

## **Colintraive and Glendaruel Community Council**

### **Minute of Community Consultation Meeting on the Argyll Rally 2025**

#### **Colintraive Village Hall, at 7.30pm on the 7th July 2025**

**Community Councillors present :** Charles Dixon-Spain (CDS) (Convener), Michael Russell (MR) (Vice-convener), Cathleen Russell (CR) (Treasurer), Rob Groom (RG)

**Residents:** Stephen McKellar, Cathy Grant, Martin McFarlane, Neil Black ,Claire Banner

**Apologies:** Toni & John King, Teresa Lenton, David Eaglesham, Ros MacGhee, Anne Craig & one resident who had asked for anonymity.

**Declarations of Interest:** CDS

#### **Welcome & Introduction**

MR who was charging as Vice-Chair given the declaration of interest from CDS, welcomed all attending and outlined the process and purpose of the meeting.

MR asked that anyone who had a financial interest in the rally should declare it before speaking, but of course there is no bar on them giving their view.

MR informed the meeting that Sam Spencer of the Argyll Rally and Hugh O'Neil of Argyll & Bute Council are both aware that this meeting was taking place and that they had provided updated information.

MR confirmed that the Community Council has discussed the rally at every meeting since last year's public meeting - CR & MR have been the liaison and have only missed one of the on line discussions.

The Community Council's position has been to seek changes to the plans which would result in

1. Only one closure for each local section
2. Coast road to be refurbished
3. Damage to be attended to quickly

MR believed that this approach had achieved partial success - the shore road only had one closure, and even that was limited because of serious accident during the evening at Tarsan. But the West Road had two closures amount which meant it was shut for residents and other for all of the Saturday . However the road was opened in advance of the advertised time, which was welcome.

Hugh O'Neil had confirmed to MR that the Coast road - called the Fearnoch stage by the Rally - would be refurbished starting in August. There was no notified damage on that section this year but the road condition was still poor. It was claimed by some attending the meeting that work would also be done on the West Road, but that had not been confirmed to the CC.

The CC also wish to assess the local economic benefit from Rally. Is there tangible evidence of local economy benefiting, and/ or local charities? Local benefit assessment so far focussed on Dunoon and the standard formula for assessing this is not really relevant here.

CC has a commitment to hear reactions to this year's rally and present conclusions to a face-to-face meeting of affected CCs with the Rally Organisers during the summer.

#### **Discussion**

Residents attending the meeting fed back as follows:

This was a very good rally. The competitors, organisers and spectators were really friendly.

The organisers of the car park in the middle of the glen made £1800 between car park fees and the stall. This money will be split between Kilmodan PS and Scottish air ambulance. The organisation of the stage on the Saturday meant that West Glen Road site benefitted from a captive audience. There was also a pop up cafe at Bealachandrain and the Rally organisers had been quoted as saying that total raised for charity in the Glen was £2500.

There were lots of camper vans, caravans and tents and it was thought many others used local accommodation. The question of whether accommodation businesses saw an uplift in trade was asked but there was also a view that not much of that trade made it to Cointraive.

CDS read the feedback the CC had received from six residents who were unable or did not want to attend the meeting. Four were against and two in favour. The main items raised were as follows:

1. Could the length of time the rally stages used residential roads be reduced further?
2. The closed stages were inconvenient and did. Not allow for reasonable access for both work and leisure purposes.
3. Would it not be possible to rotate locations, stages and dates to make the rally less impactful on both residents living along the roads used, and on the environment ?
4. There was disquiet about excessive verge clearance in some places whilst not enough in blackspot that local people had to experience all the time.
5. Two of those who had given apologies alleged that their objections as people living on the closed stages who experienced the difficulties first hand including noise, fumes, dangerous speeds, being trapped in their houses and infrastructure damage were not being heard nor did they feel that the process by which the organisers / decision-makers decided on the event was transparent or democratic.
6. All the correspondents were sceptical regarding local benefit of the rally.
7. There was a suggestion that a community-owned carbon offset project be found which would at least produce some local benefit.

MR expressed gratitude for those who had responded though he was disappointed that no one critical of the rally had actually attended the meeting. He emphasised again that the CC would put forward to the Rally the views raised, both positive and negative. A face to face meeting of CC representatives with the Rally organisers would take place at some stage over the summer.

Further discussion included the following suggestions and observations :

1. • More signage warning off delays whilst the rally was taking place would be useful - some visitors and road users were still not aware that the rally was taking place.
2. • It was generally thought that the reconnaissance day route and timings needed more publicity to ensure that residents were aware when a convoy of cars was likely to appear. Public posting online and in the resident's packs would be useful.
3. • The Colintraive Hotel reported that it didn't get an uplift in business from the event - if anything the business experienced reduced footfall. More effort was required to spread the beneficial impact.
4. • RB suggested a scheme of collective local businesses advertising, perhaps sponsoring a stage, and at the least asking for publicity for local businesses on facebook/websites from the organisers.
5. • Several attendees commented that given the success of the West Glen Road car park fund-raising some people would definitely like more stages in the Glen or at the very least the continuation of a full day using the West Road.
6. • It was noted that there had been no comments on the Bealachandrain section from anyone.
7. • Given the problems that the hotel experienced, and also the success of the West Glen Road Carpark, a Colintraive meet and greet for competitors and cars on the Friday night was suggested, possibly at, or in front of the Hotel.

MR stated that all the Cowal CCs have supported the rally this year apart from Kilfinan, and that for everyone wishing to make their views known, they could still complete the survey from Dunoon CC which has been widely circulated online and on the CC website.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8.15pm