

Minutes of JCC Meeting held on 14th November 2019

Council Chambers, High Street, Elgin

Present:

Name	Community Council	Name	Community Council
Alastair Kennedy	Chair	David Parker	Forres
Ann Mitchell	Buckie & District	Graham Hilditch	Forres
Billy Davidson	Burghead & Cummington	Graham Murdoch	Forres
Jim Patterson	Burghead & Cummington	Willie Duncan	Heldon
Colin Burch	Cullen & Deskford	Jim Mackie	Innes
James Wiseman	Elgin	Sandy Anderson	Innes
David Chapman	Elgin	Steve Hickin	Keith
Anne Skene	Findhorn & Kinloss	Mike Mulholland	Lossiemouth
Lesley Edwards	Forres	Karen Pryce-Iddon	Strathisla

In attendance:

Chief Inspector Norman Stevenson, (Police Scotland),
Jane Martin, Community Council Liaison Officer, Jill Sowden, Community Support Unit (Moray Council),
Catherine Sinclair (minutes),

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone. Apologies were noted from Marion Ross (Speyside), Stewart Black (Cullen & Deskford), Christine Allan and Morag Stewart (Buckie & District), Iain Catto (Elgin), Louise Marshall (Findochty), Carolle Ralph (Lossiemouth), Dufftown Community Council and Cllrs Leadbitter, Allan, McLean, Gatt, Cowie, Taylor and Divers.

2. Speaker: Jill Sowden, Community Support Unit – Participation Requests

Participation requests are part of the Community Empowerment Act which enables communities to request to participate in decisions and processes which are aimed at improving outcomes. See http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_127003.html and <https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/participation-requests/> for more information. There have been no requests made in Moray and not many made across Scotland yet. Other channels of engagement are still available e.g. consultations, locality planning, and it may be that where existing engagement with public bodies is good, uptake of participation requests will be low.

Community Participation Bodies (CPBs) can be e.g. Community Councils, Community Associations, disability groups or even a street of residents. CPBs can make a participation request to any public body or bodies except Moray Health & Social Care. It is likely health & social care will be included in future Government reviews of Participation Requests. CPB's do not have to be constituted but do have to evidence they have community support – this could be e.g. a Facebook poll or simple survey – nothing too arduous.

The Community Support Unit is available for CPB's that want to have an informal chat about an idea, and to provide advice on which body or department to make the request to. The CSU will check applications to ensure they demonstrate how outcomes are improving, and forward them to the appropriate head of service. A process for fulfilling the outcomes will be drawn up and the CPB's role in that process mutually agreed. There is an assumption that Participation Requests will be approved although they can be refused. Those that have been refused to date have not shown community benefit. The process is transparent with all decisions about participation requests published, and a report on the piece of work produced once it is complete. This includes the outcomes and how the CPB found the process. So far, participation requests elsewhere in Scotland have included: developing and reviewing road policies; identifying grassed areas that a community could adopt and those the local authority needs to cut; and looking at specifications for a £2.3 million tender for a mental health day service.

3. Approval of minutes 9th August 2019

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting; proposed by David Parker, seconded by Jim Mackie.

4. Matters arising

None

5. Treasurer's Report

The balance at 14th November is £10,184.58. Of this £1,842.65 is JCC grant funds, £8,051.93 is Participatory Budgeting funds and £290.00 is a grant for a Big Climate Conversation.

6. Energising Communities – CARES Funding Application – Graham Hilditch

A working group is meeting. Graham Hilditch and Joan Megson have drafted an application for the £25,000 Local Energy Scotland (LES) CARES Enablement Grant to fund e.g. legal advice and creation of a legal entity that can invest, consultation, developing a business plan etc. The Joint Community Council is eligible to apply but is missing a word in section 12 D of the constitution. It refers to signing cheques for 'the Community Council' rather than 'the Joint Community Council'. There were no objections to adding the word 'Joint' and the updated constitution was signed.

Graham Hilditch and Alex Walker met with the Clash Gour developer Force 9. It is likely the Planning application will go to public enquiry and Force 9 asked if anyone from Moray would be willing to speak at the enquiry. Graham has been in touch to express interest in speaking at the enquiry – either as an individual or as a Community Councillor. Community Benefit Fund was discussed briefly with the developer, but Force 9 do not want to discuss details at this stage.

7. CCLO Update

Moray Food Growing Strategy

Community Councils were asked to please respond to this consultation. Emma Gordon from Planning is reporting good feedback and engagement from communities and groups at events across Moray.

Draft Corporate Policy

An invitation to attend this meeting was circulated by email and at the meeting. All Community Councils should be represented at this event as it is a good opportunity to influence the Corporate Plan. Discussion was held and it was agreed Community Council grants should be raised at this meeting as well as fees and rates now being charged to community groups where previously services or facilities were provided free of charge. Jane Martin also asked that concerns of this nature are emailed to her so she has them in writing.

Planning Aid Scotland Training

A training session on wind farms has been scheduled for 30th November. The Scottish Planning Reporter should be in attendance. Only 6 people have signed up so far. Non Community Council members of Energising Communities can also book a place.

Resilient Communities Conference

Alastair and Jane attended this excellent conference. As well as hearing from Robert Black, a very engaging speaker on resilience, delegates heard from Mosstowie Primary School and how they responded to facing school closure by building community resilience. The Scottish Government resilience officer urged Community Councils to build relationships with their local schools and support their resilience.

VE 75 Celebrations

These will take place 8th -10th May 2020 with Community Councils taking a lead. Information has been circulated by email and was circulated at the meeting.

Community Safety Partners / Police newsletter

There has been good feedback on the new format which is more informative and an improvement on previous reports. Community Councils are asked to please continue to feed back on the report so it can evolve and be as relevant as possible and let people know about all aspects of work carried out.

Community Council Liaison Officer Network meetings

Jane attends a national network meeting of CCLOs twice yearly and has been a key speaker at 6 out of the 7 meetings she has attended. Budget cuts mean she is no longer able to attend. Discussion was held and it was agreed that the Joint Community Council would pay for travel and accommodation. Jane is willing to attend in her own time. It is felt that attendance at the meetings is good for the profile of Moray and the Joint Community Council. Other local authority area officers have asked to look at the JCC constitution and enquired about how it works. It is held up as an example of good practice. Jane also contributes useful documents via Knowledge Hub.

8. Community Councils Children & Vulnerable Adults– Approval & Adoption

This was requested in order for Speyside Community Council to be able to comply with the requirements of Paths for All for securing funding. Steve Hickin suggested mentioning vulnerable adults throughout the policy and including contact numbers to report concerns about vulnerable adults. Subject to these amendments, it was agreed to adopt the policy.

Jane has had a request for a social media policy. This was discussed. Policies are developed to protect Community Councils and promote best practice. **ACTION: Jane will draft a policy and circulate**

9. Town Centre Regeneration Fund

Questions have been raised about the processes and parameters of this funding and transparency of reporting on successful bids. Alastair made initial enquiries but received no answers. Buckie & District Community Council has submitted a complaint. They did not get much support with their application and only received £2,000 towards work on the square, while £45,000 was awarded to a local park. Discussion was held. **ACTION: Alastair will submit a freedom of information request about how funding was allocated**

10. Group updates

i. Participatory Budgeting – Money for Moray – Alastair Kennedy

The Joint Community Council has applied to the Investing in Communities fund for £150,000 for participatory budgeting and we should hear the result soon.

ii. Community Engagement Group (CEG) – Alastair Kennedy

The meeting included an update on Local Outcome Improvement Plans and area planning

iii. LEADER - Alastair Kennedy

All funding has been allocated. A previously unsuccessful applicant has re-applied and the application has been approved and submitted to a centrally held pot composed of remaining LEADER funds from across Scotland.

11. Community Council Information sharing

Buckie & District Community Council – A community lunch for young people and young mums is being piloted to try and support vulnerable families. The first one was held in November with another planned for December and January.

SSE Beatrice has opened an office at Buckie harbour.

Burghead & Cummington Community Council – There have been a few issues with Moray Council charging community groups for things that were previously free and, in one case, backdating charges.

Decking has been stolen from the school. The Police attended the last meeting.

The Community Hall has been refurbished and the Christmas lights have been put up and Burghead is looking good.

Cullen & Deskford Community Council – The Community Council is in dialogue with Moray Council about the possibility of communal household waste bins in the Seatown area. There is not enough space to fit all the bins in this older area of the town and this is causing conflict.

Cullen & Portsoy Community Councils are working together on a cycle path with Portsoy taking the lead.

The Chair had an interesting visit to the site where Moray West Offshore Windfarm cable comes ashore.

Two groups in Cullen have secured a year's support from Global Ecovillage Network.

A successful application was made to the Town Centre Regeneration Fund but volunteers need to be able to liaise with Moray Council during daytime hours, which is difficult. As communities undertake more work, this is something that needs to be thought about – a more flexible approach may be needed.

The Community Council has organised a hustings for the by-election and is intending to have a hustings for the general election.

There has been sporadic Police attendance at meetings but it is appreciated Police are not always available.

Elgin Community Council – The Police were thanked for their good engagement with Elgin Community Council and for the comprehensive reporting. Elgin's Fair Trade Certification has successfully been renewed after quite a bit of work from the Community Council subgroup.

Work on the A96 dualling is ongoing with another meeting next week.

The Community Council has been discussing climate change and decided to ask people not to idle their cars. Police advised they can mainly use education on this matter, with enforcement if necessary. Members attended a meeting about decarbonising Elgin Town Centre as part of the plan for a healthy and vibrant High Street.

Findhorn & Kinloss – Long serving Community Councillor Mo Hyde sadly passed away in October.

There have been ongoing issues with overnight parking on the bay front. A caravan, hitched to a car, parked up for 5 nights. This is legal (because the car was attached) but it blocks access for emergency vehicles. The Community Council plans to raise the possibility of a bye-law with Moray Council.

Speeding is an ongoing issue although vehicle activated signs have now been installed. The wooden steps at the dunes are in dangerous condition and the Community Council have raised this with Moray Council. There have also been issues with drones hovering over the bay and houses. It is difficult to identify owners. The Community Council are trying to investigate and liaising with the RAF about no fly zones. Wildfowling is continuing with some noisy weeks, with poor practice, high shooting, wounded birds and cartridge litter. There are plans to participate in VE day celebrations with a piper at the war memorial and a blitz themed party.

Forres Community Council – There are 3 new members and a 4th would like to join in the New Year. A public survey on parking problems resulted in over 200 responses about black spots. Police responded quickly and advised areas where action could be taken. The options appraisal of Leancoil Hospital has been completed. Public feedback was overwhelmingly in favour of a health and wellbeing use. Erskine are keen to partner and are exploring the possibility of a rehabilitation centre for veterans at Leancoil. Moray Integrated Joint Health Board has been very supportive and a member attends meetings. A trust is now being set up to develop a business plan and hopefully apply for a Community Asset Transfer in future. This work has not been done before in Scotland and could be a good model to use elsewhere – particularly areas with cottage hospitals. There are ongoing issues re the choice of route for the A96. The Mosset Burn survey has been completed and has delivered a useful working document. The church is taking action on child poverty and has been running coffee morning and recently put on a free meal. Fly tipping has been a bigger issue recently, partly with bigger loads being turned away from Waterford recycling centre and directed to Spey Bay. The capacity problems are partly due to issues at Moycroft where new bailing plant is being installed but could also be due to the increasing size of Forres. Capacity issues are bound to lead to an increase in fly tipping.

Heldon Community Council – The Community Council is looking into a path in Fogwatt to increase pedestrian safety, which is still a concern in spite of the speed limits in the area. Otherwise, there are not too many outstanding issues at present as Community Councillors are often able to resolve issues with the help of elected members. The Community Council is working well as every part of the area is represented.

Innes Community Council – The Police Inspector has attended meetings. There have been complaints about wildfowling firing from Kingston towards the Dolphin Centre. Coastal and River Spey erosion is ongoing, which may lead to flooding and other emergency problems in future. Merchant Navy Day was observed and the flag was hoisted with 2 cadets. Corskie Road end has been repaired by Moray Council. The Town Centre Regeneration Fund awarded £5,000 for a handrail at the cemetery and £45,000 to Mosstodloch for a playpark.

Keith Community Council – Work is continuing on installing further public access defibrillators (PADs) in partnership with Defibs for Moray. One has been installed and the Community Council is identifying sites for 2 more. The Community Council has been trying to get a response from Transport Scotland regarding a pedestrian crossing on the A96 since the loss of school crossing patrollers. A shop owner is in discussion with Moray Council about leasing and refurbishing one of the closed public toilets. The Christmas Lights switch on will be on November 30th.

Lennox Community Council – Alastair is acting as interim Chair and Steve Hickin is taking minutes. Investigations found that the Community Council is responsible for the Nether Dallachy war memorial so they carried out work on it in the lead up to Remembrance Day. The Community Council is looking into 2 overgrown paths, thought to be the responsibility of the Crown Estate. A member of the public wanted to take over 2 salt bins at Clochan so the Community Council has been investigating this. The £250 Beatrice micro-grants continue to be given out by the Community Council.

Lossiemouth Community Council – Fundraising is ongoing for the zebra crossing with a mile of pennies raising £900 and a promise of £3,000 and materials from Tarmac. Other companies contacted have not responded yet but will be chased up. Pinz bowling has offered a bowlathon – if a surplus is generated it

could go towards crossings elsewhere in Moray. £5,700 has been raised so far and a contractor is tendering for the work, hopefully for less than the £15,000 Moray Council would require.

Work on the coastal cycle track is moving forward as the biggest landowner has suggested a route over his land and the RAF may well be able to allow the path on their land after the Golf Club refused access. Forty-five people attended a public meeting and a committee will be formed to take the path forward. Sustrans have certain requirements that must be complied with – their approach is not very 'community friendly'.

There have been efforts to improve access to the West Beach while the East Beach crossing is not in use. It may be possible to get a wheelchair carrier for about £2,500 that would transport wheelchair users across the sands. Meanwhile a contractor has moved some of the big rocks at the access, free of charge and is willing to do more if this is okayed by Moray Council.

Toilets have been going well with donations of money and toiletries from the public. They are now closed for the season (apart from for Christmas Lights switch on).

Merchant Navy Day was observed with a red flag being hoisted.

There was discussion on social media issues.

Strathisla Community Council – The developer of Moray West Offshore wind farm attended a meeting to give an update.

The licensing consultation about sex trade businesses was discussed and Community Councillors wanted to know if there had been any applications yet.

Police attendance at meetings is appreciated.

There have been problems with dog noise day & night in Newmill despite the involvement of Police and wardens.

There were no purple poppies (to commemorate animals who served in wars) available locally, despite Scotland sending many animals into service. Poppy Scotland has agreed to send purple poppies to the Community Council next year and they will send donations back to Poppy Scotland.

Power For People emailed about their campaign to have a 'Local Electricity Bill' passed in law. They asked the Community Council to pass a resolution in support of the bill and to encourage individuals to sign their petition. It was agreed to send information to Jane for circulation and discussion.

12. AOCB

Condolences – Jane expressed condolences to the families of Maureen Hyde (Findhorn & Kinloss), Ally McDonald (Dufftown) and Sandy Horne, the previous Chair of the Joint Community Council.

Annual accounts – Community Council year end accounts are due and should be submitted to Jane as soon as possible.

Chief Inspector Stevenson – The Chief Inspector has spoken to the 4 Inspectors in Moray to encourage attendance at Community Council meetings where possible. If there is a lack of Police attendance at meetings, Community Councils are advised to contact the relevant Inspector. His strategy is to promote high quality and effective ongoing work as opposed to specific days of action and operations.

Community Councils were reminded to let the Police and CLO know if dates or locations of meeting are changed.

13. Date of next meeting 13th February 2020. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.