

SOUTH KNAPDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes

Date: 6pm, 11th February 2026

Location: Ormsary Hall, Ormsary

1. Welcome and Housekeeping

The Chair opened the meeting, noting that microphones were being used to assist in accurate minuting.

- **Apologies:** Cncllr Anne Horn, Cmnty Cncllr Brian Steven, Cmnty Cncllr John Campbell and Cmnty Cncllr Jarl Van Den Berg (Treasurer), Mary Ray, David Wilson, Anne McArthur, Archie McArthur.
- **Attendees:** Cmnty Cncllr Kara Paschalides (Chair), Cmnty Cncllr Ed Tyler (Secretary), Cmnty Cncllr Liza Stolton and Cmnty Cncllr Carina Spink, Cncllr Jan Brown, Peter Minshall, Andrew and Trish Russell, Hugh Thomson, Jacqui McKinney, Katharine Weir, Hector Paschalides, Chris Wolfe.
- **Declarations of Interest:** No conflicts of interest were declared for the current agenda.
- **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the previous meeting (November) had been circulated digitally and physically in the meeting and were subsequently approved.

2. Update from Councillor Jan Brown (Deputy Provost)

Cncllr Brown provided an overview of the current challenges facing Argyll and Bute Council.

- **Budget:** The council must present a balanced budget by the end of February. While the Scottish Government settlement was slightly better than anticipated, the council still faces a "tight" financial situation.
- **Integrated Joint Board (IJB):** The health and social care budget is in a multi-million-pound deficit. Proposed cuts include reducing carer hours and out-of-hours services.
- **Live Argyll:** This charity managed by A&BC is also showing a significant deficit; the council must fund it to prevent the closure of libraries, swimming pools, and community education.
- **Visitor Levy:** Implementation has been paused while the Scottish Government reviews legislation regarding flat rates versus percentages. A working group including members from the tourism and hospitality sectors (e.g., Booking.com) is consulting on the matter. Cncllr Brown confirmed any levy revenue would be ring-fenced for tourism infrastructure (toilets, Wi-Fi) and not used for general budget gaps.
- **Single Unitary Model:** The single unitary model proposes integrating the council and NHS with other local services to share buildings and streamline delivery through closer alliances. While proponents seek improved efficiency, Cncllr Brown warned

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that a larger bureaucracy might lead to "working in silos" and a loss of local focus, citing historical challenges with Police Scotland. A formal paper is pending, though the health board currently remains hesitant to participate.

3. Road Safety and Maintenance (B8024)

The community is raising significant concerns regarding the safety of the B8024 single-track road.

- **Signage:** The Council's roads department stated there is no funding for new signage in response to an email from the SKCC. Cncllr Brown suggested that the community could raise funds to install their own advisory 20 mph or 30 mph signs, following the example of North Knapdale. Cncllr Brown also warned that while making the signs is cheap, the Council may insist on using expensive contractors for installation to meet their regulations.
- **Potholes:** Cncllr Brown reported that the roads budget would be increased to address the "terrible condition" of rural routes. The community were urged to report defects via A and B Council's online form - (https://argyllandbute.custhelp.com/app/RA/Road_Defect) or by calling the Council's main number (01546 604452) and ask for Kilmory reception giving them the What3Words locations to ensure quicker action.

4. Planning and Development Updates

- **Loch Stornoway Hill:** Following a vote in November, the SKCC submitted a neutral comment to the planning portal due to divided local opinions. A decision from the planning officer is still pending.
- **Brenfield Wind Farm:** Low Carbon met with the SKCC in December. Key details include a grid connection date of 2033, the removal of battery storage from the plans, and the potential for 10% shared community ownership. Construction traffic is expected to impact the A83 and B8024.
- **Planning Department:** Cncllr Brown noted that the planning officer for the area has been replaced, which should help alleviate recent processing delays.

5. Connectivity and Infrastructure

- **Broadband (Fibre):** The Secretary met with Stephen Chamber (stephen.2.chambers@openreach.co.uk), an Open Reach Regional Engagement Manager, at a roadshow event recently in Lochgilphead.
 - Stephen confirmed that fiber construction for the Tarbert exchange via R100 and Gigabit programs is scheduled for late 2026, though Achadh-Chaorann Bay is currently excluded, leaving a gap in the area between Kilberry and Dunmore. The Ormsary exchange will be covered under Project Gigabit by 2030, with specific timelines pending upcoming survey work. Check individual property status at www.broadbandchecker.service.gov.scot.

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- **Broadband Voucher Scheme:** The Chair reported that Leisure Connect, who attended the November 2025 SKCC meeting, were offering aerial installations to the community under the Scottish Government voucher scheme, had withdrawn from the scheme. Community members in the room expressed scepticism, warning that the current broadband voucher scheme often provides aerials for masts rather than true fibre. Starlink was recommended as a more reliable alternative, noting a new, more affordable £35-a-month package having been recently released (www.starlink.com/gb/residential).
- **Kilberry Water Supply:** Scottish Water confirmed that the current method of supplying Kilberry with water was an emergency measure: temporary tanks are being refilled weekly by tankers. Two permanent tanks are planned for the future, though dates are not yet set.
- **Defibrillator:** The Ardpatrik defibrillator is currently offline. Plans are underway to relocate it to a refurbished telephone box once funding for new batteries and pads is secured.

6. Local Economy and Social Care

- **Economic Growth:** Discussion focused on the need for housing and better mobile / internet signals to retain young people. Programs like STEM projects and works-based training weeks are being used to encourage local trades.
- **Social Care Crisis:** Cmnty Cncllr Liza Stolton highlighted that significant budget cuts have effectively eliminated home care in the area. A major logistical hurdle is the travel time required for short visits. Councillor Brown acknowledged the difficulty in recruiting carers despite the high cost of keeping patients in hospitals.
- **Community Action Plans:** Cmnty Cncllr Stolton provided an update on the development of community action plans – community-led initiatives outlining what the community want to see improved in their area. South Knapdale is unique and more dispersed meaning the plan is better focused on practical infrastructure and safety. E.g., resilience planning, road conditions.

7. Police Report

The December report for MAKI was read out; the full report can be found on the SKCC website.

8. Actions & Next Meeting

Actions for Councillor Jan Brown:

- Put the SKCC in touch with the North Knapdale CC to discuss how they successfully installed their own road signs.
- Will inquire about the costs associated with North Knapdale's signage (both manufacturing and contractor installation) to provide a benchmark for SKCC.

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- Will raise local road safety concerns with Transport Scotland and will ask Cncllr Anne Horn to do the same.
- Will investigate exactly where the B8024 road sits on the council's "uplift program" for road maintenance.
- Offered to return and speak to the community again once the final council budget is decided (end of February).

Actions for the Community Council (SKCC)

- SKCC will reach out to Scottish Water to confirm the timeline for permanent tank installations and ask if the current system can support new housing developments.
- SKCC will attend discussions about the potential for community funding from Community Ownership of energy projects in our area.
- SKCC is investigating the relocation of the defibrillator to the Ardpatrik telephone box and is currently seeking funding for new batteries and pads.

Actions for the Community

- Those with specific issues regarding planning delays were invited to email Councillor Brown directly (Jan.Brown@argyll-bute.gov.uk).
- Email suggestions to info@SKCC.scot for the Community Action Plan to determine how potential funding could be used. Initial ideas include emergency resilience, such as generators, and local infrastructure improvements.
- Those who wish to receive digital minutes and updates are to provide their email addresses sent to info@SKCC.scot to be added to the mailing list.
- The community is encouraged to continuously report road defects via A&B Council's online form, as high volumes of complaints for the same pothole often trigger faster repairs.

Next meeting:

- **Next Meeting:** Scheduled for **Wednesday, 6th May, 6pm at the Kilberry Church.**
- **Action Item:** The SKCC will request a representative from Forestry and Land Scotland to attend the next meeting.