

**Minutes of JCC Meeting held on Thursday 14 August 2025, 7pm
Elgin Community Centre – home of Elgin Town Hall**

Present:

Name	Community Council	Name	Community Council
Alastair Kennedy	Chair	Anne Bolton	Findochty
		Braidwood	
Jim Patterson	Burghead & Cummingston	Paul Kerrison	Findochty
Jane Benson	Burghead & Cummingston	Steve Worth	Findhorn & Kinloss
Colin Burch	Cullen & Deskford	Christina	Forres
		Macfarquhar	
Les Tarr	Cullen & Deskford	Graham Murdoch	Forres
Steven Christie	Elgin	Lily Mulholland	Lossie
Alan Bell	Elgin	Marion Ross	Speyside
Peter Taylor	Finderne		

In attendance:

Elaine Penny and James Smith, Moray Council traffic engineers. Timothy McKay, Roads manager, (by Zoom)

Maj Maurice Gibson, Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Banffshire

Debra Duke (Moray Council) Community Council Liaison Officer

Catherine Sinclair, Minute taker

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone.

Apologies: Mary Evans, Heldon Community Council

2. Approval of minutes – 22 May 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May were confirmed as a correct record. Proposed by Marion Ross, seconded by Peter Taylor.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Police Update

Apologies

5. Lord Lieutenancy update

Maj Maurice Gibson, Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Banffshire

VJ 80 day is on 15 August and there are a lot of events in Moray and Banffshire. It would be great to see good levels of community support, as there was for VE day.

The King's Award Voluntary Scheme is still open. If you know of a community group worthy of an award, please let the lieutenancies know.

6. Community Council updates

Burghead and Cummingston Community Council

There is now a full complement of Community Councillors. Jim Patterson has been a Community Councillor for 27 years and is stepping down. Huge thanks are due to him for all his work over many years.

The reprieve for the library was welcome but there are concerns for its future and there will be a meeting on 26th August.

The Beeline community bus service is running successfully and is not affected by the M Connect 333 service.

The Church of Scotland in Burghead has been closed with a view to selling it. The Church is refusing access for removal of the war memorials in the walls. Major Gibb related difficulties

in dealing with the Church of Scotland re removal of Cameron Highlander memorials in Inverness High Church. He advised citing this example to the Trustees of the Church of Scotland, as the church eventually granted access. Money was left to the people of the village, to be administered by the church but it is not clear where the funds are. Peter Taylor advised this should have been treated as a restricted fund, in a charity account and the amount should have been published in the church's annual accounts.

Use of the community gardens is growing. A business requested using the site as a venue for inflatables, but the garden's public liability insurance was not high enough, so this was declined. There was some unpleasantness on social media about this and from this experience, a venue hire checklist for the gardens has been drawn up. The gardens received a grant of £7,000 from the Just Transition Participatory Budget fund for a basket swing. It was requested repeatedly in village surveys and is proving very popular. The wildflower area looks great. There are plans to apply to the Just Transition PB fund again.

Cullen & Deskford Community Council

Community Councillor Stewart Wilson passed away recently. Condolences to his family. Two new members were recruited at the recent volunteering day. The community lunches are going to be delivered solely by The Three Kings Community Association from now. The Community Council will still create and publish the Cullen Connected newsletter.

The Community Council website is running well, thanks to Les Tarr, and is being used for public engagement which will hopefully increase interest in Community Councils and lead to recruitment of new members. There has been quite a vigorous response regarding a need for pedestrian crossings for the A98.

Elgin Community Council

Gull issues continue to be a problem, and the Community Council is awaiting an invitation to the National Gull Summit in Inverness.

An objection was submitted in response to the Planning application for a proposed quarry in Birnie. Over 180 objections were submitted which the developer, Leiths, plans to mitigate. A meeting was held with Neil Gray, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, to discuss Dr Gray's and the state of NHS Grampian in general.

As Elgin BID is no more, Alastair and Steve are forming a Christmas Lights subgroup which currently has over 20 members.

Finderne Community Council

A successful meeting was held with Elaine Penny, Traffic Engineer regarding speed limit measures from the Dava Way Bridge to Rafford.

Moray Councillors have been attending meetings and have been helpful. It is still a struggle to recruit Community Councillors. Three are standing down at the end of this session, which will leave 2 plus one part-time volunteer. Community Councillors attended the stall at Forres Highland Games, but the stall location was poor and there was almost no public footfall. Contact has been made with the newly reformed Edinkillie Village Association and with Rafford Village Hall committee with a view to strengthening relations.

The wildfires and storm Floris proved difficult. Because the local resilience plan was still in draft form it was not enacted. Finderne Community Council understand that village halls may be removed from resilience plans because large events may be better served by providing accommodation away from the affected area. Public information was lamentable, and feedback has been submitted about this.

Broadband progress continues in fits and starts. The Community Council health check has been completed.

Findhorn & Kinloss Community Council

Following the recent wildfires, the Ecopark has completed fire drills, and the village has put up signs requesting people not to light fires or barbecues. Public education remains the best option for now. Both the village and Ecopark continue to look for more resilience funding. Large trees near Cullerne House came down during storm Floris and blocked the road. The

blue right route through the base was activated but not needed. This site was not part of the current blue light route so it will be amended. Local people came out with chain saws and cleared the route within half an hour. Community Councillors and members of the local resilience group attended a meeting on coastal erosion. Parking issues continue and have been raised with Moray Council.

Findochty Community Council

Funding has been secured to refurbish the harbour toilets, the White Mannie statue has been restored, and there is a beach cleanup kit near the Sanny. There is a new website and new display board, and a new boat planter at the entrance to the village.

The resilience planning event went well with SSEN in attendance. Funding for a grab bag, walkie talkies and flasks was awarded, and a resilience plan based on a power outage has been drafted.

Of the 5 Community Councillors, 4 have agreed to stand again and one may. One Moray Councillor has been attending meetings regularly, the other 2 less so.

There have been issues with motorhomes parking up on public areas despite there being a caravan site in Findochty. Seafeld Estates, the landowners suggested putting up signs prohibiting parking, but these are often ignored, and the motorhome users can be hostile when approached. Colin Burch suggested contacting Three Kings Cullen Association about this. Lily Mulholland advised that Lossiemouth has put up signs saying stopping for one night only is allowed, that waste containers can be emptied at Silver Sands and asking for donations for upkeep of the toilets. Feedback has been positive with lots of compliments and donations for the toilets received.

Forres Community Council

There are currently 9 out of 12 Community Councillors. There are some barriers to solo parents/carers attending. It could be useful to look at how meetings are designed and how to improve access. There was a discussion on gender balance. Although some Community Councils are wholly or mainly one gender, the overall split was 50:50 at the start of last session. The CCLO plans to gather more data this year and look at barriers to attendance. The Clovenside Church common good land issue is ongoing. The request to halt the consultation until adequate information was supplied was refused, but the consultation period was extended by two weeks. It seems inconsistent information has been given to the church vs Transition Town Forres regarding the common good. This will go before full Council shortly. Graeme Murdoch had been told that the Moray Council official dealing with this matter was told not to discuss offers or negotiations with elected members. If this is true it is concerning and shows a lack of transparency.

Controversy surrounding the site for the new Forres Academy is ongoing. The proposed site is on the Applegrove Primary School playing fields and part of Roysville playpark. Although some residents support this site, there are concerns about loss of the playpark, flood risk, impact on nearby veterans and traffic. Some feel there has been a lack of transparency about the process and no information as to why this is now the only site under consideration. A pre-planning consultation meeting will be held next week. Community Councillors faced hostility from some members of the public about Forres Academy at a Community Council meeting. This behaviour can put people off being Community Councillors. Peter Taylor advised that Findorne Community Council told members of the public they could not represent the community re the Brockloch housing site as opinion was divided. Instead, people were directed to the Planning website to submit their comments.

Communication during the wildfires was poor. There was no information about whether the fire was under control, evacuation plans or how to volunteer or donate supplies.

Friends of Falconer Museum are continuing to work hard on reopening the museum.

Heldon Community Council

Apologies but Mary advised by email that there are ongoing concerns re Cloddach Bridge. The community council has been dealing with planning applications for the proposed quarry in Birnie and battery storage in Spynie.

Lossiemouth Community Council

Moray Council are giving up the lease on the West Beach car park in 2027. The Community Council, golf club, and community development trust are meeting regularly to discuss the future and a potential handover of the lease. They are currently counting vehicles and speaking to drivers.

Carolle Ralph met King Charles. He was very interested in the Christmas tree project and had memories of Lossiemouth from his time at Gordonstoun. The project has been put forward for consideration for an award from the Scottish Parliament.

Police have been out a few times and ticketed people parking on double yellow lines. It is hoped word will spread. General parking issues are ongoing.

There are 3 beach cleanups planned this month. The VJ Day flag will be raised tomorrow and a wreath laid. This ceremony will be videoed so that anyone who cannot make it along can still see the ceremony.

Speyside Community Council

The planning application for the proposed hydrogen plant at Marypark was going to be heard at full Council on 12th August, however, Cllr Ross requested a pre-consideration meeting be held, where the developer and objectors could attend to make their case. This means the decision will probably be made in December. Over 350 objections have been received.

The resilience plan is being updated to include new resources. Marion Ross and the new coordinator are making sure the location of all equipment is logged, and items ready for use. Extreme heat and loss of private water supplies are to be added to the plan. Several private water supplies have dried up this summer. Moray Council will supply bottled water in such cases, and it may be that this needs to be more widely publicised. Fire management is also a concern. Marion contacted Scottish Woodlands to ask for their fire management plans for local forestry. There are three water sources, two of which are behind padlocked gates.

There is concern about how these may be accessed in an emergency. During the power outage caused by Storm Floris, there was an offer on social media to open the Fleming Hall if needed, but due to the outage, not everyone saw it. There is a need to look at how to better share information during an emergency.

Aberlour Community Association and Marion met to do a video for the Community Council elections to illustrate collaboration.

Aberlour playpark fund has raised £110,000 and Moray Council has awarded £100,000 so the playpark is now at the design stage. The committee has worked very hard and local businesses have donated very generously.

7. Taking forward the National Strategy for 20mph in Moray – Transportation

Elaine gave a presentation which she will share with the CCLO for circulation.

As part of the Safe Systems Framework, Scottish Government want to have 20mph limits on all appropriate roads. Eligible roads must meet criteria as outlined in the presentation, which relate to current speed limit, premises fronting the road over 400-600m and proximity to educational centres, place of worship, health centres and hospitals, community centres.

Also, if the road looks like it should be 20mph i.e. would be safer or better as a 20mph road, it is also eligible. This is already the case in e.g. Garmouth, Findhorn, Lossie beachfront.

Public information including maps and a 'have your say' button will be on the Engage Moray website (<https://engage.moray.gov.uk>) once Transport Scotland have given Moray Council the funding for this work. Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders will then be drawn up and the 20mph limit will be trialled on proposed roads. This will be a huge piece of work and could require e.g. 4000-5000 road signs and speed surveys in over 100 locations. There will be speed surveys before signs go up, once they are up, and 1 year later and this information will be published. Motorist behaviour and public feedback will be monitored. Because the orders are temporary, members of the public cannot object, but feedback and comments are welcomed. Where the Roads team have differing points of view on a road, they will try to go with what the local community wants. There will be an 18-month period where changes can be made. The 20mph limit can be withdrawn if it is not working well. After 18 months, the

orders will become permanent. Communities can make the case for a 20mph limit for roads that are not currently eligible to Moray Council who can then approach Transport Scotland to request further funding.

Elaine is happy to answer any questions in future or attend meetings to give updates.

ACTION: Elaine Penny to share presentation with CCLO for circulation

8. Planning Applications- issue raised by Speyside CC

Speyside Community Council has been dealing with a lot of major Planning applications including the maltings, new housing, 2 wind farms and 2 battery storage sites, and Marypark hydrogen scheme. It has also been asked to consult on major forestry proposals. It is extremely difficult to review the hundreds of documents and refer to several Planning policies within Scottish Government's 31-day time scale. Moray Council are also struggling to find enough staff hours to deal with these large applications. Marion has written to ask for an extension to current application consultation periods because of the Community Council elections. She has also contacted list MSPs re the short timescale. Extending the timescale is not likely to impact on large Planning decisions, many of which take years to decide. Marion Ross proposed that the Joint Community Council write to John Swinney and list MSPs requesting an extension to consultation periods for large renewables projects to facilitate democratic process. She would suggest a consultation period of 2 or 3 months rather than 31 days. She also suggested a moratorium on consultations during the period where Community Councils are reforming. There were no objections.

ACTION: Joint Community Council to write to John Swinney and list MSPs re Planning consultation periods

9. Treasurers Report

i. Receive Quarterly Report

The opening balance for the quarter was £9,612.33. Expenses of £210.75 were paid out and the closing balance at the end of July was £9,401.58.

ii. Approve spending as required

There were no objections to approving spending Joint Community Council funding on election advertising as required until November. The invoice for the election advert in Spotlight magazine will be due soon. The article from Tenants' Voice will be used in Spotlight. Community Councils can pay for any marketing and advertising in their own area while The Joint Community Council is funding Moray-wide advertising.

ACTION: CCLO to share a copy of the advert with Colin Burch for Cullen Connected newsletter

10. Resilience Plans update

The CCLO will be in touch to check contact details. There will be a new Emergency Planning Officer at Moray Council shortly, as Ross Ferguson is leaving. Please contact the CCLO with any issues meantime.

11. Training

i. Looking ahead to induction

A few Community Council health checks have been returned.

The CCLO is working with the induction subgroup and will email a survey re preferred venues, dates, and times for induction meetings. As far as possible, inaugural meetings will be on the normal meeting day. The timeline for elections will be agreed at the Corporate Committee meeting on 26 August. In the meantime, Community Councils can set the dates for their next meetings.

12. CCLO update

The CCLO network event in Stirling was brilliant. Although the northern CCLOs meet regularly by Zoom, it was good to see other CCLOs in person and share information and issues.

13. Feedback from Sub-groups

i. Election subgroup

No update. Marion, Les, and the CCLO plan to meet soon.

ii. Money for Moray

The group is meeting most Mondays. Moray's Just Transition Participatory Budgeting grant fund of £333,333 is expected from Scottish Government later this year and the first tranche of money for expenses was received 13 August. The fund is open for applications and forms are on the tsiMORAY website. This is year 4 of a proposed 10-year project. tsiMORAY publish an annual funding report on their website.

iii. Community Energy Moray

The last meeting was held in the Cabrach. CEM is standing by for use as opportunities for community investment arise. It has its own website and newsletter.

iv. Transport Forum

The forum has not met recently. The new Moray Council Roads manager is willing to support the forum if it decides to reform.

v. Admin Grant Subgroup

No update.

14. Feedback from Groups Community Councillors appointed to:

i. Moray Community Safety Strategic Group

Carolle Ralph attended the last quarterly meeting in June. She has difficulty attending as the meetings are on Wednesdays so wonders if anyone is available to attend in her place.

ACTION: CCLO to circulate terms of reference to Community Councils to see who may be willing to volunteer

ii. Moray Nature Network Steering Group

Not met since January

ACTION: CCLO to find out if group is still running

iii. Road Safety Champions

There have been no meetings since January.

ACTION: CCLO to check if group is still running

15. Closing remark

The Chair thanked everyone for attending. These have been interesting years. Hopefully, every Community Council will reform. We are a voice. Sometimes it is frustrating, but people are listening.

16. AOCB

None

17. Date of next meeting Thursday 13 November 2025 (venue to be confirmed)