were agreed. Proposed by TW seconded by SY.
4	Police Report – MB confirmed no further contact from police. She said she'd emailed PCs Darren Reid and Vasile Siritanu who'd both been instrumental in providing the artwork for the signage. She had yet to receive a reply.
5	Treasurer 's Report – None this month. JL said no major expenditure to note.
6	Council Update – DM confirmed that roadworks are proceeding with a lot of work going on at Neist Point including lengthening passing places and widening the road. Once they're completed there, they're heading to Claigan, working with SCRPID (Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division) to get as much benefit out of the new extension of the car park which should also be underway soon. Still waiting for a white lining machine, but the assistant chief executive said to DM that they're sending the inhouse squad over for a fortnight, which was news to our roads manager! We all know how desperately needed the white lines are. The meeting discussed that some potholes are reappearing on recently repaired roads – including the Claigan Road. It was noted that Craik and MacRae seem to be doing a fantastic job on the main road. The roads manager seems to be getting every possible resource working to improve the roads. There's £3 million pounds to spend and it will all be spent – but that will only make a dent. Hopefully we'll get another £3 million next year (which would mean £8.5 million over three years). DM said that Mackenzie Sutherland (roads manager) has a far more organised approach to planning works. The meeting also discussed the dreadful state of the road from Portree to Dunvegan at Edinbane. DM said that the quarry at Sconser was working to a new higher capacity, well ahead of what used to be turned out. The work at Glenbrittle is going well. We should get a full update in August – good weather will help with progress. As well as using Craik and Macrae, Eyre Plant is also being used – a lot of money is being spent. The council now have four machines for hot patching. MB asked again about the Skye and Raasay ward forum. DM and JL confirmed an offer for the meeting has gone out to all Community Councils but there's been little or no take up to date.

	The idea would be to have it on Teams or Zoom and then nobody has to travel anywhere. An agenda would be agreed so that the appropriate council could ask staff to attend. We had hoped to have the meeting in April, however DM confirmed if it was in August or September time, then there would be a good update to be given on the roads. He said listening to community councils and seeing all the emails that we get, the top topic is roads. JL asked about the countryside rangers/enforcement officers. DM said a budget was set aside for them but he's not been told if any are set aside for Skye yet. JL mentioned Gordon Willoughby who is highly thought of, and DM confirmed he's now in full time permanent employment as an enforcement officer. DM said the council are desperately trying to get the car parks done up. The meeting discussed the need for Dunvegan car park and toilets to have a considerable 'make over', perhaps being extended, with provision for motor home sewerage facilities, and also for an invitation to pay. There was talk about motorhome and campervan parking – but the meeting said that this would impact on camp site businesses. MB brought up a recent Police Scotland Facebook post where they categorically say that camping from a vehicle is NOT wild camping and therefore not permitted. This brought the meeting to discuss the visitor levy again – in regard to campers staying in campgrounds having to pay it while those 'wild camping' would not. MB pointed out that if at least rental campervans and motor homes paid a fee it would be better than none! DM mentioned there's a by-election on 19th June for a county councillor – lots of interesting candidates.
7	Trust Report – MM said that the trust had applied for community regeneration funding for a new minibus, which had been unsuccessful. The fund had about £6 million pounds worth of expressions of interest and only £500,000 to allocate. She went on to ask DM if there is any community transport funding that he's aware of, he said he'd find out. MM said she'd been in contact with Struan who were willing to contribute. The minibus would be a bit bigger, but still small enough that no special driver's licence is needed. DM asked if the bus would be electric. MM confirmed it would not as it would be too heavy and therefore only able to carry 8 passengers. MM also said she'd been in contact with Roag Common Grazings Committee to ask about land at Lonmore potentially for a park and ride facility going down to Coral Beach and also a helipad, because the existing helipad will be lost when the new school is built. The grazings committee are open to the idea but need to have a better idea of how much space is required. DM asked if the shuttle bus would run to Neist Point as well and MM said that we want to keep it in our community council area at first but that there's potential to include Neist Point in the future. MM confirmed that buses serving this would be electric. MM went on to say that the trust have launched a petition to register an interest in the police house. So far the police authority have said that they're not interested in selling the house, but she'd heard on the grapevine that they're almost definitely moving their office and that they have

	a space. So she feels if The Trust just register an interest in it, then at least they have to give us first refusal.
8	Donation for Keep Dunvegan Beautiful – JL said we have in the past, given them a grant. Last year we weren't asked – the meeting agreed to give them £250 for plants and planters. MB asked if this was in addition to the replacement barrel – it is in addition.
9	Planning – The meeting discussed a further application for Roag and it was agreed that the community council should note concern about amount of development on croft land.
10	25th Anniversary of the Millenium Stone - Durinish Stone Celebration – Saturday 21st June, MM confirmed that she's applied for the licence and should have it confirmed in the near future. MM said she'd liaised with DC in regard to Catherine McFarland. Catherine works in Portree library and would come and do a session with children. She's been asked and has agreed – but needs to leave at 3pm. Catherine McPhee is on the hunt for pictures and other memorabilia. JL said he has an album and a programme that he'll pass on. The meeting went on to discuss the poems written and the prize winning march. JL said he thought we should find someone to read the poem. MM said Emma Jane Morrison has a good public speaking voice, and said she's great on the radio. MM also said that Dunvegan Trust need photos for the community action plan and that she'd like to take photos on the day to be used by the trust. It was agreed that a subcommittee should be formed to finalise arrangements.
11	Wrap Signs – There's been one or two community councils who've expressed interest in some more wrap signs. And we've now been approached by Bridget Thomas, Highland Council's outdoor access officer and also Ewen Macpherson, senior agricultural officer with the Scottish Government about them obtaining some signs too for use on Scottish Government land. MB confirmed she has spoken with Ewen Macpherson and he's after 30 signs. The meeting discussed that changes to some of the wording is requested, and it is feared that it involves with mixed communications about wild camping. The meeting discussed that Police Scotland have recently posted on Facebook what Dunvegan and District Council believe to be true – that wild camping cannot be done from a vehicle. JL said let's get a price in and then ask other community councils if they want some and if so we'll do it. DM asked that he be copied in on the correspondence as he was fully supportive of the signs and wording.

	The meeting went on to discuss the need to complete a form for Highland Council about completion of the project MB agreed to do this. Until this is done then Highland Council won't process a new application for grass cutting.
12	Any Other Council Business Sport Scotland – JL said he'd attend the meetings about the sports pitch and also the stakeholder group meeting. Penguin 90 – MB confirmed that she'd applied to Penguin books for one of their 90 book exchanges celebrating Penguin's 90th birthday. We won't know until later in the year if we've been successful. Phone boxes – the meeting discussed BT's plans to remove phone boxes and it was agreed that we'd promote via FaceBook BT's intentions. Secretary – PM apologised for recent absence and asked that she be allowed to step down as secretary. She suggested MB take over the role as she'd been covering for PM. The meeting agreed.
13	Next Meeting – Next meeting is 27th May at 7:30pm and incorporates the AGM