

**Minutes of JCC Meeting held on Thursday 8 August 2024, 7pm
Supper Room, Elgin Town Hall**

Present:

Name	Community Council	Name	Community Council
Alastair Kennedy	Chair	Steve Ferris	Forres
Jim Patterson	Burghead & Cummington	Graham Murdoch	Forres
Colin Burch	Cullen & Deskford	Mary Evans	Heldon
Les Tarr	Cullen & Deskford	James A Mackie	Innes
Brian Irvine	Elgin	Angus Fettes	Innes
Steve Christie	Elgin	Carolle Ralph	Lossie
Peter Taylor	Finderne	Marion Ross	Speyside
David Parker	Forres	Mike Middlehurst	Speyside

In attendance:

Moray Councillors: Juli Harris, Neil Cameron, John Cowe, John Divers, Peter Bloomfield
Joan Cowe, Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Moray
Debra Duke (Moray Council) Community Council Liaison Officer
Catherine Sinclair, Minute taker

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone.

Apologies: Maj Maurice Gibson, Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Banffshire
Chief Inspector Mike McKenzie, Police Scotland
Cllr Dunbar, Christine Allan, Buckie Community Council

2. Approval of minutes – 9 May 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 May were confirmed as a correct record. Proposed by Les Tarr, seconded by Steven Christie.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Police Update

Due to operational demands and annual leave, nobody was free to attend this evening. Please direct any questions or concerns to Insp. Mike McKenzie or to the CCLO.

5. Lord Lieutenancy updates

Joan Cowe, Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Moray

Roddy Burns as clerk to the Lord Lieutenancy will now be attending JCC meetings. The Lord Lieutenant and deputies have attended a significant number of events including the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings at Findhorn, the conferring of the freedom of Moray to the Royal Regiment of Scotland, Motorfun and the 90th anniversary of Gordonstoun. The lieutenancy also attended the 85th anniversary of RAF Lossiemouth, where thanks were given to departing Group Captain Jim Lee who will be succeeded by Group Captain Sarah Brewin, the base's first female Station Commander.

Glenn Munro of Moray Concert Brass was awarded an MBE in the King's Birthday Honours, Gaia Earth Group and Johnston's of Elgin were awarded King's Awards for Enterprise. Joan thanked Community Councillors for their hard work and the Chair thanked Joan in turn.

Maj Maurice Gibson, Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Banffshire

Apologies but report by email: Nominations for the Kings Award for Voluntary Services are open 1 September to 1 December 2024.

The Royal Regiment of Scotland is on Tour 16 – 21 September including at Craigellachie Bridge on 17th at 11am; Forres on 18th at 2pm; Buckie 19th at 11am; and Baxters, Fochabers 21st at 11am.

6. Community Council update

Burghead and Cummington Community Council

The Blessing Box, set up during Covid, and still in use, is to be moved.

Several groups are involved in improving beach amenities in Burghead. Burghead in Bloom had a successful and well attended kipper barbecue.

The Resilience group lost a few members, but several Community Hall Committee members have agreed to join the group and offered use of the Community Hall.

The dredger was due in June but has still not appeared. Speeding is an issue in Cummington.

Cullen and Deskford Community Council

Community councillors met to discuss member recruitment. It is hoped that having a bigger presence in the community, and working on the resilience plan will be an effective way to increase engagement and member numbers.

A successful hustings event was held with neighbouring community councils with lessons learned about communication and concerns raised about lack of finances for venue hire.

Three picnic benches have been installed. Monthly lunches are well attended and will increase to two per month after September. The community council is applying for funding for the Cullen Connections newsletter.

Speeding is an issue, of particular concern at a local accident blackspot.

Elgin Community Council

Member recruitment continues to be an issue. Stagecoach did not attend the last meeting.

Elgin Town Board has been invited to the next meeting to give an update. The Health Team from Dr Gray's Hospital has been invited to attend a meeting again after not responding to the last invitation. An update on the lifts and escalators in St Giles centre has been received.

There are still some parking issues. Police have issued over 400 parking tickets to date, compared with 113 in total last year. North Street has reopened, and Batchen Street will be for deliveries only. Work on South Street has been delayed but is expected to finish soon.

The state of repair and appearance of some buildings in the town centre is of concern.

Elected members have advised contact has been made but some owners are not engaging.

The closure of Greenfingers is of concern.

The community council is hosting a funding meeting on 21st August open to all.

The resilience group is a little behind but will get back on course.

Finderne Community Council

The treasurer has resigned leaving 4 members.

Discussions are ongoing as to how to best spend the £20,000 grant from SSEN. The community council does not have funds to pay an insurance premium on assets so are hopeful SSEN will allow part of the fund to be set aside for insurance.

Poor broadband remains an issue. The planned meeting was cancelled due to Richard Lochhead's illness. Morrisons have been doing a lot of ducting work, but no details are known. Three smaller broadband providers are working quite well locally.

Relations with Forres Health Centre are at an all-time low and they are not willing to be in contact with the community council. Health professionals cannot contact the practice directly and must go through the call menu.

The community council has secured a consultant to work on the Local Place Plan, thanks to a grant from Finderne Development Trust. Edinkillie wants to develop their own Plan.

A farmer raised concerns about drainage and flooding at Edinkillie crossroads but received no response so Peter plans to observe the area and contact Moray Council.

Forres Community Council

The Britain in Bloom assessment went well and Forres looks great, thanks to Forres in Bloom. The last planning meeting of the Culture and Heritage group has taken place, and a grant application is to be submitted. Work on the Local Place Plan has continued, with more youth consultation to be undertaken. The Plan should be finished by September.

Community Safety reports have improved in the last few months with better reporting of local crime. Forres Community Council would like to commend this.

The Common Good Fund has spent £13,000 with the rest of the £22,900 paid to Moray Council for ground maintenance, leaving no funds for fireworks or Christmas lights. The community council has asked to see Common Good income and details of spending.

A dumbbell has been stolen from the outdoor gym which would cost £3,000 to replace. Zurich will provide third party insurance cover for an additional premium. Forres Community Council were not aware of this and cannot afford a premium. Using Community Council insurance as an umbrella for other groups as previously thought, does not seem to be possible. There is a need to fund lifetime insurance of any assets.

Heldon Community Council

Work on Cloddach Bridge was progressing well pre-election but has now paused. Some drivers are using the closed road as a racetrack. This has been reported to the Police.

Broadband is an issue. Despite many vans being seen and cable being laid, broadband will not be available to households until 2025.

Bus services are an issue and expanding the M-Connect service is being investigated.

Overgrown verges and trees can cause visibility problems while waiting for them to be cut.

There is a windfarm planning application due.

Innes Community Council

According to legislation, ragwort should be controlled as it is toxic to livestock. Jim will be writing to Moray Council about ragwort on land they are responsible for.

Speymouth West Resilience Group has been set up and is a subcommittee of the community council.

There are proposed housing developments in Mosstodloch, but it is proving difficult to get the community to engage about planning matters. James Jones & Sons sawmill has also submitted a Plan for significant expansion in Mosstodloch.

Flooding and erosion remain a concern. Moray Council have advised this is a community problem. A charity, Speymouth Environmental Partnership, has been set up to work on this. Seven community councillors are members.

Kids on motorbikes have been causing problems in Lhanbrdye. Police Scotland has advised calling 101 every time there is an incident. There is typically a 3 week wait for a Police officer to visit incidents.

Lossiemouth Community Council

Volunteers continue to be busy with the toilets, gardening, and other volunteering. The community soup and sweet will restart in August after a summer break. It has been good to have campervans holidaying, but the town is a bit inundated at present and there is not a good parking site for them.

Fundraising is ongoing to maintain community defibrillators as pads need to be replaced every few years. A Beetle Drive is going to be held to use up the last of a pot of grant funding.

There is a lifebelt now in place on East Beach. The previous one was swept away, and Moray Council would not fund a replacement. It was funded thanks mainly to a member of the public, with some funds from the community council.

A multi-agency approach is required to tackle coastal erosion. The tsiMORAY roadshow was attended to find out about available grants, especially in relation to coastal erosion.

A contractor working at RAF Lossiemouth has offered to work with Lossie community council and a suitable project is being developed.

Speyside Community Council

Major green energy related Planning applications have been submitted. A proposed hydrogen plant would extract huge amounts of water and even if a borehole is sunk, this may impact the River Spey.

Teindland Forest and Blackhills windfarm applications have been submitted. They would be neighbouring windfarms, and both have battery storage. A total of 25 x 230m turbines could be built, all within 5 miles of the Beauly to Blackhillock pylons and the Rothes III windfarm poles. The last community council meeting was held at Inchberry Hall, also attended by Innes community council, another area which will be heavily impacted. A group of residents has formed as a result and has invited Tim Eagle MSP for the Highlands and Islands (region) and Graham Leadbitter MP (Moray West, Nairn and Strathspey) to speak at an upcoming meeting.

A structural survey of the pavilion at Rothes Castle needs to be undertaken to see if it can withstand proposed repairs, including a slate roof. A planning application will also need to be submitted.

Most of the SSEN resilience grant was spent on the Tearooms. Walkie talkies are to be ordered and grab bags with wind up torches, lamps, handwarmers etc., are to be purchased. Moray Health and Social Care team have been asked if they could hold stock and deliver it to people most in need during an emergency.

Rothes Community Workforce subgroup does grass cutting and path maintenance and were pleased to get a donated delivery of 10 tonnes of gravel from Breedon Aggregates.

7. Request for a Community Councillor to join the Crime and ASB Tactical Group

A community councillor is sought to join this group. Information was circulated and the Chair read the purpose of the group, roles, and responsibilities.

RESOLVED: Carolle Ralph to take up the role

8. Gulls- issue raised by Elgin Community Council - where do we go from here?

Discussion was held on the local and national problem of the issues caused by gulls. NatureScot is adamant that gulls are in decline. A local officer did accept there was a problem in Elgin which could lead to a cull, however no further action has been taken. Elgin BID has also been in discussion with NatureScot but not getting anywhere and elected members are to be commended for doing all they can about the issues.

RESOLVED: Elgin Gull subgroup to contact community council network with a view to writing a joint letter to Scottish Government

9. Treasurers Report

i. Receive quarterly report (from 5th April)

Account no.	1	2
Balance to open	£10,209.16	£10,633.70
Expenses	£1,025.83	£460.15
Balance to close	£9,983.33	£10,173.55

Account 2 is the remains of previous participatory budgeting grant funds which are being held for Money 4 Moray.

There was discussion on the pros and cons of opening separate or sub bank accounts for ring-fenced funds, such as resilience grants. Most community councils hold such funds ringfenced in their main account. There have been issues previously with a subgroup losing contact with the community council or not being able to submit bank statements for examination by the CCLO.

ii. **Approve spending as required**

10. Review of Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils

i. **Timetable of dates**

The timetable of dates was circulated. The consultation will open and close before the next Joint Community Council meeting. The CLO intends to visit all community councils so let her know if proposed dates are suitable. All community councils should consider what they might need for the consultation such as map details. Any new policies, or changes to policies or the handbook can also be suggested. It may be useful to have guidance documents, which can be updated as and when needed, outside of the formal review of the scheme.

ii. **Sub-committee meeting dates**

The next meeting date needs to be set.

11. Resilience Plans update

Different areas are at different stages with plans. The Plan is a living document, and it would be useful to do as much work as possible and submit it even if it is incomplete. The template is intended to make it easy to find the same type of information in the same section in each plan during an emergency.

SSEN Powering Communities to Net Zero fund closes 31st August.

The CSU and Emergency Planning Officer are proposing 7th November as a date for the annual resilience event. Suggestions for a venue are being sought. Jim Mackie suggested Lhanbryde Community Centre.

The Resilient Communities Conference is in Stirling on 10th October. It may be possible to fund travel and accommodation for two people to attend, who would report back to meeting on 7th November. Further details to be shared when available.

RESOLVED: Debra Duke to email template to Finderne CRG and to check if PVG is required for volunteering during an emergency

12. CLO update

Sandra McCallum, CSU Digital Officer is planning a Digital Hub meeting on 20th September. More information will follow.

The deadline for Local Place Plans has been extended until January 2025 but plans can be submitted earlier. Contact Planning or the Community Support Unit with any questions.

13. Feedback from Sub-groups

- i. **Money for Moray** – This year's participatory budgeting fund for Moray is £333,333. £33,000 will be for a Youth Participatory Budgeting exercise, £150,000 will be available for all and £150,000 will be available for larger organisations. The upper limit for applications will be £50,000. The fund is open for applications from 19th August to noon on 23rd September. Any required permissions must be in place before a grant application is submitted.
- ii. **Safer Travel Moray** – No update.
- iii. **Community Energy Moray** – We Charge Scotland is a consortium with the vision to have Scottish Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure in community hands. The partners have software, architectural and finance capabilities. Community Energy Moray is in

discussions and propose using its BenCom structure and community shares to bring EV assets into community ownership and finance the delivery of the next round of infrastructure. We Charge Scotland seem quite sympathetic to this proposition. Highland Council is taking the lead, with Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils involved. CEM is the only body based in the area that this procurement process covers.

Clash Gour Wind Farm is going to issue a Moray-wide sponsorship fund of £20,000 p.a. until the Wind Farm is completed.

- iv. **Transport Forum** – The Findhorn to Kinloss bus service has been withdrawn. This will be discussed at a full meeting of Moray Council on 13th August. Options to be discussed are to do nothing, to develop a community led bus service, or to use M-Connect. Bus Revolution M-Connect Board is reviewing the first year of service. Bus Revolution would like to support the evening economy but will need more staff as the service expands. Journey numbers have increased but not all requests can be met as there are not enough buses and a waiting list for more. It can also take a while for repairs and maintenance as the supply company is based in England.

Elgin Town Board has invited the Transport Forum to feed into their Transport and Connectivity Strategy.

tsiMORAY hosted a meeting about transport issues and were not aware of the Transport Forum. Forum members were invited to a further meeting to tell development officers about their work.

A coffee morning was held. The Facebook page is up and running. There are plans to review and ratify the terms of reference.

- v. **Admin Grant Subgroup** – all Community Councils are invited to the next meeting on 21st August at the Supper Room, Elgin Town Hall. Travel expenses and refreshments will be paid for by Elgin Community Council. All community councils are urged to be involved. If a new agreement cannot be reached, the status quo will remain.

14. AOCB

Flooding and coastal erosion – in the last 6 months, Scottish Government has carried out several consultations and are looking to change the way areas vulnerable to flooding are identified. This is concerning if it is a route to reducing flood risk management and adopting a managed retreat approach. Jim Mackie has been researching legislation. Moray Council has been looking at coastal erosion but has not been consulting with local communities as they legally required to do. Innes Community Council has drafted a petition to Scottish Parliament stating the legislation is archaic and officials are guilty of obfuscation. He will submit it to Debra for circulation once complete. It was suggested the Joint Community Council write to a senior member of SEPA to raise concerns about lack of local engagement and consultation.

Jim can take drone footage of problem areas if other community councils are interested.

The B9011 into Findhorn is being eroded when the Findhorn is in spate. This is the only route in and out of Findhorn. It may be possible to give up other land to try and slow the spate.

RESOLVED: Jim Mackie to find out SEPA contact for letter from Joint Community Council

Emails and domains

Discussion was held on the possibility of having a template email address set up by Moray Council for each community council to aid continuity and record-keeping as members

change. In previous years, community councils have wanted to make their own arrangements.

15. Closing remark - Thanks to all those who attended.

16. Date of next meeting – Thursday 14 November 2024 (venue to be confirmed)