

Arran Recovery Group

Meeting Notes

12/2/21

Neil Arthur, Tom Tracey, Timothy Billings, Vicki Yuill, Cameron Bruce, Bill Calderwood, Sheila Gilmore, Andrew Stirling, Linda Johnston, Sheena Borthwick- Toomey, John Maguire, Jude King, Susan Foster. Lucinda Gray. Guest: Louise Kirk

Apologies :Ruth Betley

1) Summary:

- **Objective it to update our current plan to the next revision by March 12 and integrate programmes with NIP Objectives, providing an 'asset register' of Arran programmes that support the delivery of NIP Objectives.**
- **Great progress made by some sections from Health and Social Care plan complete, to draft plans updated and requiring further review in Environment and Education to setting up review group in Economy and Business and everything in between.**
- **I possible/appropriate, include one major metric for your programme e.g. GVA, Quality of Life,CO2 levels. Need help from NAC to establish Arran CO2 baseline.**
- **STR2 will form the basis of medium- and long-term Transport Strategy.**
- **Governance is an issue that needs some urgent attention. Integration of the various players may be relatively simple and a great win for the new Island Manager.**
- **Please provide your summary of programmes as you complete them. I will issue a weekly summary status against each programme, based on your input.**
- **We will conclude by March 12th. Anything that does not make this revision will be included in the next, which hopefully the Senior Island Manager will oversee.**

Thanks for everyone's hard work in getting us this far. I am sure it is appreciated by all involved. It gives us a unique picture of what is happening across the Island, now and in the future, to improve our community, environment and economy.

Tom Tracey

2 Community

a) Health :Tom from Ruth's written input. NIP Objective 7

Arran Recovery and Beyond: One-page summary complete and ready to go.

Arran Pandemic Response – Update.

- Small number of cases have further reduced on Arran
- Must continue to follow FACTS
- Preparing for return of schools
- Local health and social care staff are testing using Lateral Flow Testing followed up by PCR at Brodick Testing centre if required
- Low levels of requests from Arran community for Testing – need to encourage people to use the testing centre
- Testing centre will remain on Arran for at least another 12 months. Separate staffing now in place for Testing centre and Contact Tracing.
- Vaccination programme has given first dose to Care home residents; frontline health and social care staff; Over 70s and 80s; clinically vulnerable and shielding and all housebound patients. Mass vaccination clinics held at Arran High School. Next cohort will be 50-70s. Arran are ahead of the national programme and this is down to excellent effort of local team
- Staff are weary and it has been a very long 12 months for health and social care teams. Mental health support and staff wellbeing is key.
- Vaccination is the light at the end of the tunnel but COVID 19 is endemic and we will need to make sustainable plans to deliver vaccines like we do for Flu – work underway to plan for this.

Question Open for Ruth: What is the testing process for returning school children.

b) Arran CVS Overview: Vicki Yuill. Work maps to at least 4 NIP objectives

Good update from Vicki on the current and future work of Arran CVS. The presentation is attached and provides an overview of both the network and the work of ACVS. This will form the basis of the next revision for Arran Recovery and Beyond plan.

A few takeaways, More detail in the attached documents:

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- ACVS a) Provides support backbone service for Third Sector organisations and advocacy at both Local and Scottish Government levels.
b) It provides activities directly in support of identified need, fitting with charitable objectives e.g. Alcohol and Drug research collaborative, social isolation projects
- The work of ACVS supports at least 4 of the NIP Objectives.
- Strategic objective Separate document to be circulated
- Volunteering in North Ayrshire/ Arran contributed £63m of value in time.
- Community Zoom Facility set up and available to all groups/training provided– Should be useful for this group and subgroups.
- Community forum feedback- Looking to provide a service for most socially isolated and support for people who have been isolated in returning to activity

- Set up an overarching community transport programme- to provide equity of access for people facing barriers to social transport.
- Support development of role for community outreach worker, alcohol & drugs

c) Education: Susan Foster. NIP Objective 12

Susan provided a very helpful update on the 4 areas within the Education section: The current plan has been changed but all the changes have not been shared with colleagues yet so is not available to share but it's close.

Update on current issues:

- Education is uncertain plan a blended approach.
- Plan B all in
- Then plan C all out.
- Plan D blended mode P1, p2 p3 plus senior pupils to undertake practical work.
- SQA uncertainty over taking examinations.
- Need SDS but limited access as many pupils go on to do apprenticeships in hospitality and construction.
- Priorities to get primary pupils back in
- Early years provision centres preparing to meet increased demand for 3–4-year-olds, will need extra staff to make this work. Brodick priorities are a need for funding and a centre.
- Primary using seesaw pre-recorded learning sessions. High school is using various platforms, often fall offline. Upskilling taking place to improve effectiveness of online learning.
- Support received to increase digital access.
- Health and wellbeing provision is a priority through various programs, a number of youngsters are struggling.
- Argyll college unlikely to reopen until August but online is working well for them.
- Education landscape has changed, some opportunities but a different way of working.
- Digital infrastructure still weak. Digital tools a mixed bag but getting better. Digital support has been fantastic but is under threat and would be very damaging if lost.

Group input

Message received by Councillor Billings and will input into budget setting at NAC.

Arran Skills Plan could be updated and bought back into use, it needs to make sense to AHS and taken to SDS to make things happen. Not clear who owns this.

d) Community Council: Neil Arthur :Could map to NIP Objective 13

Neil, being new to the process is absorbing the information ahead of developing a specific plan. However, very Interested in Islands manager role and Islands plan and Recovery / 2030 plan

Likes the idea that everybody works towards those plans. CC ready to play is part in developing, monitoring and implementing these plans and objectives

Group input

CC has a key role to play to bring information back from villages/communities and to recognise value of volunteers.

Metrics are important to drive plan

3) Environment, Jude King Maps to NIP Objectives 8,9

Jude provided a slide presentation and clear updates to the existing plan in the 4 areas covered by the environment. Specific areas covered:

Food localisation Plan

- Land improvement use ongoing.
- Carbon audits ongoing
- Integrated supply chain work done through COVID, woodside farm vending machine bid successful.
- Arran Milk Zero waste Scotland funding approved.
- Working to establish metrics for 'Use more local food by restaurants'
- Engage with Ayrshire CWB more reporting needed.
- Education AES and AFJ results announce in March around behaviour change
- Carbon reduction, need a carbon baseline
- Needs to be part of a wider Arran App
- Labelling system for carbon Arran could be a pilot for this could start in April subject to Funding.

Circular economy

- Food waste composting program being explored.
- Covid has prevented Repair Reuse and Repair, ARCAS and Arran for sale and wants are finding ways to continue online. Platforms being explored to aid this.
- Food share has remained at the COOP and looking at how that can evolve, post pandemic.
- Community café idea still a possibility post Covid

Energy and Buildings

- Arran Community Renewables is looking at increasing renewable generation on the Island. Although there have been some significant challenges, progress is still being made.
- Not many updates on other areas of the plan. Need to be clear who is delivering the updates.

Land and Nature Restoration

- Flood and resilience plan to be shared in the final version of the plan.
- Deforestation Arran has catastrophic impact from infected Larch. Progress with NTS and ACLI and other organisations. Arran Geo Park progressing their objective of gaining UNESCO status.

Marine Environment

COAST to report at another meeting. Objectives in the plan unlikely to change although timescales and metrics to be added.

Group input

Although the environmental issues above are covered by two specific Objectives in the NIP, Environment runs through Islands Plan in every Objective.

Some dissatisfaction about how Pioneer Project has been set up using a council adopted single track road as no pre consultation before site was set up. Jude will pass contact details of the person managing the programme to Neil, who will work it with them directly.

Observation: While on the face of it, this issue might seem trivial, it is not. This is a real example of the 'Balance' principle being brought into sharp relief: A very local community has to decide on environmental/amenity gain v possible community disruption. Interesting, could boil down to an issue of communication.

4 Economy: Alastair Dobson. Maps to NIP Objective 2.

Alastair is in the process of setting up a focussed business group with support from NAC and HIE to feed into the Arran Recovery and Beyond by 12th March.

General comments:

- This group is vital to support solving problems raised within the various sections.
- All other sections of this plan crosscut with and effect economic recovery.
- Arran businesses have been impacted more than the rest of Scotland in part due to our hospitality sector being the dominant player.
- Should recognise the responsible behaviour of our businesses and employers.
- Most infections are driven from retail not hospitality, need for bigger retailers enforce behaviour of community in their stores.
- Need to protect and grow our tourism industry in a safe and sustainable way and we should also look to broaden our business base beyond tourism.

5 Affordable Housing, Sheena Borthwick: NIP Objective 1 and 4

Sheena confirmed that the Arran Development Trust (ADT) are on track with short- and medium-term plans for affordable housing on Arran. Updates will be made to the current Arran Recovery and Beyond plan. Outlined below are a summary highlights of recent activity:

- Planning permission granted for 18 affordable homes at Rowarden.
- Tender process now completed after separating into 9 work packages and have come in in line with Budget
- Work on first site to start in April, Houses will have solar panels and rent levels set at reasonable
- Accommodation providers have provided competitive rates for work force following an intervention by VistArran. This helps keep the overall build costs down.
- First tendering process will provide a good cost template for second site
- Serviced self-build plots to be made available that will only be useable as full time residential properties with a burden in the title to prevent the use as second homes.

Group Input

When project started no plan for new affordable houses on Arran. NAC Social Housing Islands Needs Plan (SHIP) now has 50 by 2021. The first 34 of these will be in Brathwic and will be very welcome. Every sector of Arran community and economy is short of workforce largely driven by a lack of affordable housing. It is also a primary driver in the depopulation of working age residents and the inability to recruit.

NAC is going to consult on Arran specific rental policy for Brathwic. This could potentially favour locals or those who come to Arran for work. Aim to revisit those that have been on housing list long term. No decision yet on how/if this will work. Until it changes, existing rules apply.

6 Transport, Louise Kirk: NIP Objective 3

Louise Kirk gave a very useful update to the group on the development on the new strategic plan and how the Arran Community could get involved. Presentation is attached and Survey links sent separately. A summary of some of the discussion is outlined below. Clearly, this STR2 process and everything that flows from it will provide the input to the Medium and Term Transport Strategy that will be used at a local level in the Arran Recovery and Beyond and the NIP Objective 3.

- National Transport Strategy sets out priorities and feeds into strategic transport review
- Regional Transport groups working to direct policies
- STR2 extensive stakeholder engagement. Consultation on Priorities for next 2-3 year. Next phase for next 17 years, part of growth deal project to look at regional transport needs
- Regional strategy by SPT last updated in 2008 A lot of improvements have come from SPT programme
- Local transport strategy 2015 due to be update 2020 but delayed because of delays to National and Regional strategies and Covid-19, will include active travel plan. Existing LTS sets out a range of actions in relation to Arran.
- STPR2 Consultants have worked through the feedback obtained to the public consultation to date including options generation to identify priorities. Consultation live now on TS website until 31 March.
- Topography poses some challenges with Brodick to Lamlash active travel route, discussions ongoing with funder, Sustrans.
- Brodick to Corrie, ongoing engagement with NTS, good support from Sustrans for this route.

Group Discussion

Tom thanked Louise for her comprehensive update in a very short space of time and welcomed her back at any time for another update.

7 Digital Technology, Andrew Stirling Maps to NIP objective 6

Andrew provided a baseline template to open the discussion which he will now take up with other interested parties. Themes for further discussion are:

- Arran Digital Future and Vision.
- Getting data and communications in the right place
- Data Comms Connectivity Skills
- Arran Digital Twin
- Connectivity – Create a local pot to fill significant gaps
- Digital skills for all – Digital hub to support businesses and organisations – Local digital champions. Already working with Arran CVS to deliver support in the community.
- Vision – Opportunity to diversify beyond tourism; Arran mobility app .Arran Food App – foster a circular economy and reduce waste.

Group discussion

Test ideas with those that can input cuts across many of the group's activities.

8) Governance : Timothy Billings. Maps to NIP objective 13

Timothy has created a discussion paper ahead of updating the existing Governance section in the plan. This will be circulated for wider discussion. Highlights of the main topics that are being looked at:

- NAC developing locality approach Islands Mgr. will need a clear understanding how all the organisations fit together
- NAC developing a locality hub model. How does this fit.
- How to make it real – How does community link into this, what it will mean for individuals, how will they engage, how to have community development and cohesion how do all groups link into this.
- A paper will be circulated – How do we see existing groups CC AEG Locality Partnership linking together and join up with plan. Please feedback and then we can use it to have a wider discussion.
- Eg. Community council take control of engaging with communities with others feeding in. They have remit to make sure it is happen and members have input

Group discussion

- Islands manager will be key person to drive this
- Linking groups together will make the individual parts much stronger eg. Beekeepers group can also have a role in accessibility and mental wellbeing

9) Communication: Sheila Gilmore. Maps to NIP objective 13.

Sheila confirmed the communication plan was in progress. Highlights of discussion:

- Communications plan, important to see everything interlinked.
- We don't have Arts and Culture Fuel Poverty that are in NIP. Should we add them or cover them in another section. Sheila to take soundings and recommend.
- If we are updating the plan in March something should go in the national media
- Put all comms through central comms to have continuity of communication.

10 Conclusion: Tom Tracey

Thanks the team for this mammoth exercise and everyone appreciated the hard work that went into it, remarkable.