

## Meeting Notes

Meeting of Monday 3rd June 2019 in

Rafford Church Hall

### FCC members present

Nikki Howard (NH) – Chair, Tony Pinner (TP),  
Anna Gatward (AG), Howard Davenport (HD), John Pullen (JP), Bob Laughton (BL),

Also Attending: Anne Garrow, Cllr Lorna Creswell (CL), Roger McMichael (part time)

**Presentation:** Roger McMichael from Moray West Offshore Wind Farm, gave a presentation and answered questions on the Moray West development.

The status of the project is that planning consent from Marine Scotland is expected within the next couple of weeks, and that will lead to participation in the next round of bidding for a CfD contract, which would guarantee support price for energy sales. Outline planning permission for the onshore cable route between Sandend and Keith has been obtained. Although no direct works would take place in the Finderne area, questions were raised on possible impact of power transmission reinforcements that may be required in our area.

Roger explained that due to the highly competitive nature of the bidding for a CfD contract project costs have been stripped down, and no money has been allocated to community benefit. Any benefit to local communities would come from local companies being involved in the supply chain. Cromarty Firth will be used as the construction port, and Fraserburgh as the O&M port.

Roger showed some visualisation of the wind farm, which will be visible on the horizon from many points along the Moray coast.

**Action: Roger McMichael to investigate possible power transmission re-inforcements**

**Post meeting note: HD to provide a link to Moray West presentation on FCC website.**

### 1. Apologies:

Cllr Claire Feaver (Cllr CF), Cllr George Alexander, Bob Laughton(BL), Brian Higgs(BH)

### 2. Notes from previous meeting

Approved.

### 3. Police update

No report.

### 4. Matters arising from previous meeting

- i. Broadband provision: WIFI Scotland have been developing their plans for implementation of WIFI broadband, initially in the Rafford area, and then moving towards Dunphail. They have been in touch looking for information on landowners of potential sites for

transmission towers. They have informed us that their link to the fibre network would now be at the Forres Enterprise Park.

It was also noted that links to Logienet may be available for properties with line-of-sight to Glaschyle Wind Farm.

## **5. Current Standing Items**

### **a. A96 Dualling Proposals**

NH had contacted SWECO to re-iterate FCC's support of the Transport Scotland decision to implement the norther route around Forres.

It had been reported that the Forres Community Council had formed a subgroup to campaign against the Transport Scotland decision, and an article on noise impacts had appeared in the Forres Gazette. It was decided FCC should not enter into a debate on the pages of the Gazette at this stage.

### **b. Finderne Development Trust (FDT)**

BH had reported by email that the Strategic Plan was launched on 31<sup>st</sup> May at a launch event at the FDT Logie office. It will be made available through the FDT website [www.findernedevelopmenttrust.com](http://www.findernedevelopmenttrust.com).

### **c. Vehicle Speeding in Rafford**

An email was sent to Kevin Price (TMC Traffic Engineer) on 25th April asking for advice on the idea of installing welcome "gates" (with speed limit signs) on each road entry point in to Rafford.

A response was received on 30th May. In summary Mr Price believes that some of the proposals may be achievable but others not, with the determining factor being the amount of verge space.

It was agreed that the FCC would continue to press on with this initiative, and to follow up with Mr Price on the issue of liability that he raised. It was also suggested we could do some further work on verge space available, including the option of dialogue with landowners adjacent to the verges.

### **d. Loch of Blairs Project**

BH also updated by email on the following activities:

Meetings have been held with the Foundation Managers for the G&E Baxter Foundation and the Adam Family Foundation. Whilst no guarantees of financial support were provided the meetings were extremely positive and recommendations to relevant Trustees are to be made.

Work is still progressing on the design work for the Stable conversion / extension and the friends of Blairs Loch are looking for an architectural company that may be willing to provide some pro bono support on the planning & building control applications.

The Controlled Activities Licence (CAR) for work on the aquatic weed has been granted by SEPA under the “Environmental Services” provision. This means that the fee of £2,300 for a CAR licence has been waived as the project is deemed to have significant environmental merit. Work will commence on the weed treatment in the next few weeks.

The project is currently in the Tesco’s in store ballot for the “Bags of Help” scheme and will receive either £1k, £2k or £4k when the results are published in July.

e. **Clashgour Wind Farm**

HD provided a brief report on the Energising Communities Forum held in Elgin on 3rd May. A full report on the Forum, plus copies of the presentations should be made available by the Joint Community Council shortly.

It was agreed that FCC would sign off the Clash Gour Shared Ownership MoU, in order that we would get an opportunity to be involved in the formation of the single Community Company, that would seek funding and distribute benefits, should the Clash Gour project go ahead.

It was agreed that FCC would meet with Nick McKay from Force9 Energy to discuss our objection to the wind farm. However as the FCC response was based on community feedback, our position would not change.

It was also agreed to check the response made by FCC to the Forres Gazette.

**Action: HD to organise sign off of the MoU.**

**6. New Business**

- a. **Core Paths Consultation:** No further information awaiting information from Cllr Feaver on how Moray Council (Ian Douglas) plans to take this forward. **Action: Cllr CF to check on Core Path position.**
- b. **FCC Budget/Funding:** NH has drafted a further letter on the cut of funding for Community Councils. FCC has agreed the draft. **Action: NH to send letter.**
- c. **Berry Burn Wind Farm Extension:** Recent Community Liaison Group meeting was re-scheduled at short notice and FCC unable to attend. Minutes should be available shortly. Next CLG meeting scheduled for September.
- d. **Moray Local Plan:** no further action at present, awaiting publication of final document.

**7. Planning Report**

No new planning applications submitted.

**Action: TP to maintain a watch on planning applications.**

## 8. Secretary's Report (HD)

- a. *Insurance:* Documents from Zurich Insurance had been received and HD would review regarding volunteers working on behalf of FCC. **Action: HD**
- b. *JCC Meeting:* Minutes of a subgroup reviewing impact of service cuts received. A query was raised on plans for grass cutting in historic cemeteries such as that in Lower Rafford. Post Meeting note: Moray Council website states that these will be cut 4 times per year. It was noted that Rafford Village Hall committee had made arrangement for cutting of the playing field beside the hall on a voluntary basis.
- c. *Planning Guidance for Community Councils:* A hard copy had been received and was in the custodianship of TP.
- d. *Meet your MP:* A meeting with Douglas Ross had been attended by NH. Feedback was: he supports FDT, keen to resolve broadband issues and will raise this with British Telecom, and will meet with Mike Crutch to hear about the impact of wildfires.
- e. *GDPR:* Jane Martin has informed all Community Councils that they should be registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) at a cost of £40 per year. The FCC had completed the ICO online assessment in January 2018 and came to the conclusion that registration was not required. However in the light of Jane Martins advice, FCC will re-assess this position.  
**Action: HD and others to re-evaluate.**

## 9. Treasurers Report

AG indicated that there had only been a minimal change in financial position, Bank balance £1527.67, of this £592.00 was restricted to Loch of Blairs with remainder £935.67, unrestricted (Moray Council admin grant balance).

## 10. AOCB

- a. *New FCC membership:* Hilary Rolton has kindly agreed to join the FCC as a co-opted member. Action: HD/BH to complete the appropriate forms.
- b. *FCC Publicity:* It was agreed to put up posters on Village Hall noticeboards, advertising future FCC meetings. Action NH to make up poster.
- c. *Forres Town Hall:* Forres Area Community Trust (FACT) is in the process of a asset transfer to take on the ownership and running of Forres Town Hall. Action: TP to attend a meeting on this on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June.

- d. *Wildfires in Moray*: Richard Lochhead MSP was holding a concurrent meeting in Dallas on the impact of recent wildfires. BH was attending of behalf of FCC.

**Post meeting note:** The meeting was attended by representative from the Police, Fire Services, and SNH. Key points brought out were:

- The fire services stated that this was an unprecedented size of fire for them and they were at times overwhelmed by the situation.
- There is no root-cause investigation carried out by the fire services. They said that they didn't have the technical skills to do root cause investigations on wildfires and so it would be left to the Estate's insurers to decide whether they wanted to do one.
- There had been a "multi agency" debrief but the only local community input had been from the Moray Council.
- The fire services guy admitted that the estate workers PPE was far better for the circumstances than that his fire crews were equipped with (which is more generalist in nature to cover all types of fires they may attend). There is clearly a resource issue here that will need to be addressed if the frequency of such wild fires increases as expected due to climate change.
- Most of the discussion was about the heather and muirburn with very little, until late in the meeting, any comments about the impacts of clear felling and brash management. It was evident that the ecologist vs game keeping debate about muirburning is still unresolved.
- A question was asked about the possible impact of wind farm developments and associated land management which got a very robust and defensive response from the operations manager of Pauls Hill wind farm.

#### **Next meeting**

15th July 2019, Edinkillie Hall, 19:00.