

Gourock Town Centre Regeneration Forum (GTCRF) Minute of Meeting

Held Friday 7 February 2025 at 10am by hybrid format, within the Municipal Buildings Customer Services Centre Meeting Room 4 (CSCMR4) and via Microsoft Teams Videoconferencing.

ATTENDING

Cllr L Quinn (Chair)	Inverclyde Council - Ward 5
Cllr S Reynolds	Inverclyde Council - Ward 5
Cllr I Hellyer	Inverclyde Council - Ward 5
G Canata	The Whisky Room & Gourock Community Council
H McCulloch	The Pirate and Bluebelle Gallery
H McKenzie	Inverclyde Tourist Group
S Gallagher	Clydeview Academy School Representative
K McKenzie	St Columba's School Representative
J Ramsay	Clydeview Academy School Representative
J Boyd	Inverclyde Council - Community Worker
E Dickie	Inverclyde Council - Team Leader, Communications and Tourism
A Fox	Inverclyde Council - Heritage Coordinator
J Horn	Inverclyde Council - Physical Regeneration Manager
S Jamieson	Inverclyde Council - Director Environment and Regeneration
A Johnston	Inverclyde Council - Business Development Officer, Town Centres
G Leitch	Inverclyde Council - Team Leader, Consultancy
G Murray	Inverclyde Council - Technical Services Manager
G Smith	Inverclyde Council - Capital & Assets Principal Accountant
AM Bagstad (Minute)	Inverclyde Council - Committee Officer

1.0 **Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interests**

1.1 Cllr Quinn welcomed everyone to the meeting especially the new attendees as follows:-

- S Gallagher
- K McKenzie
- J Ramsay
- J Boyd
- A Fox

Everyone at the meeting introduced themselves.

Cllr Quinn, H McKenzie, G Murray and AM Bagstad present, all other attendees accessed the meeting remotely.

1.2 Apologies received from E Baird, R Braddick (E Dickie substituting), A King, K McEwen, N McIlvanney (S Jamieson substituting), E McKelvie, E Montgomery (G Murray substituting) and Rev. T Peterson.

1.3 There were no declarations intimated.

2.0 Approval of Minute and Matters Arising

2.1 A Minute from the meeting held the 15 November 2024, were disseminated prior to the meeting and unanimously approved.

2.2 Matters arising covered under meeting Agenda.

3.0 Gourock TCRF Budget

3.1 A January 2025 Gourock TCRF Budget snapshot was disseminated prior to the meeting.

3.2 It was noted the Forums total allocated and approved budget was £498k with a remaining unallocated balance of £84.5k.

3.3 It was advised that a recent Gourock Pool site visit had been carried out, and several areas were identified for improvements ([Appendix 1](#)).

Inverclyde Council (IC) Officers will provide costs for the improvements and a further Forum conversation will be held to identify which project(s) will be taken forward, utilising the Forum's unallocated balance above.

3.4 It was asked if the unallocated funds could be used on the dilapidated residential buildings at the corner of Shore and John Street and did IC have the powers to force owners to take responsibility for the building.

It was highlighted that the Forum utilised funds in 2022 to provide a more robust hoarding at the public/pedestrian exclusion zone. However, it would not be appropriate to utilise Forum funds on privately owned properties, as the responsibility for the building lies solely with the owners of the flats. It was added that IC have done all that can be done within its powers, using best efforts to engage with owners to resolve the situation, however attempts have been unsuccessful and whilst the building is safe with a robust exclusion zone, public funds need to be protected, therefore it is now a Civil matter.

3.5 It was advised there is no deadline for utilising the Forum's unallocated funds, however, IC Officers are working towards having the funds allocated/earmarked against future projects by the end of this financial year (31 March 2025).

Decided:-

- **IC Officers to provide costs for identified Pool front improvements.**
- **IC Officers to identify projects for unallocated budget by end of the financial year.**

4.0 Inverclyde Council and Partnership Updates

4.1. REPORT UPDATES

A Gourock Report was distributed prior to the meeting with updates on the following projects:-

a) Pier Head Kiosk

- In addition to the report update, it was advised that the creation of a Christmas Grotto within the Kiosk and a Gourock Festive Trail had been a great success for the town; with over one hundred children visiting the

Grotto. The prizes for the festive trail were Gourock vouchers that could only be spent in the shops who had taken part, which kept the money in Gourock.

It was noted that The Pirate and Bluebell had taken part in IC's successful Business Growth Programme, which helped her to network with other businesses, such as Clyde Eats who were the Christmas events main sponsor. It was a great collaborative event, and traders are keen to repeat such events, due to the increased footfall throughout December 2024.

The Whisky Room, The Pirate and Bluebell and Gourock Community Council are working together to develop future events throughout the forthcoming year.

- It was advised that The Whisky Room, Gourock Community Council and The Pirate and Bluebell, have developed the Go Gourock brand. There is currently a live basic Go Gourock website with additional content being unveiled in due course. The site's aim is to be a full Gourock hub to promote Gourock on a local and national level.

More information can be found on the Go Gourock website ([link to Go Gourock Website](#))

It was requested/agreed that the Go Gourock brand developers, meet/engage with IC's Corporate Communication (Corp Coms) Team, to integrate the Go Gourock website with IC's Discover Inverclyde (DI) website ([link to DI website](#)) for them to harmonise both platforms and maximise visibility of both.

- It was asked if there are plans to capture the Cruise Liner visitors and encourage them to visit Gourock.

It was advised the Member of Parliament (MP) for Inverclyde, is holding a round table event in February 2025, to look at influencing cruise ship excursion companies towards retaining Cruise passenger within Inverclyde and improving Inverclyde's Green Credentials.

The Inverclyde Tourist and Inverclyde Council representatives attending the round table meeting, are to feedback on discussions held and outcomes, to the next forum meeting.

Decided:-

- **IC's Corp Coms Team and Go Gourock Creators, to meet and harmonise both Go Gourock and Discover Inverclyde websites.**
- **ITG and IC's round table meeting attendees to feedback on meeting discussions and outcomes to the next forum meeting.**

b) Active Travel

- Further to the report update, it was noted that the two identified Active Travel projects for Gourock, are solely funded from the Scottish Government, via the Active Travel Transformation Project, established by Transport Scotland. The funding for the two areas highlighted within the report, is still to be agreed.

- Additionally, in 2022, the UK Government made changes to the Highway Code to include new rules about the hierarchy of road users, placing those most at risk to the top of the hierarchy, making pedestrians and cyclists a top priority ([link to Highway Code Changes](#)).
- It was highlighted negative comments have been made on social media platforms, in relation to Gourock's planned Active Travel projects, and it was requested that IC Officers provide consultation and reassurances to the public.
- It was also highlighted that some priority should be given to improving footpaths within Inverclyde as many of them are uneven.

IC Officers advised that the Road Services Annual Programme will be focusing more on footpaths going forward.

However, it was also requested that when Inverclyde residents are out and about and notice poor footpaths to please report this to the Council, to raise Officer's awareness of any issues ([Link to IC's reporting online service for Roads/Footpaths](#))

Decided:-

- **IC Roads Services to hold formal consultation events for planned Gourock Active Travel projects.**
- **Inverclyde residents to report Road and Footpath issues to IC.**

c) Proposed Sale of Land (front of Station)

In addition to the report update, it was advised IC Officers are progressing with the Conveyancing works. Thereafter, a further report will be submitted to the Environment and Regeneration (E&R) committee, identifying all interests and intended uses of the land for a committee decision.

Decided:-

- **Future report to E&R Committee to decide outcome of land, identifying all interests and intended uses of the land and feedback outcome to Forum.**

d) Granny Kempock Stone

e) Gourock Boating Tragedies

- **Erection of Mary of Iona Information Board**

In addition to the report update, it was advised this is a work in progress project.

- **PS Comet Inscription**

Further to the report update, it was added that the inscription to be added to the Cemetery memorial stone is still to be confirmed with residents in Inverness.

It was advised that if factual historian approved information on the PS Comet II is submitted, this can also be added to the new Information/Storyboard.

Decided:-

- **Inverness residents to confirm inscription to IC's Burial Services.**
- **Factual historian approved information on the PS Comet, to be submitted, by Cllrs to Corp Coms for adding to Information/Storyboard.**

f) Greenock Levelling Up Fund Eastern Side

It was noted the Chair requested this item to be added to the Forum's Agenda, to raise awareness of any potential disruptions traveling to and from Gourock, during the Greenock project works.

In addition to the report, it was advised the project will remove the A8 flyover at the Oakmall and bullring roundabout and demolish Hector McNeil House and 40% of the Oakmall. This project will change the current configuration into a safer environment for pedestrians, visitors, cyclists and other road users when navigating Greenock Town Centre.

Officers and contractors are currently reviewing the programme of works to bring the project within budget.

It was added that the planning application mentioned in the report was approved (subject to conditions), at IC's Planning Board meeting held the 5 February 2025 ([link to papers](#)).

It was further noted IC's Regeneration and Corp Coms are working on a micro website for broadcasting project information, and updates and once live, a website link will be sent to the Forums.

Decided:-

- **IC Officers to disseminate link to Greenock LUF Project's Micro website to all Forums.**

g) Front of Gourock Pool Visit

It was noted the recent safety and repair works made to the front of the Gourock Pool site area, have been completed to a high standard. As a result, it was felt that additional improvements works were required in adjacent areas.

A site visit with Ward members, IC Officers and a resident, took place on Tuesday 28 January 2025. Several areas for improvement were identified. Identified projects will be sent to IC Officers to provide costings and brought back to a future Forum meeting for discussions ([Appendix 1](#)).

It was advised that the programme of railing repair/replacement works along the whole waterfront is ongoing.

Decided:-

- **IC Officers to provide costings for identified pool front improvements and brought back to a future Forum meeting for discussions.**

4.2. VERBAL UPDATES

a) Gourock Park Wider Lighting

It was noted this project was brought about to improve the Park's access/short cut route widely used by various members of the community, as well as an outcome from the Women and Girls Safety survey held in 2021.

IC Officers advised they have safety concerns with the current route identified for light installations and would like to hold another consultation meeting with Ward Cllrs at the park to address these concerns.

The Forum's School reps from Clydevue Academy confirmed the park is used as an access route to their high school and raised concerns about inadequate lighting in winter months, as well as potential tree roots being tripping hazards.

It was agreed another meeting is arranged as soon as possible to look at options and solutions.

Decided:-

- **IC Officers to arrange another Park Site visit to relay their safety concerns and work towards alternative options/solutions.**

b) Town Centre Action/Master Plan

The Chair explained the background on how areas within the town were identified for regeneration projects. The Action Plan has been developed to progress identified projects as well as bid for project funding when it becomes available.

Officers are working towards finalising the Action Plans and once complete, they will be published on IC's Gourock Forum webpage. A website link will be distributed to all Forum members.

It was agreed that the previous Forum's Presentation on the Action Plan, is sent to the Pupil attendees, to provide contexts to the Plan's objectives.

Decided:-

- **IC Officers to finalise Action Plan.**
- **IC Officers to send webpage link to finalised Plan to all Forum members.**
- **IC Officer to send Presentation to Pupil attendees.**

5.0 Aspirational Projects

5.1. Gourock Park Pets Corner

It was advised that previous aspirations to build a new pets enclosure/building proved to be too costly. IC Officers have revisited the project and have identified ways of refurbishing the current structure, giving the animals improved ventilation and safety, as well as better visibility for visitors.

IC Architects have produced new drawings and once the Quantity Surveyor has availability; costings will be applied and the plan brought back to the Forum for consideration.

Pupil attendees advised the Pets Corner is also known as the Bunny Park and confirmed it is well used and is an excellent place to visit, especially when the Gourock Garden Party takes place.

Decided:-

- **IC Officers to bring back costed plans for the refurbishment of the Pets Corner enclosure to Forum for consideration.**

6.0 Any Other Competent Business (AOCB)

6.1 No further business discussed.

7.0 Date of Next Meetings

7.1 The next Gourock Forum meeting is scheduled for Friday 9 May 2025, commencing at 10am.

Chair Signature Date

APPENDIX 1

Gourock Pool Site Visit

Tuesday 28 February 2025, commenced at 1pm

Attendance

- Cllr L Quinn
- Cllr S Reynolds
- A King
- L Smith
- E Montgomery
- E Baird
- G Murray
- AM Bagstad

1. **Refurbished/Repaired Section and Suggested Artistic Seating**

The Group met at the entrance to Gourock outdoor pool and after introductions, moved to the newly refurbished/repared section above the Boathouse.

It was noted the works are impressive and have made a vast improvement to the area.

It was also suggested that artistic seating is erected in the area, through possible external funding and/or in partnership working for fulfilment of this idea.

Remaining works

IC have appointed a contractor to remove the existing broken up asphalt around the perimeter of the boat store.

The contractor will install a dark grey paving slab around the perimeter to complete the detail. ([Appendix 1](#)).

2. **Embankment and Stairwells**

The Group's focus moved to the embankment at the side of the boathouse and both stairwells leading to and from the boathouse/waterfront area.

It was noted both areas are littered with refuse, abandoned gardening items and broken slabs. The stairwells are extremely mossy in certain sections, with broken/chipped stairs leading to/from the waterfront/boathouse area.

A local resident advised the embankment height has increased over time with people dumping items in that area. The resident advised of a flooding problem to the side and bottom of the embankment ([Appendix 2](#))

Request

It was requested that IC consider if there could possibly be drainage inserted between the embankment and building to stop water accumulating next to the building, as well as the addition of planting easily maintained trees/bushes within that area, to soak up the water and make the area more aesthetically pleasing.

It was also requested that the area is maintained more frequently to remove moss and refuse dumped in the area, as well as a plan for repairing broken stairs and slabs.

Agreed

It was agreed Grounds Services, taking into consideration the requests above, would be requested to look at and identify what improvements they could make in this area and advise of any additional costs associated with these requests.

3. Older Section of Promenade

It was noted that the newly repaired section of the promenade, makes the older section look worse and in need of refurbishment.

It was further noted that the cube seating in this area is not used for its intended purpose, as visitors tend to sit on the benches provided. It was further noted the cubes also require a lot of upkeep and get dirty very easily.

Agreed

It was agreed that IC Officers will seek cost estimates for replacing this section with the same materials used in the repaired section.

It was also agreed that the Cube seating would be removed and possibly stored and utilised by IC's Road Services for alternative uses. ([Appendix 3](#))

4. Paved Section of Promenade

It was noted that more maintenance is required in this area to reduce weeds and moss.

It was also noted that the walls retaining the bedding sections need to be looked at with regards to a build-up of salt and the possible requirement for repointing in certain areas.

Agreed

It was agreed Grounds Services would be requested to increase their maintenance to remove weeds and moss in this area and identify if improvements/repairs are required to bedding area walls. ([Appendix 4](#))

5. Retaining Wall Section, Grass Area and Wall Area at Pool

It was noted and agreed that the waterfront retaining wall section is heavily littered with refuse and extremely unsightly and difficult to keep free of refuse and debris.

The grass section (higher up) in front of the retaining wall section, is being used as a dog pooping area, as dogs crawl under the fencing and owners fail to pick up dog poop.

It was noted the wall at the side of the pool needs paint and plaster works.

Suggested

It was suggested that planting (that is easily maintained and does not grow too high) is strategically placed on top of the rocks above this area and right along the inside of the railings of the grass section, to obscure/block out public/passers-by's views of the retaining wall, prevent/deter pet access to the grass area and hide the poolside wall.

Agreed

Grounds Services would be requested to identify works and costs associated with this request. ([Appendix 5](#))

6. Cenotaph

It was noted the Cenotaph is in good condition but that some of the stones at the base and stairs need reinstated.

Agreed

The reinstatement of stones to be added to ongoing Cenotaph maintenance list.

([Appendix 6](#))

APPENDIX 1 - Refurbished/Repaired Section and Suggested Artistic Seating

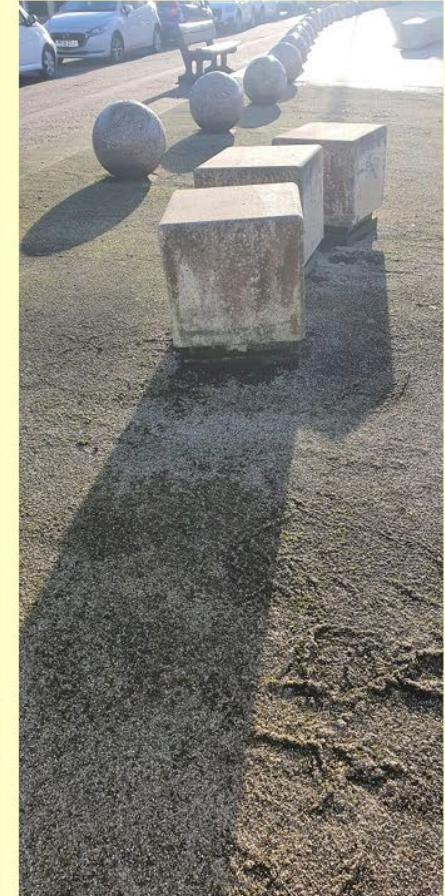
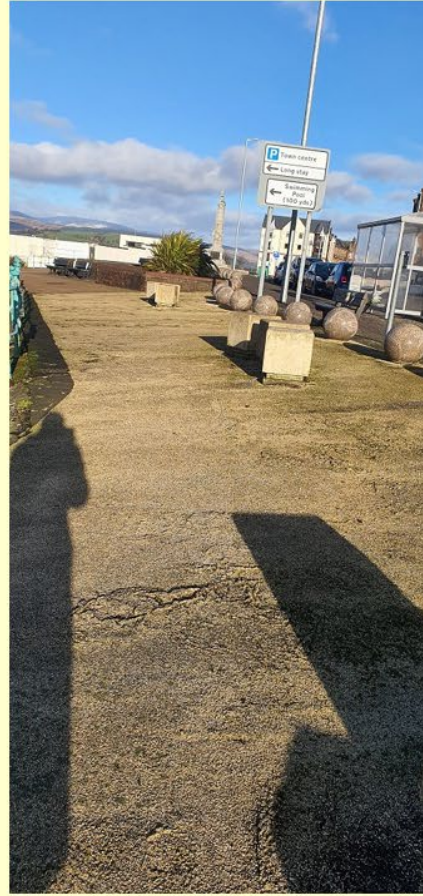


APPENDIX 2 – Embankment and Stairwells





APPENDIX 3 - Older Section of Promenade



APPENDIX 4 - Paved Section of Promenade



APPENDIX 5 - Retaining Wall Section, Grass Area and Wall Area at Pool





APPENDIX 6 - Cenotaph



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