

Minutes of JCC Meeting held on Thursday 12th February 2016

Council Chambers, High Street, Elgin

Present:

Alastair Kennedy	(Chair)
Maureen Garden	Lossiemouth Community Council
Carole Ralph	Lossiemouth Community Council
Les Morgan	Findhorn and Kinloss Community Council
Pat Carroll	Findhorn and Kinloss Community Council
Ann Mitchell	Buckie & District Community Council
Sonia Ritchie	Buckie & District Community Council
Gordon Methven	Elgin Community Council
James Wiseman	Elgin Community Council
Graham Murdoch	Forres Community Council
James Mackie	Innes Community Council
Sandy Anderson	Innes Community Council
Donald Cameron	Lennox Community Council
Karen Pryce-Iddon	Strathisla Community Council
Bunty Campbell	Dufftown & District Community Council
Dennis Dalgarno	Dufftown & District Community Council
George Tulloch	Dufftown & District Community Council

In attendance:

Jane Martin, Community Council Liaison Officer, Sylvia Jamieson, Community Support Officer, Cllr John Divers, John Calder, KCR FM, Anita Milne, Catherine Sinclair (minutes)
Sharon Dunbar, Andy Donnachie and Graeme Shanks (The Moray Council)

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone. Apologies were noted from Dyke & Landward Community Council and Cllr Lorna Creswell.

2. Moray Connected Project

Sharon Dunbar, Andy Donnachie and Graeme Shanks explained how The Moray Council is developing their website to enable individuals and businesses to do more online 24/7 including on smart devices and when on the move. They aim to have a citizen registration where signing up will enable a user to see their transactions with the council and get updates on applications, repair reports, offers of housing, report anti-social behaviour, book leisure sessions etc. Users will get a notification of their submission and an expectation of time for it to be dealt with. The service should improve speed, efficiency and cost effectiveness. Other means of contact including face-to-face and telephone will remain in place. Community Councils are asked to spread the word about the developing service and the survey to gather information on how the website is being used and what users would like to see on it. For more information or to fill in the feedback survey, see <http://www.moray.gov.uk/connected> or email connected@moray.gov.uk to reach the team. Paper copies were also circulated. Feedback on the contents of current website pages can be given using the smiley face icons and this will be passed to relevant departments.

3. Minutes of previous meeting 12th November 2015

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Proposed by Jim Mackie, seconded by Gordon Methven.

4. Matters arising

Jim Mackie emailed R Lochhead on the environmental impact of dumping dredged materials into the Moray Firth. He received an email from Marine Scotland and is seeking a meeting with them.

The subgroup regarding Community Council constitution is to be formed. Alastair suggested those Community Councillors on the Participatory Budgeting Working Group stay after a meeting to carry out the work. There were no objections.

5. Participatory Budgeting, Sylvia Jamieson, Community Support Officer

Sylvia gave a background to Participatory Budgeting (PB) and how it works - "Communities making democratic decisions about public budgets...for the mutual benefit of both local government and communities". It began in Brazil in 1988 and is now used in over 1500 communities worldwide. In the UK it is often youth or neighbourhood projects that use it, and it is often led by local authorities or housing associations. Highland Council has successful experience of using PB. Benefits including increased participation in democracy, volunteering, campaigns and voter turnout as well as making closer relations between local authorities and communities and between community groups. Research and the experiences of Highland Council show that people do vote selflessly, for the 'bigger picture' benefits, not for pet projects. For more information see <http://pbnetwork.org.uk/> and www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/regeneration/engage/empowerment/newsletter/September10/SpecialFeature/ParticipatoryBudgeting

Moray Council identified £120,000 of funding which is hoped to be used under the heading of Economic Development in rural areas of Moray. This has been match funded by £65,000 from Scottish Government, which must be committed by May 2016. The remaining funds must be allocated over the next 2 years. Funds are for rural areas and at the moment organisations in Keith, Forres, Lossiemouth and Buckie plus Elgin are not eligible to apply as they have funds through The Four Towns and BID respectively.

A working group of 8-10 people from across Moray will work on application criteria and how to deliver a public vote event and overcome any barriers to access issues. The first meeting will be week of 22nd February. It takes 2 or 3 rounds to get good at delivering PB and there are issues with the short timescale, promotion and word of mouth, to ensure enough bids are submitted.

Discussion was held on Participatory Budgeting. Comments were made on lack of feedback on consultations and previous work carried out by Community Councils. Alastair advised that work is ongoing on Access to Streets.

Sylvia asked for help from Community Councils in promoting PB, especially word of mouth, and for their support. Several Community Councillors are on the working group and the JCC was asked if there were any more who would like to volunteer.

ACTION: Sylvia to find out what stage collating of information and feedback from Moray 2023 Plan consultation events is at and report back via Jane

ACTION: Community Councils publicise PB

6. Community Council Complaints Review

Jane circulated a draft complaints procedure for feedback and comment. The procedure could be used by members of the public. Complaints might be minor (step 1) and dealt with by the Community Councillor concerned, or more serious (step 2) and have an investigation process involving a group of Councillors from other Community Councils. It was suggested Community Councils use their own email address in the final document rather than a generic one. Jane cannot be the point of contact for this as Community Councils must police themselves, however she can provide help and advice. It was also suggested complaints must always be in writing, not by telephone.

ACTION: Jane to email draft complaints document to Community Councils for further feedback

7. Reports

a) Financial Report

A copy of the accounts was circulated. Balance is £1055.08. Expenses were largely for travel, training and minute secretary. There were no queries about the accounts. It was agreed Alastair could claim expenses for attending Participatory Budgeting training in Edinburgh.

b) Rural Parliament Update (Gordon Methven)

Brechin will be the Rural Parliament venue for 2016. Scottish Rural Action AGM will be in Perth on 4th March. Gordon intends to go and expects to hear more about the review of the action plan, which is in development.

8. Information Sharing

Buckie Community Council

Two new members joined in January and there are now no vacancies. Promotion of the Community Council is planned so the public can get to know their Community Councillors and how to contact them to raise any issues. Recent problems include icy roads and pavements and Community Councillors would like to see more gritting in and around Buckie. They also requested more information on what Community Council grant money can be spent on.

Dufftown & District Community Council

A petition has been launched for a safety barrier on Parkmore Brae where the trees have been felled. There was also discussion on the removal of a cast iron barrier from outside a residence. A training night for new members is planned and there is only 1 vacancy remaining.

Elgin Community Council

A member wishes to make a film of Elgin to send to Elgin, Illinois, with some gifts, in reciprocation of gifts received about a year ago. The Community Council has been lobbying Abellio for service improvements and met with management then arranged a well-attended public meeting.

The Moray Community Awards went well and there are plans to hold them again in spring 2017. Work continues on a Community Emergency and Resilience Plan. Elgin South Area Forum is in abeyance but links are being maintained with members to retain their knowledge and enthusiasm.

Two Master Plan events were attended with Elgin Community Council input well received at Findrassie.

Diane Burgess, newly in post with Scottish Water visited and aims to get in touch with other Community Councils across Moray in due course. Jim Royan gave an interesting talk on 'The Lost Kingdom of Moray' – he may give the same talk to other Community Councils on request.

Fair Trade Fortnight begins 29th February and there are several events planned, including a Big Breakfast event at St Giles Wednesday 2nd March 10am – 12 noon.

Findhorn & Kinloss Community Council

The legal bid to halt the Moray Council's approval of Beach Huts on the north shore in Findhorn has failed. The Court of Session in Edinburgh ruled that the process of granting planning permission did not break the law. The developer intends to start construction and sell the huts as soon as possible.

Findhorn & Kinloss Community Council decided they should urge The Moray Council to introduce a byelaw to enable the wildfowl shooting in the Findhorn Bay area to be controlled as the present situation is untenable. Feedback from The Moray Council is that byelaws are expensive so they may not take action, which is very disappointing.

It was decided to support Cromarty Community Council's objection to the Cromarty Firth Port Authority's licence application to conduct ship to ship oil transfers on a large scale.

The Community Council and local community are very grateful 39 Eng. Regt Kinloss for their work in carrying out repairs to the Beach Road in Findhorn. A large number of the potholes were filled with hot tar. The army completed this as a training exercise and the cost of the materials was funded by Findhorn & Kinloss Community Council via a grant from the BerryBurn Windfarm Trust.

Currently the CO 39 Eng Regt is liaising with the relevant MOD authorities to allow the Kinloss Pool to be used by local swimming organisations when Forres Swimming Pool is out of action for refurbishment. Lorna Creswell, a Moray Councillor for Forres, is dealing with this issue.

Forres Community Council

James 'Flicker' Duncan has stepped down and will be sorely missed. There are 3 vacancies but one possible new member is interested. Planning For Real 2020 is progressing well.

Privately owned Castlehill Church had fallen into some disrepair, trapping pigeons inside and attracting flies. It has been pigeon-proofed but was a problem for some time. The January meeting had a talk from Skillforce, an educational charity. Schoolkids have worked together very effectively to partly clear a derelict skate park. Forres Community Council is enjoying an improved and productive relationship with The Moray Council.

Innes Community Council

A Chair and Vice Chair have been appointed and Alastair will no longer be Acting Chair.

James is responding to replies and feedback re the Invasive Non-Native Species petition received from Scottish Government and other organisations.

Innes requested further repairs to the Spey Viaduct as plywood has peeled and curled. The missing sleepers are now to be replaced with the natural oak slabs required by SNH.

There is no shop in Garmouth now after several tries to run it as a profitable community shop. Stagecoach has announced withdrawal of the bus service. Milnes Area Forum and the Transport Forum are liaising with other agencies regarding this. Paul Hendry, Scottish Flood Forum is to attend the next meeting. There are currently 6 members and 4 vacancies but it is difficult to attract new members, partly due to the Community Council covering 5 different areas.

Lennox Community Council

Lennox Community Council is grateful to Alastair and Jane Martin for attending their last meeting. A developer presentation on a 39-house development in area R3 (opposite Christies) was well received. The ownership of Portgordon Square, and therefore who should maintain it, is unclear. The Registrar in Edinburgh is investigating. Lennox also faces challenges of recruitment and of dealing with a large area of disparate villages with different interests.

Lossiemouth Community Council

There are 6 members and 3 vacancies. They have been dealing with Planning issues including opposition to the access to a 278 house development on the edge of the town. Planning has been granted, to the disappointment of local groups. There have also been several contentious individual planning issues. Issues with the Harbour Bollards is ongoing and there are now safety concerns. The Community Council are pleased Scottish Government has approved a new High School but hope it will be more sustainable than the existing buildings. The Community Council is also involved in High School re-zoning proposals. Pam Gowans attended to advise on progress on the Integration of Moray Health & Social Care Partnership. It was a good meeting with lots of debate and Pam is keen to return. A joint presentation for Citizen of the Year has been made.

Strathisla Community Council

Councillors on the Edintore Community Benefit Fund Working Group are due to meet soon to formalise the constitution. Jane attended the February meeting and noted that one member has not received a long service award.

An email was received about a tea party for over 90s in Banffshire to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday, circulated to other Community Councils covering Banffshire.

Concerns were raised to the Community Council about a planning application for a single wind turbine at Knauchland. Surrounding residents were not aware application for a bigger turbine had been made.

There are a few vacancies on the Community Council.

9. AOCB

KCR FM

John Calder was welcomed back. He would like to re-launch his schedule of visiting Community Councils to promote and share the work they do for the 'Moray Matters' programme, broadcast on a Tuesday evening. He would welcome invitations to visit.

Dog Fouling

Since this is a perennial issue for Community Councils, Jim Mackie suggested petitioning parliament after the election to increase fines and decrease the requirement for evidence. There is a new Anti-Social Behaviour officer in post.

ACTION: Jane to invite Willie Findlay to JCC meeting

10. Date of Next Meeting – 12th May 2016

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm

ACTIONS

- **Sylvia to find out what stage collating of information and feedback form Moray 2023 Plan consultation events is at and report back via Jane**
- **Jane to email draft complaints document to Community Councils for further feedback**
- **Jane to invite Willie Findlay to JCC meeting**