

Forres Community Council

Thursday 15th February 2024 at 7.00 pm, Forres House Community Centre

Secretary: Peter White | **Email:** info@forrescc.co.uk

Attendees - FCC		Attendees - Other
CC Steve Ferris (SF)	Chair	Cllr Paul McBain
CC David Parker (DP)	Vice Chair	Cllr Kathleen Robertson
CC Fiona Graham (FG)	Minute Secretary	
CC Kev Skivington (KSk)		Garry McCartney (GMc) (Press)
CC John Innes (JI)		
Peter White (PW)	Admin Secretary	
		Members of the Public (MOP) in attendance
Apologies		Laura Cameron (Community Support Officer)
CC Graham Murdoch (GM)	CC Ken Shand (KS)	Sandra McLennan (Forres In Bloom)
Cllr Scott Lawrence	Graeme Reid	
Cllr Van der Horn	Michelle (FACT)	

Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p>Welcome, and apologies:</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were recorded as above. The Chair introduced Laura Cameron from Moray Council who is our Community Support Officer.</p>	
2.	<p>Community Safety Report:</p> <p>The CSR for December has been circulated. SF went through the report.</p> <p>The report stated that over the previous month, there was an apparent road rage incident that resulted in a cyclist being assaulted. One person was held in police custody to attend court after potentially driving under the influence and was charged with numerous motoring offenses as well as others. One report of acquisitive crime and theft from commercial premises. Four reports of fraud in the area involving scam email from EVRI, purchase of an item that was never received and contact details led to nowhere, and a false PayPal account set up to make online purchases.</p> <p>It was mentioned that after previous meeting comments, there was a notable difference, and it shows that fraud is increasing.</p> <p>From a proactive stop, the Road Policing team stopped a female who was driving with a defective light, no insurance, and in possession of cannabis. The female was reported to the Procurator Fiscal and had the vehicle seized. A male was</p>	

	involved in an accident where his vehicle hit a tree and he admitted to the Police that he was struggling to keep his eyes open.	
3.	<p>Public Session</p> <p>SF introduced Laura Cameron to the meeting to tell the FCC about her role within Moray Council's Community Support Team. She advised us of the support we could receive with our Resilience planning. She mentioned the Local Place Plan which different areas and communities get together to cover areas that what is liked and needed for the local area, and this will feed into will feed into the Local Development Plan. Laura stated that it was thought that the FCC could help to facilitate the collaboration of what plans are out there and what the desires and needs of the local community. SF asked if it would be possible to get all the previous studies and plans that are out there as this would help enable discussions with the Community and the various groups (i.e.: Green Spaces, Forres Business Association, Forres Heritage). The consensus was that the FCC would like to be involved with the discussions of the Local Place Plan. We were advised of the timelines, draft plan to be submitted by September, and final plans to feed into the Local Development Plan by December of 2024. GMc asked what the Council wants the FCC to do, LC advised that the FCC could 'kick start' the process, co-ordinate and pull together other people and groups to come up with an idea of how to involve the Community to look at what has already been actioned and how any gaps can be filled, what is important to the people and community of Forres. It was proposed that the FCC should be involved, which was proposed by KSk and seconded by DP. Therefore, the FCC will start the process and see who would take in on and forward.</p>	
4.	<p>Ratification of Minutes 18th January 2024.</p> <p>These were accepted as a true record. Proposed: John Innes Seconded: Kevin Skivington</p>	
5.	<p>Matters Arising</p>	
6.	<p>Planning/Licences</p> <p>a. Change of use for the ground floor of the Victoria H part of t otel. The change is to enable Erskine to take over the ground floor of the building. b. Changes to shop fronts of Macbeth the premises next door. Macbeth's is having a remodel, and the other is to become a food refill shop and market.</p>	
7.f.	<p>Action Plan Updates</p> <p>a. <u>Resilience</u> – KSk has advised he has emailed Moray Council with regards to what stage other Community Councils are at, as we do not wish to be too far ahead or behind the others. Also advised that Forres Highland Games might be interested in hiring the radios, that are to be acquired, for the Games and this</p>	KSk/S F

	<p>would bring in an income. JI advised that there would need to be a step-by-step instruction manual made up so users of the generator and pump can use them easily in an emergency.</p> <p>b. <u>Scottish Water</u> – JI has finally heard back from Scottish Water with the contact details for a point of contact going forward.</p> <p>c. <u>Forres Conservation & Heritage Scheme (FCHS)</u> – SF advised that things are moving ahead, and a meeting was held in the Falconer Museum, for interested parties. The event was good and one lady who was giving a talk, talked about the archives and how Hugh Falconer was a friend of Charles Darwin and there is an annex in the British Museum called the Falconer Annexe that shows the work that Hugh Falconer did. There will be an open day at the Falconer Museum on the 22nd of February, with doors opening at 2.30 pm to show what the plans are for the Heritage Quarter.</p>	<p>JI</p> <p>SF</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>Email received from GMc with a request for feedback on the toilet block behind the Co-op that has gone up for sale. SF stated personally it is sad to see this happen, and as discussed there are lots of premises where you can use their bathroom facilities. There is a scheme that all premises can display a sticker on their window to advise of this.</p> <p>Email received from Tez Watson (Owner of Gallery 55) regarding the number of people who park on the zig-zag lines outside his business. This has been reported to Police Scotland, unfortunately, nothing has been done. He is now keeping photographic info to be handed to the police for ongoing investigations. This has been raised to the Police. Elgin CC has funding to have uniformed patrols to help them with their parking issues. FCC to investigate getting posters made to be placed in windows near problem areas.</p> <p>Email received regarding the works being carried out by Scottish Water on Grantown Road and the inconvenience that it is causing.</p> <p>Email received regarding the service provided by Stagecoach in the local area, main issues are late or cancelled buses. Due to a major incident at Elgin Bus Station in February. SF advises that we will not contact Stagecoach directly for a response. KSk suggested pushing the issues cited over to the Transport Forum to make contact and raise our issues and those of outer Community Councils in the local vicinity.</p>	<p>SF</p> <p>SF</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Treasurers Report</p> <p>Balance as of 14th February - £4,067.80</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Moray councillor reports</p> <p>Cllr Robertson – A levy has been introduced on second homes. An empty home policy for council tax is usually 299 percent but Moray Council has managed to make a change to this which is 150% for two years if the homeowner can prove the property is being renovated if the house is not renovated then the homeowner will incur a 200% council tax.</p>	

The Education Committee meets next week, and part of the discussion will include the Curriculum for Excellence for P1, P4, P7, and S3. Also being discussed is a paper on the behaviour within schools,

The working group on BSM will have the review findings will be discussed at the committee meeting.

Moray Council budget for this year has been approved and engagement events held with the public and stakeholders about what they want out of the Council's libraries and leisure facilities and the Council needs to rethink how they are operated. Any decisions will come into effect from next year's budget.

Potholes – the Council can't repair any of them if they are not reported on their portal: http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_40815.html

Cllr McBain - The BLB Committee that met today (15/02/2024) to discuss planning applications that the Planning Department had refused. One application that had been refused planning permission had its decision appealed and this Committee reviewed it and passed it. Still, the main objector was a government body.

Therefore, the application had to go to the Scottish government to review the whole application and decide in due course if it should be refused or approved. The other application was to do with green space, a homeowner wanted to procure the area next to their house and turn it into a garden. The Committee felt this was a good use of the space, but they added one stipulation that stated that no extensions to their house, but they could put up a shed on the land,

In the afternoon Paul attended a Planning Committee meeting to discuss 4 applications. These include battery storage, a wind farm extension, and a housing estate in Lhanbryde.

PM advised that for most of the month has been looking into a lot of items related to the budget and questions to the relevant departments and asking questions about the figures.

SF had a couple of questions for the Councillors, firstly any word on the site of the new Forres Academy, secondly, SF queried that the Council has the budget they want but is Moray Council doing the same as some others who are increasing Council Tax by 5% but still receiving the Tax freeze funding from the Scottish Government. KR advised that the decision is a Council matter and will be made public on the 28th of February. KR also advised that although the Government is funding the Council Tax freeze the increase being imposed by Moray Council comes in at about 3.775% and this is because the Government cut the Councils core budget, and difficult decisions have had to be made this year, but we could be looking at a 10% increase next year.

11.	<p>Forthcoming Events</p> <p>Every Saturday – The Gaff – Club for Youths is held in Transition Town (Will be held in the Town Hall for 3 weeks). This is for the youth of Forres and nearby outlying areas where they can chat, play games, karaoke, etc, and currently has 20-30 attendees.</p> <p>22/02/2023 – Falconer Museum Open day – Doors open at 2.30 pm.</p> <p>29/02/2024 – Leancoil Hospital Trust AGM – in the Tolbooth.</p> <p>01803/2024 – Osprey Trust Bus visit to Tomatin.</p> <p>08/03/2024 -Osprey Trust Bus visit to Restock in Lossiemouth and Bingo.</p> <p>13/03/2024 – Pathway to 2030 Community concentrations from SSE – 2- pm to 7 pm in Forres Town Hall.</p>	
112	<p>AOCB</p> <p>The Banking Hub -PM advised the official opening date is the 29th of February. This is what’s known as a soft launch, official photos are to be taken on the 15th of March.</p> <p>The following Banks will be operating out of the hub–</p> <p>Monday – Bank of Scotland</p> <p>Tuesday –The Royal Bank of Scotland</p> <p>Wednesday – Santander</p> <p>Thursday – TSB</p> <p>Friday – Clydesdale / Virgin Money</p>	
13.	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>Thursday 21st March 2024, 7.00 pm.</p> <p>Venue: Garden Room or Café within Forres House Community Centre.</p>	