

Forres Community Council

Thursday 20th February 2025 **Venue:** Erskine Veterans Activity Centre

Secretary: Fiona Dunsmuir | **Email:** info.forrescc@gmail.com

Attendees – FCC		Attendees - Other
CC Steve Ferris (SF)	Chair	Cllr Paul McBain
CC David Parker (DP)	Vice Chair	Cllr Kathleen Robertson
CC Graham Murdoch (GM)	Treasurer	Cllr Scott Lawrence
CC Fiona Dunsmuir (FD)	Secretary	
CC Kev Skivington (KSk)		
CC John Innes (JI)		Garry McCartney (GMc) (Press)
CC Ken Shand (KS)		
CC Michael Walker (MW)		
CC Derek Hallis (DH)		Members of the Public (MOP) in attendance
		Lorna Cresswell
		A large turnout of approximately one hundred members of the public
Apologies		
Cllr Van der Horn		

Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p>Welcome, and apologies:</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone from the public to the meeting. SF explained what the Community Council is and what we do. Apologies were recorded as above.</p>	
2.	<p>Community Safety Report:</p> <p>The Community Safety Report is now produced bi-monthly therefore reporting will be shown on the minutes in March.</p> <p><u>Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Disorder:</u></p> <p>a.</p> <p><u>Acquisitive Crime:</u></p> <p>a.</p> <p><u>Road Safety & road crime:</u></p> <p>a.</p>	
3.	<p>Public Session</p> <p><u>Forres House Community Centre</u> – SF advised that the this is due to the Moray Council Sport and Leisure Review, and he asked Gm to give a talk about some of</p>	

the history of the Community Centre and said there was a more of a social benefit rather than a financial benefit , once LC arrived SF asked her to give some information about the Community Centre and the various transitions that it has taken place over its 50 years and she mentioned some of the groups and activities like the hi-jinks after school club and the senior citizens luncheon club.

SF then introduced Emma-Louise who has set up the virtual and physical petitions to save the Community Centre and at the time of our meeting the petitions had approximately 25% of the town's population adding their name to them. IT was stated in the review that the Community Centre was under used but Emma-Louise mentioned a vast list of diverse groups that use the centre week in week out. Emma read out some comments noted on the petition, an important building, a huge resource, a well-used resource and invaluable to the local population, many generations have used the centre and would be a big loss, the hub of our community from toddler to pensioner. A Member of the Public stated that the library was central but if it were moved into the New Academy building you would potentially only be able to use it during school hours.

A MoP stated that they had read the review and what stuck out to them was that the "Consultants" stated that it would have extraordinarily negligible impact if it were closed.

another MoP asked where they could obtain a copy of the Review documents. A question was raised regarding contacting the Councillors and advised they can be emailed directly via email.

SF advised that Moray Sports Centre, Moray Leisure Centre and Moray Council have each got a separate governance stream, so this is an area where money could be saved. The next process in the review that all Moray Councillors will be holding workshops to discuss what buildings should be closed. The decision is not decided by the Councillors but the Council Officers.

SF advised that the Council needs to see how Hi-life Highland is in fact opening buildings, so it is something for the Council to investigate.

A MoP mentioned that with the council Fit-life cardholders can book out the games hall for an hour and no-one else could get in, therefore this is an area that needs investigated.

A MoP stated when Auchernack closed, and the staff moved to the community centre it was for the council to save money and save the community and she said it was a disgrace that five years later this is happening again.

Dr Simmonds spoke to say that there would be no place for the young people to go to. It is a vital hub for both mental and physical health, and so he believes we should try and do everything we can to save it. He stated that the number of people here at the meeting shows how strongly the community feels about it.

SF said in winding up this section of the meeting and asked what can do to help to save the Community Centre to keep it open for now and in the future.

	<p><u>Community Warden</u> -SF introduced Donna Jamieson to talk a bit her role, the area she covers and how to contact with her. She covers the west of Moray (Lossiemouth, Burghead, Findhorn and Forres). She was asked when she was in town, and she advised that she tries to be in town on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays.</p> <p><u>Forrest Area Community Trust (FACT)</u> – LC gave an update about FACT; she stated that the Board has been depleted to three members but on Monday there were twelve people. All keen to take part of the board. One prospective board member has done some research, and the Town Hall is only 50% used, so they are looing to see how they can improve on this.</p>	
4.	<p>Ratification of Minutes 16th January 2025.</p> <p>These were accepted as a true record.</p> <p>Proposed: Kevin Skivington Seconded: Michael Walker</p>	
5.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
6.	<p>Planning/Licences <u>Planning</u> Keith Builders Merchants are planning to erect a new building to replace the existing one, which will then in turn will be demolished.</p>	
7.f.	<p>Action Plan Updates</p> <p><u>Resilience</u> – KSk advised that himself, JI, Colin, and Steve attending a meeting the previous week. They had some funds that they could spend, it was about £300 so they have decided to purchase torches, gloves, jackets, and wind-up lanterns. One of the groups will be contacting Moray Council for the next steps are. SF advised he had requested for them to do a tabletop exercise to check all aspects of the resilience plan and safe places etc all work. KSk advised the members of the public what the resilience plan is. SF stated that they are expecting to be fully ready by June as Forres usually has some flooding in July/August time. PM advised that Findhorn has slit their area into four areas which might be something Forres could investigate.</p> <p><u>Forres Cultural and Heritage Scheme</u> – SF advised he is still waiting to hear if they had been awarded funding which was applied for last year.</p> <p><u>Local Place Plan</u> – SF advised that this is with the Council, and they have changed a few items in it and once the council have Previewed it, it will be available for public consultation for 28 days, after that it will go onto the Councils website for all and any to see and use.</p>	<p>KS/SF</p> <p>SF</p> <p>SF</p>

8.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>There was received the usual correspondence, SF advised he had received a letter from John Mundell OBE (Chief Executive of Moray Council) regarding the Common Good Fund and how the council has used it. It states how it has previously used and how it has been used during this fiscal year giving a breakdown of costs across Common Good land.</p>	
9.	<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <p>Treasurers report has not changed from the previous month.</p>	
10.	<p>Moray councillor reports</p> <p>Cllr Robertson – KR wanted to expand on the Councillors pay as it is getting a lot of heat now. She advised when they were elected Councillors pay was £19k, there are different banding for the councillors and the level of work they conduct, so the pay has been increased to match other areas of the country. KR advised that historically Councillors only need to attend two meetings a year, but they are looking to get this changed. KR advised she is not the highest paid councillor as per the news. It was announced that the Chief Executive gets over £100k but is the lowest paid in Scotland.</p> <p>Cllr Paul McBain - PM advised he joined the Council to be effective and after 2 years they are now seeing doors open, but he states part of the decent work of the current interim chief executive. He said he does not want the community centre to close but first and foremost a councillor he is happy to make the tough decisions if it is the right one financially for the council budget. Previously the council had a make do and mend attitude, also the work for the flood alleviation was a priority over work on the school estate.</p> <p>Cllr Scott Lawrence - SL advised that it has been a busy week with Education meeting, Full Council meeting. Good news is that the libraries within Moray will not be closed. The Budget meeting to be held next week and there are discussions and workshops being held about that. SF asked the question of why there are three levels of Governance within the leisure services. SL advised that is what they will be looking into, and it could be that they do something similar as highland who have Hi-Life run all their leisure facilities. KR advised that the sports centre is a separate entity as a property developer built it, and the leisure centre has its own governance because an outsourced consultants were brought in due to the fact it nearly went under. SL confirmed that the Council Tax for the 25/26 is a 10% increase.</p> <p>SF thanked the Councillors for all their work especially with the budget next week.</p>	
11.	<p>Forthcoming Events</p> <p>21/02 – The Borrower (Film Forres Family) 26/02 -Moray Good Food, Good People, Film premiere and dinner, Forres Transition Town at 7pm</p>	

	<p>07/03 – Frozen2 (Film Forres Family) 25/03 – Speaker Andy Wightman, Evening to hear about the Common Good Fund, Forres Town Hall, 7pm (advised Forres Area Forum have funded this event so to make it free to the public) Forres Osprey Bus are having their AGM on 24/03/2025 6m in the Garden Room, Forres House Community Centre. Film Forres are holding their AGM on 26/032025 in the Tolbooth. The Forres Market on Mother’s Day on 30/03/2025. The Forres Market will be on the 17-05-2025.</p>	
12.	<p>AOCB</p> <p>DH advised the Knockomie residents have been in discussion to have safety signs for children playing and there is also a blind corner. Gm advised that Geen Shoots have received funding to do a project at TTF but due to the tenancy being ended, GM asked if we were happy for their funds to paid into our account and be ringfenced solely for them. SF stated this has been done previously GM proposed and KSk seconded it.</p>	
14.	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Thursday 20th February 2025, 7.00 pm. Venue: Garden Room, Forres House Community Centre.</p>	