

## Forres Community Council

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 at 7.00 pm, Forres House Community Centre

**Secretary:** Community Councillor Jo Lenihan | **Email:** info@forrescc.co.uk

Attendees - FCC		Attendees - Other
CC Steve Ferris (SF)	Chair	Garry McCartney (GM)
CC David Parker (DP)	Vice	Cllr Kathleen Robertson
CC Graham Murdoch (GM)	Treasurer	Cllr Paul McBain
CC Fiona Graham (FG)		Andy Hall, Moray Council Learning Estate
CC Kev Skivington (KSk)		Michelle Gillibrand (FACT)
Apologies		Members of the Public (MOP) in attendance
CC Jo Lenihan (JL)	Secretary	Henrietta Grant-Peterkin
CC Kenny Shand (KS)		George Wilson
CC John Innes (JI)		Graeme Reid
CC Ben Stewart		

Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome and apologies:</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that it would be recorded for minutes as JL was away. Apologies recorded as above.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Community Safety Report:</b> The CSP for September has been circulated. The Chair outlined the key points from the report. Insp Miekham attends JCC but the ability to support FCC meetings as well is very restricted due to operational commitments.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Public Session</b></p> <p>a. Andy Hall, Acting Head of Education Resources and Communities, Moray Council. Andy updated FCC on the situation with Forres Academy resulting from the issue of RAAC. The Academy is open, but the first floor of the building will not be used for foreseeable future and areas of ground floor are cordoned off. A small area of first floor accommodation in the newer extension is unaffected and is therefore still open. The main reason for attending is to talk about the long term. The original plan was for a new school to be opened in 2027 however plans will be brought forward to August 2026 which is a challenging target. The preferred site is Roysvale area which is common good land and therefore it will be necessary to go through a formal consultation before a change of use is submitted. As common good land will be used for new school the plan will include the demolition and redevelopment of the current Academy site with possible inclusion of a 4G pitch, skate park and outdoor health and wellbeing facilities. The new school will be designed to incorporate a community hub that is accessible to the community even during school hours building on the learning from Lossiemouth's new school and other successful projects across Scotland. The plan is for a campus style facility.</p> <p>Discussion took place on factoring in increases in school role, implications of use of common good land and alternatives for teaching pupils in the short term with reduced facilities.</p>	

	<p>The Chair thanked Andy for the update, and all were reminded of drop-in session on Tuesday 24 October, 11am - 8pm at Forres Library, Forres House Community Centre (FHCC).</p> <p>b. The Chair handed over to Vice to present a request on behalf of Transition Town Forres (TTF)</p> <p>SF outlined the issue that TTF faces with a significant increase in rent being demanded by Moray Council. The MC Finance committee rejected TTFs request for a rent reduction. The commercial rent being requested is £13,000 up from £4,000. Historically a 10-year lease was agreed where TTF paid £40,000 up front; this ran out earlier this year. TTF submitted a community asset transfer (CAT) 2 years ago which was rejected as the community did not want Forres Common Good land sold. Over the years TTF have invested considerable financial and time resources to upgrade an old building and it is this that has resulted in the rateable value increasing. There has been no offer of negotiation from MC on this. There appears to be no consideration of the good work that TTF does for some of the most vulnerable members of our community and the considerable effort put into the development of young people. They are the only organisation currently offering this level of support in Forres. Deadline for the rent is 31<sup>st</sup> March.</p> <p>SF asked if FCC would write letters of support to Directors of TTF, and to Councillors to reconsider outcome of meeting and to Chair of Corporate Finance Committee on workable solution.</p> <p>Discussion took place on this, and it was agreed that letters of support would be provided.</p> <p>c. Lorna Creswell (LC) advised that the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of FHCC falls in December. A week of activities will run from 4<sup>th</sup> December and memories and memorabilia collected through a project called 'Then and Now'. It was requested that FCC support funding applications as FHCC doesn't involve a constituted group. SF asked LC to check whose insurance will cover the events. There is money in Forres Common Good fund which could be approached for support.</p> <p>FCC agreed to support the events.</p>	SF
4.	<p><b>Ratification of Minutes 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023</b>  These were accepted as a true record  Proposed: Fiona Graham  Seconded: Kev Skivington</p>	
5.	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>a. FG – No response had been received from Dial-a-bus</p> <p>b. Grass area around Castle Hill monument. Cllr McBain had provided a policy report from MC and SF outlined the contents of this. Further discussion took place, and as there is no further action this item is now closed.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Planning/Licences</b></p> <p>a. <u>Planning</u>  Nothing noted of concern.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Action Plan Updates</b></p> <p>The resilience working group had attended the Moray resilience meeting. FCC is insured through Zurich but requires a policy change to reflect the inclusion of resilience plan and equipment. The group needs TORs and to record regular updates to ensure compliance with the insurance. Any additional premium will be covered by MC.</p>	

	<p>Ross Ferguson heads up emergency response for MC and this team will have a secure radio system which other radios will not be able to patch into so FCC can purchase their own radios. The next stage is for the household resilient plan to be delivered to 4400 houses in Forres. Community resilience plan is with Ross Ferguson but is not public as it contains personal information. The 3 safe spaces are confirmed as Tolbooth, Scout Hut and Town Hall. We now need to recruit volunteers: admin, 4x4 vehicles, etc. SF will purchase equipment in next few weeks.</p> <p>Further discussion took place on radios and it was decided to wait the outcome of Speyside's operation to see how they work in a very rural area before purchasing.</p> <p>SF Actions. Draft TORs and purchase equipment.</p>	SF
8.	<p><b>Correspondence</b> Nothing to note</p>	
9.	<p><b>Treasurer's Report</b> Balance 18<sup>th</sup> September - £8220.30. King's Coronation grant underspend of £180 returned to MC. FCC admin account balance is £2319.27. SSEN money still restricted. End of FY is September not October as previously thought.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Moray councillor reports</b> Cllr Kathleen Robertson – outdoor gym due to start in next 10 days. FCC's Insurance policy will need to be updated to reflect this. Consultations currently running that we need to encourage people to complete – budget and engagement sessions about learning estate. Full council will be discussing skate park, car park charges in Elgin. She would also like to convey congratulations to Forres in Bloom for their outstanding win. Cllr Paul McBain – briefed that he sits on the law review body and if a plan/policy is not agreed or passed it goes to this board. It can be challenging to overturn a decision. Also sits on corporate committee and education committees. Frustrating that the process for the new school will take so long. Licencing – short term lets. The licencing template is now online and there have been 230 requests. The deadline is 30<sup>th</sup> September for completing applications which if missed will necessitate starting a new application with premises not allowed to let out until the licence is issued. The banking hub has temporarily opened in MFCU and is only the second Scotland. It is open 4 days a week with a different bank operating each day for personal advice and banking services. It was agreed this is great addition to the town and very grateful for the effort to bring this about.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Forthcoming Events</b> Weekend of 23/24 September Open Doors FHT photography exhibition in Tolbooth Forres Men's Shed open 6<sup>th</sup> October – Film Club 'Up' Crafters event on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 10<sup>th</sup> October – Moray Transport Forum 28<sup>th</sup> September – Documentary film Moray Firth Coastal Partnership focussing on climate events. Register via Eventbrite 24<sup>th</sup> October - Schools Estate drop-in session 11am-8pm FHCC 10<sup>th</sup> October – Forres Osprey Bus AGM 7pm Tolbooth Rent Room</p>	
12.	<p><b>AOCB</b> <b>KSk</b> – The timings on the original traffic lights at Orchard Road seem wrong and particularly short time for cyclists as lights change before the reach the other side of the road. Junction possibly needs box markings, etc. Keep a watching brief. <b>GM</b> – Town Centre Improvement Plan. Asked if FCC had heard from Kirsty Shand (Development Officer). Chamber of Commerce appear to be doing something similar but is this a different project to MC? It was explained that Kirsty had only been in post for a week and would be reaching out to all interested organisations. The Chamber of Commerce has received funding from MC but</p>	

	<p>is different to the Town Centre Improvement Plan. Kirsty is going to Chamber of Commerce to clarify this situation.</p> <p><b>SF</b> – Proposed a vote of thanks of Forres in Bloom. JL has resigned and SF proposed a vote of thanks for her work. She will continue until the end of the year, but FCC will need to find a Minute Secretary and Secretary. This role doesn't have to be a resident of Forres and remuneration is available. There is also a need to recruit more community councillors. Discussion took place on this, and it was agreed to pay for an advert in the paper for one month and for Garry to do an article, especially as it's the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CC's. This should include that councillors must be resident in Forres and over 16 and young people should be encouraged to join. Cllr Robertson will mention it in 'Councillors Corner'.</p> <p>A proposal was put forward to move meetings to the Town Hall as the Garden Room is too small for meetings and other space in FHCC is not readily accessible. Michelle will forward information on costs and availability to GM.</p> <p>The Chair recorded thanks to Councillors for their work on the Academy situation as they had done so much in a short space of time.</p>	GM
14.	<b>Date of next meeting:</b> Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2023, 7.00pm. Venue: TBC	

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