



Keith Community Council

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 4th February at Keith Community Centre

1. Members in attendance: Neil Kidd (Chair), Catherine Sinclair, Susan Hutcheon, Steve Hickin, Marguerite Cruickshank, Sandra Clark, Fiona Addison and Dave Carson

Also in attendance: Councillor Gatt, Councillor Coull, Alastair Whitfield (Northern Scot), Keith Gray and John Seivwright

Welcome and Apologies: Neil welcomed everyone. Apologies were received from Sandy Dickson, Councillor Shepherd and Police Scotland.

2. Approval of minutes from last meeting:

Subject to an amendment, the minutes were approved as accurate by Susan Hutcheon and seconded by Steve Hickin

3. Police Matters:

The February Community Safety Partnership Report is not available yet. All reports are available at http://yourmoray.org.uk/ym_standard/Page_110794.html

Information was passed to the Police as covered at the last meeting and Neil is planning to meet with Inspector Campbell. There is still anti-social driving. There has been some minor vandalism at the roadworks at weekends which was reported via 101

4. Possible closure of Keith Swimming Pool:

Keith Community Council does not wish to see Keith Swimming Pool close and will support the 'Fit Life' membership drive. For clarity, 300 new memberships *across Moray*, not just in Keith are required to keep Keith swimming pool open in the short term. This does not include sign ups to Moray Leisure Centre Fit Life, which is an Arms-Length External Organisation, now run by Hi-Life Highland with Board oversight. Fit Life Memberships from both Council run facilities and Moray Leisure Centre can be used at any Council facility and Moray Leisure Centre. Well over 100 have been received to date. An open day is to be arranged at Keith Sports Centre to show people what is available. If the Fit Life membership target is met, a longer term solution will still have to be found to make the pools run sustainably. Membership fee increases are being looked at for the next budget year. Moray Council is looking into investments which could provide income to run the pool e.g. renewables such as solar farms and turbines. Management restructuring is also ongoing.

There was discussion on why parts of the meetings and decision making have to be confidential. Members of the public felt the decision had come out of the blue and left a short timescale for action. It is felt that there was a lack of information and transparency about how decisions were reached. Sharing facts and figures about running costs, membership levels in different areas and information on decision making was requested. A Freedom of Information request showed that membership uptake in Keith was 12.5% compared with 3% across Moray on average and the question was asked if this was taken into account when calculating the degree of subsidy of each pool. People from outside Keith attend the pool as it is a good facility and the potential economic benefit of people going on to shop in Keith will be lost if the pool closes. It is expected people will stop swimming rather than go elsewhere.

All pools in Moray run at a loss and Moray Council does not have funds to sustain this. Decisions were made firstly on running costs of each pool, and secondly public access including geography and transport routes. As Lossiemouth is close to Elgin (and will potentially have a pool in the new High School), and Keith is on better public transport routes than Speyside, it was opted to keep Speyside pool open.

Cllr Coull agreed to set up an open day at the swimming pool with a public forum with facts and figures on why decisions were made.

The additional £2 million of Scottish Government funding for Moray will help towards balancing the books and budget cuts.

5. Treasurer's Report:

KCC - £1071.70 – includes annual grant although it is less than usual, which Marguerite has enquired about.

Christmas Lights - £5708.01 – includes donations from Keith businesses

Scots Toun - £3,066.56

Community Council grants can only be used for specific purposes such as admin and promotion so it is not possible to make a donation to worthwhile local causes. It may be possible to e.g. purchase a noticeboard that would be used to display minutes and promote the community council. We are waiting to hear more from Longmore Hall Committee

6. Matters arising from the last minutes

Roads and resurfacing – complaints received about severity of potholes on A96 in proximity to bridge works. This will be reported to BEAR although we appreciate they will be difficult to repair in cold weather. We will also ask if adverse weather has delayed the project and if there is a new completion date.

ACTION: Steve to invite the BEAR Bridges Manager to the March meeting

Keith Institute – ACTION: Cllr Coull to update on progress of potential sale of the Institute.

Joint Community Council – Steve to attend the next meeting on 14th February

Heritage signs – ACTION: Neil carried forward

CCTV – has been reinstated and is now fully operational. Keith Community Council was not informed despite making repeated enquiries over previous months.

Tree felling - The hedge at the side of the Ugie was growing over the house boundary and was too large and mature to be trimmed to an attractive shape. Its removal opens up the approach to the war memorial and daffodils have been planted on the bank. The Fife Park work was done by a Council subcontractor for a telephone mast company to allow a clearer signal and was done at no cost to Moray Council. Work on Balloch Road trees may have been arranged through Roads Maintenance.

Auld Brig – Neil is making progress on ownership and will update. Moray Council grounds maintenance is being stopped on sites where ownership is unknown – this will include the Auld Brig.

Defibrillator – monthly checks to be carried out and logged on the Scottish Ambulance website.

7. Correspondence

Citizens Advice Bureau Community Asset Transfer - have responded in support of this proposal

Local Development Plan - drop in is 28th February from 4-7pm at Longmore Hall

Bank closures in Keith – correspondence between MPs and banks has been received. The Bank is making the decision on business grounds and advised mobile banking will be available and that personal and small business customers can use the Post Office.

Budget cuts – see AOCB & Keith swimming pool closure.

8. Edintore Community Benefit Fund Decision Making Panel

Three panel members are to stand down this year and their organisation will nominate their

replacements. The Hill of Towie will also be due to change two Councillors (Community or Elected member) on the Panel this year. Discussion was held and will be finalised at the March meeting. In the meantime, existing panel members were happy to continue to use their own email for correspondence and take care to comply with data protection. Neil and Sandy are happy to stay on Edintore Panel and Susan is happy to stay on Hill of Towie panel.

9. Community Councillors' Update:

Planning & Licensing – no updates.

Roads and rights of way – as per Matters Arising

Environment and General Issues – no updates

Councillor Coull – in addition to Budget matters, Cllr Coull has been to a meeting about a potential Winter Festival for Moray to build on and co-ordinate existing events in local areas and attract tourists to Moray from November to January.

School crossing patrollers – having no patroller on the A95 and A96 seems dangerous. It was agreed to request a crossing point. The 'school' sign is not very obvious heading westbound.
ACTION: Steve to ask BEAR to consider a crossing and railings to improve child safety and to speak to Keith Grammar about this as well.

Neil to discuss with Keith Primary Parent Council and suggest they also contact BEAR.

Councillor Gatt – supportive of an open day to showcase Keith Swimming Pool. Is not part of the administration and does not agree with decisions made about cuts.

10. External Group Updates:

Keith & Strathisla Regeneration Partnership - no updates

Christmas Lights Committee – no updates

Scots Toun – no updates

11. AOCB:

Keith Library – hours may be reduced due to budget cuts

Active Schools – this is at risk too. Keith Community Council does not want to see this happening. A high uptake of Fit Life membership could help support this.

Reduced gritting of P1 roads – this will not affect Keith

Reduced grass cutting - discussed

Spikkin' Scots at Keith Primary School – Neil will attend this on 15th March and elected members have also been invited

School buses – until now children who are not entitled to the free bus have been able to get on the bus if there are spare seats. From now on, those not entitled will have to pay.

Annual Keith Grammar School Citizenship prize – all were agreed that Keith Community Council is happy to provide this. Neil proposed increasing the prize to £30, seconded by Dave Carson. There were no objections.

12. Date of next meeting: Monday 4th March at 7pm, Keith Community Centre