

Forres Community Council

Thursday 16th May 2024 at 7.00 pm, Forres House Community Centre

Secretary: Peter White | **Email:** info@forrescc.co.uk

Attendees - FCC		Attendees - Other
CC Steve Ferris (SF)	Chair	Cllr Paul McBain
CC David Parker (DP)	Vice Chair	Cllr Kathleen Robertson
CC Fiona Graham (FG)	Minute Secretary	Cllr Scott Lawrence
CC Kev Skivington (KSk)		Garry McCartney (GMc) (Press)
CC John Innes (JI)		John Mundell OBE (MC Interim Chief Exec)
Peter White (PW)	Admin Secretary	
CC Graham Murdoch (GM)	Treasurer	
CC Ken Shand (KS)		
CC Ben Stewart (BS)		Members of the Public (MOP) in attendance
Apologies		Colin Buchan
Cllr Van der Horn		Andrew Stepien (Stagecoach Moray OM)
		Sandra MacLennan (Forres in Bloom)
		Ann Rossiter

Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p>Welcome, and apologies:</p> <p>The chair welcomed everyone to this month's meeting.</p>	
	<p>Public Session</p> <p><u>Stagecoach</u> – Andrew Stepien who is the Operations Manager for Stagecoach Moray, he advised what area Bluebird Moray covers which includes MacDuff. Communication was an issued highlighted to Andrew and the lack of information available to passengers. He will take away the issues that we have passed on and he will take this up, He advised that in the previous 3 weeks, Bluebird had sent out 296 tweets.</p> <p>He has asked for staff to notify customers of when the services are running as scheduled as well as delays. It was also mentioned the information at the Station is not always up to date, he was also advised that some tweets are uploaded hours after the scheduled time.</p> <p>SF asked what the current age range of passengers as not every passenger has a smart phone and or use twitter. AS advised, he has mentioned this, and another service is trailing alternative platforms.</p> <p>FG suggested about installing a monitor in the travel shop that is updated by Stagecoach staff rather than being reliant on Hi-Trans to manage the updates, as</p>	ui

this is not done. A MoP asked if the times of buses shown on the Hi-Trans board the actual buses or the schedule to which they were advised it is a rolling ticker which Stagecoach do not manage.

KSk advised that we have given a note of issues but what could we give as a solution for them. One solution given was to put updates on the Stagecoach app. SF advised that that the issues are impacting on the economy of Forres.

AS advised that when he started as OM in Elgin there were only ninety-three drivers, and they are not at 119 which means there are only nine drivers short from both Elgin and MacDuff depots.

Over the previous 14 weeks thy have lost over four thousand miles due to no drivers across the network. AS advised to use the live buses site as it tracks all buses nationwide including the buses not running.

GM stated that there appears no difference to the problems than was mentioned before by a previous Stagecoach representative, GM mentioned that the number of buses cancelled between Lossiemouth and Forres appears to be a frequent occurrence. AS advised that the service between Lossiemouth and Elgin is their most frequent service so they can cancel one of these buses to replace another service if for instance Forres to Elgin bus broke down they can use another bus to cover in the short term.

GM advised that passengers pay good money for a monthly bus ticket, and a lot of the buses do not run according to their schedule. Which is frustrating to all concerned. GM advised Andrew Stepien that a fellow councillor had to take a taxi from Forres to Lossiemouth because the bus went via the bypass instead of going through the high street and the member has written to Stagecoach and has not been reimbursed yet. Its like they have swept the issue under the carpet.

FG asked when Elgin will be getting new buses considering Inverness have a new fleet of buses, As did not know if they would be getting any.

SF stated that the day before the last JCC meeting there was a post from Richard Lochhead asking for input into Stagecoach as he had a meeting scheduled with them. SF took it upon himself to write to Richard Lochhead (MSP) and copied in Douglas Ross (MP).

Unfortunately, Richard has been taken to hospital, SF did receive a response from Douglas Ross, advising they have written to Stagecoach and has been advised that they have had a successful recruitment campaign for new drivers but have had difficulty obtaining drivers for Elgin but he will take back to the many other issues that are highlighted to him.

Andrew Stepien said that there will be a timetable change in August which has to go to the Council then sometime in June/July there will be a public consultation on it.

	<p><u>Moray Council</u> - Steve Ferris introduced John Mundell OBE to the Community Council members. John is the Interim Chief Executive of Moray Council. John thanked SF for the invitation, and he stated he wants to manage the difficult issues and resolve them, he also wants to understand what the issues we deal with.</p> <p><u>Local Issue</u> – GM advised he has an elderly neighbour who lives by themselves and is having footballs kicked over the wall separating Anderson’s Primary School and Murdoch Butchers and the neighbour’s property. she has had broken roof tiles and guttering when the kids are retrieving the ball.</p> <p>This is very distressing and unsettling for her, she has contacted the school who have said it is not their problem as its outside of school time. She has spoken to Citizens Advice, and she does not know where to turn to next to resolve this issue. If a ball does go over the wall, there is a void between the wall and the adjacent building where someone could fall and suffer severe injuries.</p> <p>The big problem is there are goals and a play area set out in the playground and this is encouraging them. Just the other evening the lady went outside to find a few children on her roof and the mother of one of them was telling them to get the ball, the lady’s neighbour has also had all his slates broken.</p> <p>GM cannot understand it has been set up in the playground when they have a large playing field behind the school. SL suggested speaking to the school to take the equipment in at the end of the school day, unfortunately, the kids will still play there. KSk advised the police can deal with it especially if an adult is encouraging the kids, this led the discussion to the amount of time it takes to speak to someone.</p> <p>SF suggested the council to put up fencing like what is used at tennis courts and golf ranges as this would be protecting their neighbours, KR said this is something the council could investigate.</p> <p>KR advised that the council currently have an open grounds policy, but it is something they will investigate in the local development plan. FG advised that the school already has a large wall down the side of the school so the netting would only need to go above it and it would help local businesses and residents.</p> <p>KSk said he understood there is an issue with reporting it, but someone could go up to the police station the next day and then the more times it is reported it can help to resolve this problem for all parties concerned. SL said they will contact the school to get them to take the equipment in at the end of the school day.</p>	
3.	<p>Community Safety Report</p> <p><u>Anti-social Behaviour, Violence and Disorder</u> –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. There were four reports of Vandalism in April, Lines of inquiries are being followed up on, utilizing CCTV, as well as house-to-house inquiries. b. There were three reports of threatening and abusive behaviour. Two people have been charged, with one being reported to the Procurator Fiscal, and another issued with a recorded police warning. Enquiries are ongoing with the third. 	

- c. Two people have been cautioned and charged with a Breach of the Peace at a licensed premises, for causing a disturbance within. Both were issued with an ASB Fixed Penalty Notice.
- d. There was one report of an assault at a license, a potential suspect was identified, and inquiries are still ongoing.
- e. Three reports of small personal amounts of controlled substances seizures, one has been issued a Recorded Police Warning, one a YJMU Verbal Warning – Under 16 and the third still has outstanding enquiry.
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- g. A report received of an attempted Wilful Fire Raising (and other offences) to a van outside a residential property which failed, then when an attempt to gain entry to a property failed, the suspects fled in a vehicle that was dumped and set on fire before fleeing the scene. Currently there is positive lines of enquiry ongoing.
- h. Three reports of persons assaulting their partners. Two released from custody to appear at court later, the other still has ongoing enquiries.
- i. One person was traced, arrested, and charged, following a report of them acting in an aggressive manner, whilst carrying an offensive weapon and damaging property. A report was sent to the Procurator Fiscal.
- j. One person charged with assault for grabbing a youth who was playing chap door run and had been harassing the family and neighbours for some time. Report sent to the Procurator Fiscal.
- k. Also, inquiry ongoing into a report of an assault against a child by an adult and one person charged for a breach of bail conditions, released to appear at court later.

Acquisitive Crime -

- a. There is a report of a theft of a hybrid pedal cycle from garden shed, located in a rural Findhorn property. Enquiries are still ongoing, no named suspects.
- b. One report of a theft of a motor vehicle from outside a residential property, potential lines of enquire with CCTV, and a suspect ID with local companies, enquires still ongoing.
- c. Report of theft and attempted theft of clothing from a local recreational facility, positive lines of inquiry, with a suspect identified which should lead to a charge.
- d. This month saw four reports of theft by shoplifting from local businesses. Enquires are still ongoing into them but some positive lines and potential for some identities for some suspects.
- e. One report of extortion, where various images were exchanged and then money or gift vouchers demanded or threats that they would be shared with family and friends. Enquiries ongoing.
- f. Two reports of Fraud one in store in person, where they have used ringing the changes and used confusion to obtain more money back and one online Fraud, where victim agreed a purchase of an item, paying the funds but not receiving it thereafter. All are ongoing enquiries.

Road Safety & Road Crime –

	<p>a. This month in Forres, five persons were charged and reported for driving without valid insurance, one of them with an additional charge of no valid MOT and one driving whilst disqualified.</p> <p>b. Three persons were found to be driving whilst unfit, in one case a small personal number of drugs were also seized, suspect was charged and reported to the Procurator Fiscal.</p> <p>c. The second had additional charges of no MOT, no insurance, driving without a provisional license and lamp offences. Enquires still ongoing.</p> <p>d. The third had an additional fail to stop charge, with enquiries still ongoing.</p> <p>e. One person has been reported for failing to stop after an accident and two persons for failing to wear a seatbelt both were reported to the Procurator Fiscal.</p> <p>f. One person was issued a Recorded Police Warning for a defective rear registration plate light.</p> <p>g. One person was found to be speeding, driving at 89mph within a 60mph area.</p> <p>h. Another was found to be driving whilst disqualified, along with no insurance, whilst the passenger was charged with aid/abet/counsel and cause and permit no insurance. Both were reported to Procurator Fiscal.</p> <p>SF said that the new Inspector for our area attended the JCC meeting who talked about the reduction in bad parking in Elgin and this has only been possible thanks to the funds received from Elgin Community Council Common Good Fund. SF did ask if the officers could be moved buy, they cannot as its money from Elgin’s Common Good Fund. PM clarified that it was time given so officers working overtime.</p>	
4.	<p>Ratification of Minutes 18th April 2024.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed to be a true record of the previous month's meeting. Proposer – Keny Shand Seconded – John Innes</p>	
5.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
.	<p>Planning/Licences</p> <p><u>Planning</u> - there are no planning applications that warrant follow-up.</p>	
7.f.	<p>Action Plan Updates</p> <p>a. <u>Resilience</u> – SF introduced Colin Buchan as our Shelter Marshall and handed over items he will require which includes Moray Council's immediate action paperwork and needs to be at the relevant safe places.</p>	CB/SF

	<p>SF has had discussed about the radios and has still to order them, he will get them ordered in time so that they can be trailed at the Highland Games.</p> <p>b. <u>High Street Parking</u> – SF asked KSk about getting a poster from Police Scotland, KSk advised he had not had anything back. SF stated he would get one designed and -printed. Gm added that the traffic lights on Victoria Road has almost wiped out the HGV’s from coming through the High Street. Kenny advised when he parks on the High Street and when he tries to get in or out of his car, some van drivers park on the zig-zag lines which in turn blocks access to the dropped curb. This will be mentioned to the Active Travel Group, who will take it forward with Moray Council.</p> <p>c. <u>Forres Culture and Heritage Scheme</u> – A meeting was held in the afternoon of Wed 18th May and the development phase was due to continue until September, but this has been brought forward to August. This phase is for the justification of the £3 million funding. What is currently taking place is the paperwork has been gone through to ensure that is ready to go to the next stage. In May the funders are coming to Forres, and the members will check the paperwork and they will help to secure the funding.</p> <p>d. <u>Forres Local Place Plan</u> – This is something new, previously Moray Council produced a 5-yard Local Development Plan which showed where new houses, businesses, and roads were going to be developed. A sub-group of the Community Council would look at all aspects of the Plan and how it would affect the community.</p> <p>Now the Council is developing a 10-year plan (2027-2037), and the Council has done the first part of the work, which is the policy parts, and this has gone to the Government for approval.</p> <p>The Council now wants community groups and Community Councils to go through a template of questions on how we want land to be used, where we want houses built, where we want green spaces etc.</p> <p>Forres is truly fortunate that over the last 6 months, they have had so many consultations from other groups and most of the information required that they be looking for has been collected, so no repetition of questions needs to be asked. What information still needs to be gathered major capital, major networks, biodiversity, and open spaces.</p> <p>We are lucky that we have a Green Spaces group that can answer those questions. Another group already involved is Active Travel. We are also going to work with FACT and Forres Area Forum to find out what areas are missing. Sandra McLennan asked that a colleague from the spirit of the community to join in.</p>	<p>SF/KS k</p>
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8.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
9.	<p>Chairpersons Report</p> <p>Steve advised he had received another email from a member of the public who was complaining about the time it is taking for all the road works to be completed, SF stated that for Forres to have more houses built then there is a need up to date utilities therefore these works need to happen.</p>	
109	<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <p>The current balance in the bank is £6.608.86. The honorarium is the only expense paid out since our last meeting. GM advised that the JCC is looking at ways to help some of the smaller councils, such as rent. We are lucky as we hold our meetings in a council building.</p> <p>The funding for the Community Council has not changed over the years and needs to be reviewed. GM also advised that the Community Council expenses form is only for mileage rather than having one that shows for ink and paper supplies, payment of honorarium, etc.</p>	
11.	<p>Moray councillor reports</p> <p>Cllr Kathleen Robertson – wanted to thank Paul and Scott for stepping in as she was unwell, and they were very eloquent in their views on the new Forres Academy site.</p> <p>The decision was a unanimous one in favour of Roysvale and will go to the full council for a final decision. If the Roysvale site is unsuccessful it will be the Lochyhill site. The caveat is there are things that need to be done before a brick is laid.</p> <p>At the Corporate committee, Forres area did come up and it was agreed, to a 3-year rent deal of which the Common Good is subsidizing it.</p> <p>Today, (18th May) marked the official do for Chef Executive Roddy Burns who retires after 42 years of service with Moray Council.</p> <p>KR advised she is on the Elgin Towns Board which is money given by the UK Government, and there is a bit of controversy that she is sitting on it and that it should be all the Elgin Councillors who should be on it. After a debate, it was decided it is the County town for all of us and important to have fed into it. There is a consultation ongoing, and KR would like us to go online and give our thoughts on how the money should be spent. The link is on the www.MyMoray.co.uk website.</p>	

	<p>Cllr Scott Lawrence – SL advised a new HIE project went through the Council for the new development which will be built at Enterprise Park and would potentially create three hundred jobs. It will be a manufacturing Innovation Hub for businesses who want to find more ways to innovate.</p> <p>SL mentioned the new school building and if it does go ahead on the land chosen there will be a discussion about the Common Good land and there will need to be further discussion about a bus land on Sanquhar Road</p> <p>SL also mentioned that there was an improvement plan put in place, then the RAAC was found so things were put on hold, another inspection has taken place. and there have been improvements. KSk mentioned that during the inspection they were two totally different groups of inspectors, which he found strange and wondered. Why it was not the same group who could see what improvements had been made.</p> <p>Cllr Paul McBain - PM advised with regards to the new school that it is not usual to have all council members agree on what is right for Forres. There are things to do and hurdles to cross but time is of the essence, if there is an issue with the common good this will delay the release of money for building the school,</p> <p>There are other things that must be considered, for example, the High Street and How the town will be impacted etc. Councillors must look at the bigger picture. when reviewing building applications.</p> <p>Paul also mentioned he is on other committees such as EDI and LRB (local review body). Over the past few weeks where they must look through a lot of planning applications, why they were refused, and whether to uphold the decision. or not. They had to review two today, a driveway, small businesses and Paul finds. this part of the role interesting and all members make up their own mind and are. not influenced by any others.</p> <p>GMc asked about the flooding issues around the proposed site for the Academy. and if it was anything to do with what the FCC have been working to get resolved, the councillors advised there were a lot of things that must take place before the building could be built.</p>	
12.	<p>Forthcoming Events</p> <p>6/6 – D-Day celebration on Findhorn Pier at 11.30 am. 8/6 – Freedom of Moray being given to the Royal Regiment of Scotland from 11.30 am on the Plainstones on Elgin High Street followed by a march down the street, 5/6 – Toun Mercat 6/6 – Macpiping hot – British Pipe Band Championships 25/5 Forres in Bloom Coffee Morning in the Town Hall. 3/6 – Nairn Gaelic Choir in St Laurence at 7.30pm 25+26/6 – Circus is in town.</p>	
13.	<p>AOCB</p>	

	<p><u>Kenny Shand</u> – Poot hole outside fire station has been fixed, 3 days after our last meeting, the one outside the bakers has still to be fixed. Erskine handed the keys over to the contractors for their Forres Veterans Activity Centre which should be open in October. Veterans cannot just turn up they have to make an appointment for a tour. Erskine are looking for volunteers to help fundraise.</p> <p><u>Key in Skivington</u> – The Gaff still on with about fifty or so kids attending. Kevin oversees the stall for the Highland Games. Osprey Bus has a new administrator. Active Travel Forres is looking for new helpers and volunteers are needed for Grant Park 100.</p> <p><u>Steve Ferris</u> – We are now in possession of a portrait of King Charles III. The Heritage Trust has the Moray flag and will fly it but will need to obtain one to replace it when it is worn out.</p>	
14.	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>The next meeting will be on Thursday 20th June at 7.00 pm in the Garen Room in Forres Jouse Community Centre.</p>	