

Meeting Minutes

Meeting on Wednesday 13th December 2023 at Rafford Village Hall

FCC members present:

Tony Pinner (TP), Anna Gatward (AG), Howard Davenport (HD)

Also present:

Andy Munro(AM), Andrew Kemp, Susan Kemp, Niall McDonald,
Margaret Birnie, Pete Mitchel, Pat Hern

Apologies:

Stewart McCracken (SMcC), Tom Hardie (TH), Juli Salt,

1) Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes agreed.

2) Matters Arising

a. A940 Road Junction at Edinkillie Church

HD reported that he had forwarded the sketch from Dianne Anderson, explaining the Roads Department plans for the junction, to the interested community members. AM reported ongoing dialogue with Roads Department and Douglas Ross.

b. Rafford Village Hall access visibility

HD reported that Rafford Village Hall now has a quote for lowering the pillars at the end of the stone walls to improve visibility. RVH had been advised to apply to FDT for funding for the work.

c. FCC membership

HD reported that the poster for additional members had been displayed at Edinkillie Hall, but the Rafford Village Hall poster had disappeared. **(Action: HD to provide another poster to RVH.)**

TP reported that a good article had been published in last weeks Forres Gazette, describing the role of community councils and encouraging community member to join.

d. Local Place Plans

TP told the meeting that SMcC planned to attend a forthcoming meeting on Local Place Plans. **(Action: SMcC).**

HD noted that a member of the community had volunteered to get involved in the exercise..

3) Current Standing Items

a) Traffic Safety in Rafford

- **Provision of a pavement in Upper Rafford**

HD reported that we had received no update on whether the path construction was yet out to tender. HD reiterated that Elaine Penny would like to see the work to be completed before end of March 2024 for budget reasons.

A community member asked for information on the layout of the footpath. HD explained that the initial plan was to continue the path from Marypark along the west side of the road as far as the field opposite the village hall. However some householders in this area were unwilling to sacrifice their limited front garden space, whereas households on the east side of the road had agreed.

PM asked if the path would link through the woods to the playing field beside the village hall. HD explained that this had been considered, but the owners of the woods had not agreed to this.

- **Vehicle Activated Signs**

TP reported ongoing problems with one of the VAS signs. TP and SMcC has been in contact with the suppliers again, and would once again try to reset the sign, but the supplier had been asked to come up with a permanent solution, possibly replacing the sign completely.

- **Village Entrance Signs**

HD had no update, since Elaine Penny had contacted the selling agents for the field at the South end of Upper Rafford, where we need to widen the verge to accommodate a new sign.

b) Broadband

TP relayed a report from TH that last week External Reality was given the go ahead for the grants for the two properties in Upper Rafford that are eligible for the £5000 R100 grant. So External Reality will be moving forward to bring fibre connectivity to that part of the village from Old Road as their next package of work.

TH also asked that community members please keep reporting the presence of any OpenReach vans working with large orange reels on trailers in the village, as this gives an indication of any progress they are making.

HD reminded the meeting that as far as we know Openreach would continue with their plans to install fibre to premises in Upper Rafford by April 2025, although the Scottish Government R100 lead has said it may be late 2024.

Post meeting note: the FCC are trying to arrange a further meeting, with attendance from Richard Lochhead (MSP), Duncan Nisbet (Scottish Government), and Robert Thorburn (Openreach) to focus on the R100 fibre rollout. **(Action: HD to arrange meeting)**

c) **Brockloch Field Development**

TP reported that a stage 2 design report from the architects has been issued, and had been made available on the FDT website. This includes the same number of houses, but removes the self-build option, in order to avoid a lengthy construction period, and to maintain some consistency in design approach.

In response to a question, TP said that based on current information a communal heating strategy did not appear viable, and that plans were proceeding on the basis of individual Air Source Heat Pumps.

HD noted that no information on visual impact such as ridge heights or street lighting plans was included in the report at this stage.

d) **Windfarm Developments**

No further information

e) **Joint Community Council**

Although no member of FCC was able to attend, HD reported that the meeting discussed the following:

- Police update, including statistics on number and type of calls to the police
- The launch of the new Moray flag.
- Moray Woodland and Forestry Strategy
- Dr Gray's Maternity Unit update
- Household resilience document sponsored by JCC
- Review of Community Council funding model

f) **Resilience Planning**

TMcC has contacted Rhona McNicol from Moray Council who had agreed to assist in facilitating a Resilience Workshop in Finderne, in order to identify risks and prioritise possible mitigations.

(Action: TMcC)

g) **Forres Health Services**

HD relayed a report from TH. TH attends the bi-monthly NHS Forres Locality Planning Group. At the last meeting he raised the fact that in a recent Scottish Government survey both of the Forres GP practices were below average. TH found the practices reacted defensively to this, and was disappointed there was no focus on improvement initiatives.

AM reiterated that he had suffered some very long waits on the phone to get appointments, and had been cut off on occasion. HD and PM reported that they had successfully used the on-line E-consult service, where a doctor had called back later in the day, which avoided a lengthy wait on the phone, but recognised this is not an option for many people.

4) Planning Report (TP)

TP had reported by email:

- No new planning applications since the previous meeting.
- No response from Planning Dept to the query about the planting and access to the site at Brockwood. (New house opposite Tulloch Lodges) despite regular emails to MC Planners to ask what the outcome of our query was). After some discussion, the meeting agreed not to follow up further.

5) Secretary's Report (HD)

HD gave a summary of correspondence received by email up to 13th December 2023:

- 15-Nov :- NHS Grampian presentation materials from 9th November JCC
- 15-Nov :- notice of formation of Community Stakeholder Reference Group for Forres Area Schools, inviting membership applications. SMCc has volunteered on behalf of FCC.
- 16-Nov :- received Edinkillie road junction sketch from Dianne Anderson of TMC Roads department
- 20-Nov :- received agenda for Moray Transport Forum meeting
- 20-Nov :- rec'd Zero Carbon Moray newsletter, offering loan of infra-red camera, and stall at any community meetings.
- 22-Nov :- Feedback from community member offering help with Local Place Plan
- 22-Nov :- Note from Richard Allan with an update on his fibre rollout plan. Saying that 2 households in Rafford have agreed to using £5K voucher, which will enable him to bring fibre up from Lower Rafford.
- 23-Nov :- SSEN update on SSEN Transmission's Community Benefit Fund, forwarded from JCC, who had made a representation of Moray CC's behalf
- 23-Nov :- Request from FACT for update FCC contact details. Details sent.
- 24-Nov :- Logie Primary School Newsletter
- 28-Nov :- TMC Sport and Leisure budget questionnaire. Included in FCC Newsletter.
- 28-Nov :- Rec'd Halls online guide, forwarded to Rafford and Edinkillie Halls.
- 1-Dec :- Rec'd SSEN report on Overhead Line Consultation.
- 1-Dec : Note from Community Member/ Dunphail Distillery shop about lack of gritting on Half Davoch road. Forwarded to TMC Roads Dept.
- 4-Dec :- rec'd CSP Newsletter from Moray Police West
- 6-Dec :- note from Debra Duke on Household Resilience leaflets
- 7-Dec : Draft minutes from Nove JCC meeting
- 8-Dec :- Request from JCC for info on Community Council funding needs.

6) Treasurers Report (AG)

AG provided the following update prior to the meeting:

- Bank Balance at 13-Dec-2023 - £21,079.99
 - £20k SSEN Resilient Communities Grant
 - £782.20 Moray Council Admin Grant balance
 - £240 Stocksigns refund
 - £57.79 Newtyle Residents balance to be used for salting

7) AOCB

- **Community Councils Funding model**

It was agreed that FCC should respond to the JCC request for information on the costs of running a community council. The costs of meeting rooms, website, registration with ICO, audit fees, and an annual mail drop would be included. TH had suggested by email some further items, which the FCC members would discuss by email. **(Action: all FCC members)**

A community member asked why the FDT did not fund the FCC. TP responded with some background on the formation of the FDT by the FCC, and explained that FDT have funded specific FCC initiatives, such as the Vehicle Activated Speed Signs. TP also advised that funds have been allocated for improvement of each Village Hall, and this had already funded improvements to toilet facilities at Edinkillie Hall.

- **Finderne Development Trust 5 year plan**

HD noted that in a recent FDT newsletter there had been reference to a new 5 year plan for 2024 – 2028. He was not aware of any consultation taking place with the community or with FDT members, on the communities priorities for the next 5 years. The meeting agreed this was a concern, and that HD should write to FDT on behalf of FCC, to express this concern.

(Action: HD to send an email on this subject)

8) Next meeting

Next meeting: 7:00 pm – Wednesday 24th January 2024, at Edinkillie Community Hall.