

Flanagan, Kirsty <Kirsty.Flanagan@argyll-bute.gov.uk>

Fri 20 Jun,
12:12

to me, Yvonne, William, Gordon, Jenni.Minto.msp@parliament.scot

Classification: OFFICIAL

Dear Ms Renfrew,

I refer to your correspondence of 30 May 2025, in which you raise several points on behalf of the Kilfinan Community Council. I will address each point in turn:-

1. We were pleased to see extensive coverage of the views from Community Councils, but disappointed that the response does not include any indication of how the view has been reached that our objections to stages in our area are overridden by the views of other CCs about their stages.

As per previous correspondence to you dated 10 December 2024 and 19 March 2025, the event is not a Council run event, the legislation states that the Council may make a Motor Sport Order if satisfied that adequate arrangements have been made to allow the views of the local community to be taken into account as well as involve local residents, the police and other emergency services in the planning of the event. Mr O'Neill was clear in his response to the Kilfinan Community Council's request to withhold approval and direct the Mull Car Club to revise their proposed routes in partnership with the Community Councils who have lodged objections, that he took the view of sharing this with the other Community Councils where the event covers. The Council reviewed the whole route and having had regard to the comments from all four Community Councils about the event, we are satisfied that adequate arrangements have been made to involve local residents, as such we are not in a position to withhold approval.

2. We are not clear why route revisions cannot be made in the Kilfinan CC area, based on this community council's concerns?

Any proposal from KCC for route revisions would be part of the ongoing engagement with the Event Organisers. Ultimately, as stated in the response to 1 above, the Council reviewed the whole route and having had regard to the comments from all four Community Councils about event, we are satisfied that adequate arrangements have been made to involve local residents, as such we are not in a position to withhold approval.

3. We find the response incomplete in not addressing a number of the specific points in our submission:-

- There is no statement on the economic impact, which Argyll and Bute Council (ABC) is required to consider and which we specifically queried.
- We asked ABC to explain how the road closures can be legal when there are no alternative routes? There is no answer to that question.
- We asked for a statement from ABC about the noise level and how it complies with the relevant environmental regulations.

I would refer you to the correspondence previously sent on by me to you in February 2025, where I advised "As per his commitment at the Strachur Community Council special meeting, Mr O'Neill has asked the Rally Organisers and Dunoon Bids for a wider Economic Impact Assessment". I would further confirm that Mr O'Neill has liaised with our Economic Growth team and the information from Dunoon BID uses the Scottish Government website data set which is acceptable to the Council.

I would refer you to previous communication between you and our Head of Legal in June of 2024 regarding alternative routes. I would refer you to previous communication between Mr O'Neill and you in September of 2024 where he provided a response regarding noise levels.

4. We were also concerned to receive the traffic regulation order. This includes alternative routes for every closure but most of those alternative routes are closed roads. The same order states "being satisfied that it is not reasonably practical for the event to be held otherwise than on a road" but there is nothing in the report from Hugh O'Neill which indicates how ABC have reached that conclusion?

The application is for a closed road event, as such it is not reasonably practicable for the event to be held otherwise than on a road.

5. Finally, we would like to engage with the Council to agree a planning process for future years which enables community council views to be reflected in the early development of route proposals. We will engage with other community council's in this regard and would welcome thoughts from ABC about how this might work. This CC does not want to be in a position for 2026 where the rally organisers put firm routes out for "consultation" which do not have the support of our community and which go forward unchanged

As this is not a Council run event, it would be for the Community Councils to engage with the Rally Organisers. There is already an established forum for regular meetings with the rally which involves Community Councils to which you have participated as well as council officers who will continue to support this where duties permit.

The Council will continue to engage positively with all parties in addressing the arrangements in these events. With that in mind, I would ask that future correspondence in relation to the rally deals with new matters or new concerns, it is not only time consuming for officers to go over previous responses, but also not conducive to building harmonious relationships between officers and community council representatives to revisit matters where clear advice or information has already been provided.

Regards,

Kirsty Flanagan

Executive Director
Argyll and Bute Council
01546 604268
www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

From: Secretary Kilfinan Community Council
Sent: 15 June 2025 20:13
To: Flanagan, Kirsty
Cc: Mcneilly, Yvonne ; Sinclair, William ; Blair, Gordon ;
Jenni.Minto.msp@parliament.scot
Subject: Re: Argyll Rally 2025

Thanks for that, the points raised are the same as our early April submission. It is disappointing that 2 months later Council officers have not been able respond.

Catriona Renfrew
Secretary
Kilfinan Community Council

On Fri, 6 Jun 2025, 12:35 Flanagan, Kirsty, <Kirsty.Flanagan@argyll-bute.gov.uk> wrote:

Classification: OFFICIAL

Dear Ms Renfrew

Thank you for your email below, I can confirm that this is receiving attention.

Kindest regards
Susie

Susie Sinclair (Mills)
Directorate Support Officer

Argyll and Bute Council
Kilmory, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RT
www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
01546 604421

From: Secretary Kilfinan Community Council <secretary.kilfinancc@gmail.com>
Sent: 30 May 2025 15:35
To: Flanagan, Kirsty <Kirsty.Flanagan@argyll-bute.gov.uk>
Cc: Mcneilly, Yvonne <Yvonne.Mcneilly@argyll-bute.gov.uk>; Sinclair, William <William.Sinclair@argyll-bute.gov.uk>; Blair, Gordon <Gordon.Blair@argyll-bute.gov.uk>; Jenni.Minto.msp@parliament.scot
Subject: Argyll Rally 2025

Dear Ms Flanagan,

We discussed Hugh O'Neill's communication at our meeting earlier this week (attached with our submission for ease of reference) and agreed that we have substantial concerns about this response.

We were pleased to see extensive coverage of the views from Community Councils, but disappointed that the response does not include any indication of how the view has been reached that our objections to stages in our area are overridden by the views of other CCs about their stages. We are not clear why route revisions cannot be made in the Kilfinan CC area, based on this community council's concerns?

We find the response incomplete in not addressing a number of the specific points in our submission:-

- There is no statement on the economic impact, which Argyll and Bute Council (ABC) is required to consider and which we specifically queried.
- We asked ABC to explain how the road closures can be legal when there are no alternative routes? There is no answer to that question.
- We asked for a statement from ABC about the noise level and how it complies with the relevant environmental regulations.

We were also concerned to receive the traffic regulation order. This includes alternative routes for every closure but most of those alternative routes are closed roads. The same order states **"being satisfied that it is not reasonably practical for the event to be held otherwise than on a road"** but there is nothing in the report from Hugh O'Neill which indicates how ABC have reached that conclusion?

We would appreciate urgent responses to these points as there continues to be a high level of concern in our community about the rally.

Finally, we would like to engage with the Council to agree a planning process for future years which enables community council views to be reflected in the early development of route proposals. We will engage with other community council's in this regard and would welcome thoughts from ABC about how this might work. This CC does not want to be in a position for 2026 where the rally organisers put firm routes out for "consultation" which do not have the support of our community and which go forward unchanged.

Catriona Renfrew

**Secretary
Kilfinan Community Council**

FW: Argyll Rally Proposals 2025 [OFFICIAL]

rally



O'Neill, Hugh <Hugh.O'Neill@argyll-bute.gov.uk>

16 May 2025,
14:24

to me, Kirsty

Classification: OFFICIAL

Classification: OFFICIAL

Thank you for your correspondence in relation to the Argyll Rally where we note the request from Kilfinnan Community Council to withhold approval and direct the Mull Car Club to revise their proposed routes in partnership with the Community Councils who have lodged objections.

In your correspondence we have reviewed the paper submitted by the Secretary of the Kilfinnan Community Council (KCC) which sets out the KCC agreed position and that their conclusion is that KCC oppose the granting of a motorsport order for the route proposed.

As this paper made reference to other Community Councils, and clearly stated the requirement to consider:

- (a) the likely impact of the event on the local community,
- (b) the potential local economic and other benefits, and
- (c) any other matters that the roads authority considers relevant.

As well as:

The roads authority may make the motor sport order if satisfied that—

- (a) adequate arrangements have been made to allow the views of the local community to be taken into account,
- (b) adequate arrangements have been made to involve local residents, the police and other emergency services in the planning and implementation of the event,
- (c) adequate public safety arrangements have been or will be made for the event, and
- (d) adequate traffic management arrangements have been or will be made for the event

The Council took the view that this should be shared with the other Community Councils and asked for comment.

The Colglen Community Council (CCC) initially responded confirming that a section of the KCC paper was wrong as per below:

“ We have confirmation from Colglen CC that their objections to the stage proposals in their area, formally submitted by the CC in September 2024, have not been addressed by MCC and still stand. This means that the Community Council’s covering 10 of the 16 stages have objected to the rally progressing on the route proposed”.

“The Colglen CC does not believe that our objections “have not been addressed”. Indeed, we are grateful for the changes that have been made to the Shore Road and West Road stages but the organisers , but we do believe more changes are required. So, we think progress is being made but we also think there needs to be more progress on the issue of stages that require road closures for any sustained period of time.

We have tried to correct this mis statement of our position on several occasions when we have heard it being made by a representative of Kifinan CC but apparently to no avail”.

Further to this, the CCC met and discussed the paper from the KCC, they provided the below update:

- 1) We remain in support of the rally , recognising the strong views on both sides. This support is not, however unequivocal and we understand that for both here and in Kilfinan there is a considerable inconvenience for some business and many residents. Everything should be done to minimise this.
- 2) In that regard we believe some progress has been made on some issues in our area, including the reduction in usage of both the Shore Road and the West Road stages , (as we call them). We would like the usage of these parts to be further reduced in future years.
- 3) We understand that work on the Shore Road is planned by the Council at some stage this year and in the light of that we are prepared to wait and see if such improvements are enough to make local residents agree that the road is suitable for the type of usage it gets as a rally stage. If not we will return to this matter if there are any proposals made for 2026.
- 4) There may be economic benefit to Dunoon but we are not at all sure that much of it spreads out to our area. We would therefore ask the organisers and/or Argyll and Bute Council to undertake a much more focused local benefit analysis this year and we will ourselves endeavour to try and capture as much information as we can on the matter.
- 5) Finally given that we have seen the “stage proposals” at least partially “addressed” by the MCC we cannot agree with the statement of the position of the ColGlen CC as alleged on the final page of the Kilfinan document.

The Strachur Community Council provided the below response:

Strachur & District Community Council supports the proposals for Argyll Rally 2025. However, we would like to repeat the following points that were included in our submission to Motorsport UK’s consultation.

1. Residents in our area of responsibility have mixed views on the proposals for Argyll Rally 2025.
2. We are confident that Mull Car Club is fully aware of residents' concerns and that they intend to address those pertaining to:
 - (a) Marshals.
 - (b) Road closure signage.

- (c) Excessive noise.
- (d) Drivers' behaviour during recce sessions.
- (e) Repair of damaged walls etc.
- (f) Providing relevant local businesses in our area (Post Office, Filling Station, Stucroch Caravan Park, Creggans Inn etc.) with information about road closure locations and times.
- (g) Ensuring that there is easily available information about road closure locations and times (and routes between closed stages) on the Argyll Rally website and on Facebook.

3. Certain residents in our area of responsibility, particularly those with businesses affected by the closure of part of the B8000, want the rally to avoid the B8000 completely. In their proposals for Argyll Rally 2025, Mull Car Club attempted a compromise by removing the B8000 Saturday afternoon stage, although this failed to satisfy affected businesses. The idea has been raised of rotating rally routes from year to year so that the same residents and businesses are not affected annually. Strachur & District Community Council hopes that serious consideration will be given to this and any other suggestions for reducing the inconvenience to residents and businesses in future iterations of the rally.

The Dunoon Community Council (DCC) responded as below:

DCC issued a Community Survey on 28 June 2024 @ 0900hrs and it closed on 19 July 2024 @ 1200hrs.

Total responses – 262, of which 86 were from Dunoon residents. I've attached the full response to the survey (the highlighted comments on the completed survey, are all from Kilfinan residents). No comments have been altered in any shape or form, even the spelling mistakes are still there.

Also attached is a summary document of the views of those whom we represent. On our web site we also have the summary pie charts of responses, where you will note that 86% of the Dunoon residents who responded are in favour of the Argyll Rally Town Centre Stage taking place in 2025 (overall 90% of those who responded). And a summary of all the comments made, in the free text area of the survey are attached as an Excel workbook. There are 3 worksheets in total within it.

Note that some commentators were misinformed / mistaken in their comments, e.g. access to CalMac ferries being denied which is not the case.

We also published details of the Mull Car Clubs consultation on our web site in late August 2024 for our residents to comment directly.

As you can see, the overwhelming majority of Dunoon residents who responded to the DCC survey are in favour of the Rally taking place. It will be a huge blow to the overall Argyll and Bute economy if it doesn't go ahead.

Mull Car Club has over several years carried out engagement meetings with the relevant Community Councils and endeavoured to work with issues raised. This is highlighted in the response from Strachur CC (point 3) and ColGlen CC (points 2 and 5) which covered the issues raised from last year's event. This is further supported with the consultation carried out by the Mull Car Club after the request made through the Community Councils.

Conclusion:

The Council, as Roads Authority has had regard to;

- a)the likely impact of the event on the local community,
- (b)the potential local economic and other benefits, and
- (c)any other matters that the roads authority considers relevant.

-The above responses and also the meetings officers attended with 3 of the 4 Councils over the last year (where there was representation from Kilfinnan residents and businesses as there was no Community Council there until February 2025).

-The views of the Community and noted that 3 of the 4 Community Councils have supported the 2025 rally.

-That the Mull Car Club has endeavoured to work with local communities and indeed has carried out far greater arrangements to involve local residents than any other event held within the Argyll and Bute Area which I am aware of, including changes to routes and times over several years, due to feedback and engagement with the communities demonstrating a level of understanding of the needs of the various communities and a flexible approach to address these.

The Council as Roads authority is satisfied that —

- (a)adequate arrangements have been made to allow the views of the local community to be taken into account,
- (b)adequate arrangements have been made to involve local residents, the police and other emergency services in the planning and implementation of the event,
- (c)adequate public safety arrangements have been or will be made for the event, and
- (d)adequate traffic management arrangements have been or will be made for the event

Having considered all relevant matters, the Council is not in a position to withhold approval and considers it appropriate to grant the order.

Regards Hugh

Hugh O'Neill
Network and Standards Manager
Roads and Infrastructure Services
Development and Infrastructure
Argyll and Bute Council
(01546) 604084