

**Cullen & Deskford Community Council
Meeting on Thursday 16th April 2009
7.30 p.m. in Memorial Hall, Cullen Town Hall**

M I N U T E S

Present: Professor Ashley Mowat, Chair
Mr Thomas Johnston, Vice-Chair
Mrs Joyce Henderson, Treasurer
Mrs Zillah Jamieson, Joint Secretary

In Attendance: PC Kevin McPherson

Apologies: Mr Sandy Christie
Mr Malcolm Watt
Mrs Monica Wells, Joint Secretary
Cllr Gary Coull
Cllr Stewart Cree
Cllr Ron Shepherd
Inspector Derek Spark
Sergeant Tony McCullie
PC Iain Dormand

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the 16th meeting of the Cullen & Deskford Community Council.

Apologies were noted as above.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (19th March 2009)

No amendments were made. The Minutes were approved as a true record.

3. Reports

3.1 Police:

Police: The Joint Secretary confirmed that Sergeant McCullie had advised her (20th March) that he is happy to keep members abreast of the current crime figures for the Cullen and Deskford beat. PC McPherson reported that there had been 32 calls since the last meeting, covering a range of incidents, including kids throwing stones at cars, possible unlawful removal of car, derelict building on fire, reported drink driver, suspicious male prowling a garden, minor accidents, an assault (person charged for this) and a break-in at the Cullen Fish and Chip Shop (for which there are two suspects).

In response to a query raised by the Vice-Chair, PC McPherson confirmed that agricultural vehicles which are too wide for road conditions should be reported through the 0845 number.

It was also agreed that the road markings for the Seafield Street crossing in Cullen should be pursued with the Moray Council given the danger involved in crossing the street if lorries/vans are parked too close to the crossing.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

Mobile police surgery/use of police office: PC Kevin McPherson confirmed the following dates and times when Sergeant McCullie/PC Dormand will be manning the Cullen Police Office:-

- Thursday 7th May: 12.00 - 14.00
- Tuesday 19th May: 15.00 - 16.00.

PC Dormand will also be patrolling Cullen on other days outwith these surgery hours. These dates/times will be displayed in the Cullen Library and Post Office, and the Deskford Halls.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

Neighbourhood Watch: nothing to report.

3.2. Local Councillors

No Councillors were present.

3.3 Treasurer

Bank Balance: The Treasurer confirmed that the bank balance stood at £2,307.61, including £504 to be paid to the RNLI (proceeds from the Burns Supper), £500 contribution to the Beacon fund and £252.51 in safekeeping for Neighbourhood Watch - leaving £1051.10 of "disposable" funds.

The presentation to the RNLI is to be arranged.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

Textile Recycling: The Treasurer confirmed that Northern Textiles will be sending a monthly cheque in payment.

Community Council Grant April to September 2009: The Joint Secretary confirmed that she had signed and returned a proforma to enable payment of the Community Council Grant for the above period (as a result of current term of office coming to an end in October 2009).

Update on list of ideas on which to spend funds:

Meals on Wheels: it was agreed to pursue the suggestion of Christmas Hampers for those people receiving Meals on Wheels, with the first action to identify the numbers involved.

ACTION: Malcolm Watt

Outings for elderly/less mobile people: the potential public liability insurance issues are yet to be clarified.

ACTION: Malcolm Watt

Transport for less able people to Deskford Flower show: ditto comments.

Contribution to website: tender responses were received on 20th March (see Agenda Item 5.9).

Contribution to Cullen District Calendar: the Secretary of the Cullen, Deskford and Portknockie Heritage Group had confirmed that the initial production run is 200, at a cost of £2.20 each. It was agreed that the Community Council would contribute £220 to this initiative.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

3.4 Funding Update/Incoming Information

Awards for All: The Joint Secretary confirmed that she had been advised that the Big Lottery Fund has recently announced that it is making important changes to how its small grants scheme - Awards for All - operates, including measures to simplify and streamline the process for applicants, in particular Community Councils. They intend to implement a new process which will allow them to be confident for audit purposes about the status and fitness of a potential Community Council grant applicant, whilst not adding unwieldy compliance requirements to the application process - involving contact with the Community Council Liaison Officer in the relevant Local Council area.

CSV Action Earth 2009: the Joint Secretary confirmed having received details of this new campaign which runs until 31st July 2009. The campaign wishes to empower people to take action in their community. To do this, there are two different grants to give to groups of volunteers who are carrying out local conservation/environment projects or who are improving biodiversity in Scotland. **SNH Biodiversity Awards** of £250 support and encourage groups that carry out practical environmental projects, creating or upgrading wildlife habitats or improving the life of Scotland's wildlife. Projects have included pond renovation, removal of invasive species, hedgerow planting, frog hotels, bird and bat boxes and planting wildflower meadows. **CSV Action Earth awards** of £50 are also available to help projects to purchase plants, tools and materials and to cover volunteer expenses. This covers projects of all sizes and can cover community clear ups to litter picks and a range of other environmental projects. It is advised to register as early as possible (especially for events at the end of the campaign) as awards are handed out on a first come basis. The organisation will also send out emailed updates to registered projects on additional sources of funding, both large and small scale, that will help in maintaining and enhancing their work.

It was agreed that the above would be investigated with a view to applying on behalf of the Community Garden.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

3.5 Events Diary

Attached as Appendix 1.

4. Criminal Justice Services - Presentation

Tish Richford and Mike McRitchie provided an excellent presentation on the work of the unit. Individuals can be tasked with anything from 80 to 300 hours community service, and 10 people can be available at any one time on a project working 7 hours a day.

Examples of both outdoor and workshop activities were given, including woodwork (signs, frames for tableaux, garden benches, wooden flower tubs, picnic benches), paths (town halls, gardens), gardening and painting.

Re-offending under this scheme has been shown to be less, and the individual's self-esteem raised as a result of this type of activity.

Actions from the list of potential projects were agreed as follows:-

- Crannoch Hill path - joining up from end of pavement to beginning of walk (materials need to be provided) - site visit to be arranged
 - Cullen Beach tidy-up - will be added to the unit's list of projects
 - Coastal path to the east of Cullen - tidying vegetation - site visit to be arranged
 - Cullen Community Garden - tidy up - site visit to be arranged
 - Tidying litter along the Viaduct - will be added to the unit's list of projects
 - Removing dog mess (particularly during the summer) - Mike has confirmed he has no means of picking up dog excrement
 - Cullen Town Hall/Memorial Hall: internal painting; this will be discussed further once discussions with the Moray Council have progressed.
 - Deskford Community Hall - weeding/cutting grass - site visit to be arranged.
- ACTION: Zillah Jamieson**

The Joint Secretary undertook to thank Tish and Mike for their time, and also confirm the agreed actions.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

5. Community Plan

5.1 Reduction in Public Facilities in Cullen

The public meeting was held on Wednesday 25th March in the Memorial Hall, Cullen - attended by some 80 members of the community and Cllrs Coull, Cree and Shepherd. The key points raised included:-

- The review of Council assets in Cullen has not been completed; nevertheless, the 2009/10 budget has indicated a reduction in public facilities in Cullen
- The Asset Review will be made available as soon as it is reported to the Council
- A suggestion was made to turn the Board Room into a Registrars
- A suggestion was made that the OPP3 decision on the green area at the Community Centre should be reversed, under the Safe Route to School initiative
- The public toilets are critical for a tourist burgh, and must be kept open, available, and most of all clean
- The Nissan Hut is definitely going to be demolished, although advance warning will be given in order to re-house those items stored there currently.

A member of the community had made a complaint to Cllr Cree regarding a remark he had made to the Chair prior to the meeting; Cllr Cree responded with an apology and an assurance that he would do his best to ensure that the needs of all members of the community are met.

The meeting was covered extensively in the 31st March issue of the Banffshire Advertiser.

A letter was received from the Cullen, Deskford & Portknockie Heritage Group on 26th March 2009, highlighting the following key points:-

- The Cullen Town Hall has been badly neglected by the Moray Council, resulting in the need for urgent work to provide even the most basic of facilities
- The Cullen Town Hall offers a relatively small number of activity rooms, and is therefore somewhat limited should any proposal be made to make greater use of the Hall
- Volunteer groups cannot afford to hire the Hall for more than a couple of days per year
- The Heritage Group is willing to become a "partner" in a leasing arrangement on the Town Hall (such as Lossiemouth) in order to give the community a volunteer-run heritage centre of its own; the Heritage Group, with its charitable status, can now attract considerable grants to properly equip a heritage centre
- The Community Centre complements the Town Hall (rather than replicating it) given its different design and its ability to host a wide range of activities (which would be awkward in the Town Hall); the residential unit is virtually unique in North East Scotland and offers significant opportunities for visiting parties; the Heritage Group is one of many groups that depend on the Centre to remain viable
- The Heritage Group expressed concern that the open grassed area beside the Community Centre has been designated "opportunity land"
- The Library forms a crucial social and learning element of the Town and is used considerably; it occupies a position of prominence, is easily accessible and caters for all age groups; any move to restrict the services offered, or its accessibility, must be challenged vigorously; the possibility of listing the old school building should be investigated to help prevent unwanted development/changes of use
- The Heritage Group would like assurance that it can continue to make affordable use of both the Community Centre and the Town Hall, whilst maintaining its strong intent to secure a permanent heritage centre.

A letter was received from the Cullen Play Centre on 30th March 2009 indicating:-

- their deepest concerns with regards to the possible closure/sale of Cullen Community Centre and other properties currently owned by the Moray Council in Cullen and requesting the Community Council's help in voicing the strongest objections against the sale/closure/development of the Community Centre
- the great need within Cullen and surrounding area for a pre-school Play Centre
- the Play Centre's rental agreement is due for renewal in July 2009, with no response from the Moray Council currently available re the post-July situation
- 44 children accommodated currently, with a healthy waiting list - employing 1 Play Manager and 2 Play Workers
- the Playgroup is government funded and adheres to the Education Curriculum

- parents pay a fee for the under 3's groups (contributes to some of the running costs); other funds are raised by the committee and staff through constant fundraising
- an invitation was extended to the Community Council members to attend a morning session to experience what is provided for the children.

A letter was received from the Cullen Parent and Toddler Group on 9th April 2009, indicating their use of both the Community Centre and the Town Hall (every Tuesday morning in the main hall of the Community Centre + dining room - with the Town Hall as an alternative when the Community Centre is not available). The children's group is 19 strong, with children coming from Cullen, Deskford, Portknockie, Buckie, Fordyce and Portsoy. The outlook for membership is very healthy due to an increase in births in recent years (15 in Cullen in 2008, 9 in Cullen to date in 2009).

It was agreed that these letters should be sent to the Chief Executive of the Moray Council, with a covering letter indicating support for all the points made in these letters (with copies to Local Councillors and the Groups' Secretaries).

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

5.2 Harbour Committee Report:

It was reported that the 3 Harbour Committee had met on 8th April, when Malcolm Watt and Ashley Mowat were elected as Chairperson and Vice-Chair respectively. A report on the 3 Harbour's "wish list" is currently being compiled for submission to the Moray Council.

It was reported that some improvements at Cullen Harbour are in hand, which are welcomed.

Lighting on west pier: an update is awaited from the Moray Council. It was agreed to submit a further letter to the Chief Executive requesting a response to this request.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

Press article on future of harbours: extensive coverage appeared in the Banffshire Advertiser of 7th April confirming Cllr Coull's securing of a commitment from the Moray Council to keep a weather eye on improvement opportunities for Moray's smaller Council-run harbours, including Cullen. Having objected to a recommendation put before elected members that "other harbours (apart from Buckie) offer less opportunity for investment and proposals should not be developed at this time", he obtained a commitment which stated "that the committee should also note that opportunities at other harbours are kept under review." He also requested that increased funds be available for harbour development. He also indicated his belief that there is a role for the communities to develop various ideas for both Cullen and Portknockie harbours and take them forward.

The Council report indicated that the pontoons in Cullen and Portknockie are near the end of their useful lives. The report also indicated that only the inner basin in Cullen was suitable for berthing, and that a 12-year-old pontoon providing 24 berths, for which there was a waiting list of 21, was currently in place. No significant investment had taken place in Cullen harbour over the past decade, although environmental works had attracted an expenditure of £13,000.

The document added that the harbour structures were in a fair condition, although there had been undermining of masonry piers and grouting is required, along with continual maintenance of the pontoon. The report concluded that there were "no real opportunities" to expand the harbour.

The Chair was quoted as follows: "Whilst noting Moray Council's statement of support for further exploration of the idea to develop a marina in a basin of Buckie harbour, we wish wholeheartedly to support the recently reported wish of Councillor Gary Coull that this development will not be to the detriment of the necessary funding from Moray Council to maintain its other harbours, such as in Cullen, Portknockie and Findochty. Whilst there is a refreshing acceptance amongst some Councillors that these harbours are community assets which have not been supported to realise their full potential as recreational and tourist attractions, the reality is that allocated funds from Moray Council have been frozen for many years."

5.3 Town Hall Report:

Town Hall Flag: Having submitted the Common Good Fund application for the costs of the Town Hall Flag, the Joint Secretary was advised by the Head of Finance that there were two requirements before the Flag could be hoisted:-

- carry out a Health and Safety Review to make sure the flagpole is safe (responsibility of Nick Goodchild)
- clarify that we have permission to fly the flag from the Lord Lyon, King of Arms Register - based in Edinburgh - which can only be accessed by visiting the office during weekdays or writing formally. The Head of Finance kindly visited the Court of the Lord Lyon on our behalf (during a visit to Edinburgh), and she confirmed that Cullen Community Council do NOT have the right to fly the Royal Burgh of Cullen Coat of Arms and have to apply for approval. The Joint Secretary now has both an electronic and printed copy of the application form. There is a current fee of £1,194 to get this approval (£200 of this is required as a deposit with the application), and the backlog is around 12 months. On this basis, it could well be the case that the cost of approval may have become even more expensive by that point. The Head of Finance also supplied the contact details of the Buckie Community Council who have been through this process successfully and may be able to help.

Subsequent to receiving this information, the Chair e-mailed Richard Lohead, MSP, asking for his help given that this forms part of our Homecoming 2009 celebrations. The Joint Secretary also asked the Treasurer to put the purchase of the flag on hold.

Following extensive discussion, it was decided to:-

- write to Nick Goodchild asking for confirmation that the flagpole is safe
- approach Buckie Community Council to establish details of their experience with the Lord Lyon
- write to the press in the event of no response from Richard Lohead
- write to the Lord Lieutenant of Banffshire.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

Noticeboard: A noticeboard has now been fitted to the Town Hall. Thanks were expressed to Tam McLellan and Nick Goodchild for their help in this.

Town Hall Pictures: it was agreed to write to Nick Goodchild requesting progress on this.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

Property Review: the property review has been completed and currently sits with the Asset Management Group, whose final meeting is imminent. Once its recommendations have been made known to Moray Councillors, there will be a period of public consultation before final decisions are voted on by the Moray Council.

Reading Room: Nick Goodchild is still working on issues of lack of caretaker access and the current lease agreement for the facility.

Meeting with Nick Goodchild: draft minutes from the Town Hall Committee meeting of 8th April (still to be confirmed) would indicate the following key points:-

- discussing details of possible community expenditure on the Town Hall was considered premature
- trying to define additional or better use of the Town Hall was also considered premature
- Nick Goodchild undertook to investigate some apparent discrepancies in the latest Condition Survey Report
- the Town Hall roof should be replaced in 3 to 5 years - the Moray Council would retain responsibility for roof repairs in the future
- Nick Goodchild undertook to look into the issues of substandard toilets, lack of wheelchair access for both genders, and kitchen safety and provision - critical issues to be addressed before any potential lease
- the Town Hall Committee to continue its investigation into a Community lease, including a visit to Lossiemouth Town Hall.

5.4 Cullen Common Good Fund

The Joint Secretary confirmed that an application to cover the costs of the new Town Hall Flag had been submitted on 26th March 2009. This application had now been suspended given the developments highlighted in Agenda Item 5.3.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Joint Secretary should request a statement of account from the Head of Financial Services, and also establish whether conditional approval for the application has been given (coming out of 2008/09 budget).

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

5.5 The Lawtie Trust

The Chair confirmed that he had written to Rhona Gunn, Senior Solicitor, on 25th March requesting a meeting with herself and the newly appointed Trustees, in order to discuss the finer details of the Trust, including remaining lands. Rhona's response of 27th March indicated that she had had a chat with the other officers who have been involved in issues arising from this trust, and would be happy to meet to discuss the finer legal aspects of the trust. She confirmed the trust purposes (approved by the Court of Session in 2005) as follows:-

- the income is to be distributed for the purposes of meeting the needs of and making provision for the social welfare of persons affected by poverty and living in or otherwise associated with the town of Cullen or the village of Lintmill - the trustees have absolute discretion as regards who meets this test and how much they should get
- there is no obligation to distribute income in any year
- capital can be spent but only in furtherance of the same trust purposes and only if the trustees are unanimous in approving this
- the trustees can't make any payment if in doing so they are making provision for something the local authority should be financing. This would also apply to anything Central Government should otherwise finance i.e. the funds should not be utilised to relieve financial obligations existing at a local or national level
- the trustees otherwise have the usual trustee powers including to sell and let.

Rhona also confirmed that she would be unable to confirm at any meeting in the near future the extent of the lands owned by the Lawtie Trust as this would require a detailed title investigation, and she does not currently have the staffing resources to undertake this exercise, current staff being dedicated to areas which have been identified by the Council as areas of high priority such as flood prevention. She anticipated however that this difficulty would be resolved in a matter of months.

Rhona confirmed that she would be happy to discuss projects/applications for trust funds, and to consider whether these would fall within the trust purposes. The decision thereafter as to whether they should be funded would be a matter for determination in the sole discretion of the trustees. She did not propose that the trustees attend the meeting as she believes it is important that they remain independent until such time as the Community Council has fully crafted proposals to place before them.

The meeting is unlikely to take place before 20th April. A date is awaited.

It was agreed to ask Rhona Gunn to expedite the title investigation at as early an opportunity as possible.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

5.6 Floodlighting of the Market Cross/War Memorial

The Chair confirmed having received a letter from the Area Engineer Lighting, the Moray Council, indicating the following ballpark estimates for floodlighting the Market Cross and War Memorial:-

Market Cross: £5,500 + VAT (4 ground mounted floodlighting units)

War Memorial: £4,650 + VAT (3 ground mounted floodlighting units).

Energy and future maintenance costs should also be taken into consideration when assessing the viability of the project.

It was agreed to approach Reni Milburn in the Moray Council to investigate funding applications for the lights, and also to write to Cullen groups to request their support for the project.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

A letter from the Area Engineer Lighting (dated 26th March 2009) was tabled, indicating future arrangements for street lighting column replacement in Seafield Street and Seafield Road. It was agreed to write to the Area Engineer Lighting to establish whether the costs quoted above could be reduced in light of this work, and also to establish why the Community Council had not been advised of the scheme.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

5.7 Homecoming 2009

The current schedule of activities includes the following:-

Date	Event
23rd January	Burns Supper, Cullen Town Hall - successful evening - with the bottle competition carried forward to a future event; funds raised for the RNLI amounted to £504.00; presentation to be organised
16th February	Gents & Boys Haircutting Marathon - Scissors, The Square - funds raised for the Play Centre amounted to £100
15th June	Talent Night (Town Hall) - part of Heritage Week
15th to 21st June	Cullen, Deskford and Portknockie Heritage Group - Homecoming Week - various events (Primary School and Town Hall)
17/18th June	Seniors Open - run by Seniors Section of Golf Club; now accepted as an official event in the Homecoming Scotland 2009 programme of events; accommodation and information sheet prepared to send out to all competitors outwith the area; thanks expressed to Dennis Paterson and Zillah Jamieson; Homecoming Application made for funds to assist in marketing of the event
11th/12th July	Craft Weekend - in aid of RNLI and PoppyScotland (Town Hall)

26th July	Vintage Tractors and Cars: ground booked through Moray Council (The Link); public liability insurance arranged through Moray Council; risk assessment about to be finalised
31st July/1st and 2nd August	Art Group event
8th/9th August	Craft Fair - Christmas Lights Group (Town Hall)
7th November	Christmas Fair - Christmas Lights Group (Town Hall)
28th November	Musical event, possibly Whiskers Galore
30th November	Beacon to be lit on the Bin Hill - courtesy of Seafield Estate
November/December	Christmas Lights Switch-on

The Joint Secretary confirmed that an application had been sent to the Homecoming 2009 Fund to cover the costs of the hire of the Town Hall for the Burns Celebration. An outcome is awaited.

ACTION: Ashley Mowat

5.8 Cullen District Calendar

Further to the agreement at the last meeting to contribute £150 towards the production costs of the Cullen District Calendar, further information indicated that the costs of production would amount to £440 (200 calendars at £2.20 each), thus requiring an increase in the amount of Community Council contribution. As indicated under Agenda Item 3.3, a contribution of £220 was agreed.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

5.9 Cullen Website

The Joint Secretary confirmed that 3 responses to the tender had been received, and that a meeting was held on Wednesday 15th April to discuss these with the HIE Consultant. Further clarification is to be sought from each of the 3 organisations before further progress can be made.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

5.10 The Gravel Pit/Cullen Community Garden

The Chair indicated that a letter had been received from the Cullen Community Projects Committee proposing to hand over responsibility for the Community Garden to the Community Council. Following discussion, it was agreed that an official response should be sent indicating that the Community Council would be very happy to support the Projects Committee in every way possible, but that their role can only be one of facilitation and support. The letter would also propose that the Projects Committee is re-activated, including a representative from the Community Council. The Community Council would offer support in submitting funding applications, as well as progressing activity through the Criminal Justice Services unit.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

5.11 Cullen Allotments

The Joint Secretary confirmed that she had written to S. Parsons (22nd March) - copy to Caron Hunter and Isobel Addison - indicating the following: "The Community Council (through the Chair) has been conducting an investigation into the old nursery site on the Lintmill Road, given that it forms part of the Lawtie Trust land. The Lawtie Trust is a complex issue; however, we anticipate that our investigation into this particular piece of land will reach a conclusion within the next couple of months, at which point we would be happy to advise you of the outcome.

In relation to the other site, the Cullen Community Garden, we can confirm that the Community Garden will not be an option for allotments - for two major reasons. Firstly, that the topsoil spread over the garden, whilst considerable in tonnage, was spread very thinly over the entire area, and would therefore not prove fruitful in terms of growing vegetables. Secondly, and more significantly, we have established that there were conditions attached to the gifting of the land by the Seafield Estate to the Cullen community - one of these being that it should not be split up in any way."

ACTION: Ashley Mowat/Zillah Jamieson

6. Planning

6.1 Cullen Harbour Lighthouse

The Chair confirmed having sent a letter of thanks to the donor of £500 as the start of a fund for the restoration of the Beacon, and confirming that the Moray Council has now agreed to add the £2,000 set aside for the beacon's removal towards any restoration fund. He also confirmed that quotes were being sought for restoring the lighthouse.

6.2 Lintmill Nursery

The Chair confirmed that he had been approached by Arthur Gauld (and his architects) in connection with the existing path via the School, along the boundary wall of Cullen House grounds, past the Lintmill Nursery and down to Lintmill. This is an attractive path, superior in many ways to the more exposed route along the public road to Lintmill from Cullen. The status of this path could be raised if it was classified as a Core Path. Arthur Gauld is willing to consider contributing to its improvement in sections which are in danger of becoming overgrown, and asked for the Community Council's support of his effort to have this path recognised as a Core Path on the grounds that it would add value to the network of public paths around Cullen to the benefit of residents and visitors.

The Joint Secretary e-mailed all members of the Community Council on 29th March; whilst replies were not received from all members, the majority indicated in favour of supporting Mr Gauld's efforts to have the path in question recognised as a Core Path on the grounds that it would add value to the network of public paths around Cullen to the benefit of residents and visitors. She advised the architects accordingly on 4th April, also indicating that, at that point, without further discussion with the Council members, this was as far as the members could reasonably be expected to go.

She also made it clear that the above statement did not imply in any way at all that the Cullen & Deskford Community Council directly supports the housing development being proposed. That is outside its remit, and the Community Council would not wish to be cited in that way.

A further e-mail was received from the architects (on 2nd April - just prior to the above response being sent) emphasising their understanding that upgrading the path in question to a Core Path will :-

- entitle it to proper sign posting (which their client would be prepared to assist with) - sign posting and Core path status publicity are likely to ensure regular use.
- entitle the Council to press for any necessary upgrading or maintenance by appropriate parties. Their client is prepared to assist with this if no other party is.

In other words the future state of the path, which for the moment may be uncertain in terms of sign posting, maintenance and continued use, could be put on a firmer footing if the Community Council is prepared to support their client's initiative.

It is also their understanding that effective support for their client's representation to the Moray Council will be strengthened if expressed under the following categories :-

- a brief expression of evidence, even anecdotal, regarding past use of the path by the community
- a brief confirmation of the relevance of the path to local history and amenity
- confirmation that upgrading to Core Path status is likely to open up latent demand for use of this attractive route by locals and visitors alike
- confirmation of the unique local attractiveness of this path and added value to the core path network that is likely to be secured for the future if this path is included in the Core Path Network around Cullen.

The architects requested that the Community Council express its support in these terms on behalf of the local community.

This e-mail was acknowledged by the Joint Secretary on 4th April, with an indication that its contents would be discussed at the 16th April meeting. Subsequent to this, the architects e-mailed again indicating that they fully appreciate the Community Council's position and agree that it is appropriate, in this instance, that the issue of the path is kept separate from that of the housing development, and that they look forward to hearing from the Community Council after its meeting of 16th April.

Following discussion, it was agreed to send a supportive letter to the Moray Council along the lines suggested above, but that the letter should emphasise that this support is not linked to the planning application in any way and is a totally separate issue.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

6.3 Weekly List

In the Weekly List dated 20th March, the following application appeared:-

- Listed building consent to install replacement windows and gate at 10A Seafield Street, Cullen

This was not deemed to be of community interest.

7. Points for Noting/Information

7.1 Licensing Board Applications:

Licensing Board Applications are being monitored on a weekly basis by the Joint Secretary. The Joint Secretary confirmed that she had circulated to members on 22nd March the Licence Application from the Cullen Bowling and Tennis Club. There were no grounds for objection.

7.2 Correspondence

None to report.

7.3 Publicity

Midnight Football League: The Midnight Football League was run during August to October 2008, and was funded by the Cullen & Deskford Community Council, Anton's Solicitors and Moray Council Sports Department, with support from the Scottish Football Association and Grampian Police. Subsequent to this, twelve participants from the league participated in a football skills competition run by UEFA and Ford; each participant had to perform skills and tricks with a football for a period of one minute, and had to be video-ed by a willing teenage participant. One of the Buckie teams came 4th overall in the competition which was a fantastic achievement considering the number of European submissions UEFA had received; the team, including the cameraman, were given a range of Adidas football gear as prizes. A second edition of the competition is being organised. Press coverage appeared in the Banffshire Advertiser of 14th April 2009.

It was agreed to write to Kim Paterson confirming our possible involvement in next year's league and requesting that we be kept up-to-date on developments.

ACTION: Zillah Jamieson

7.4 Suggestion Boxes

Nothing to report.

7.5 Consultation Documents

There were no consultation documents to report on.

7.6 Confirmation of other actions taken

Path on Way to Salmon Bothy: The Joint Secretary confirmed that she had written to the Seafield Estate on 22nd March indicating our understanding that the path in question is definitely the responsibility of the Seafield Estate, and requesting that they investigate the points raised with a view to hopefully rectifying the potential problems. A response had been received, as follows: "The response I received from Moray Council was not very encouraging. The Department responsible for all coastal protection indicated there was no justification for Council involvement as no buildings are at risk. From the Estate's point of view, we have no significant need for vehicular use of the track and would therefore intend in the meantime simply to monitor the situation."

Derelict Building: the building has now been boarded up.

8. A.O.C.B.

8.1 Best Kept Village in Moray Competition 2009

The Joint Secretary confirmed that she had received details of the above competition run by the Moray Federation of Community Halls and Associations since 1982. The organisation is funded by a small grant from the Moray Council and the council nurseries supply competing villages with bedding plants. There are categories for large villages, small villages and scattered communities. There is no entry fee. Entries must be sent in by the end of May, judging takes place in August and awards are presented at a ceremony in the Town Hall in September. There is also a Junior Section to encourage young people. Applications forms are sent out around the end of March. Following discussion, it was agreed not to enter this year's competition.

8.2 Canine Care Card Scheme

The Joint Secretary provided posters for display in the Cullen Library and Post Office, and the two Deskford halls - outlining the canine care card scheme, which, in the event of a dog owner's death, the Dogs Trust looks after their dog indefinitely until they can find a responsible caring new home for them. More information is available at the Dogs Trust (www.dogstrust.org.uk).

8.3 Notice of Intention to Review Community Council Scheme

The Joint Secretary confirmed having received the Moray Council's Notice of Intention to revoke the existing Moray Community Council Scheme by 4th October 2009 and publish a new scheme for the establishment of Community Councils. A review will take place of the current Community Council scheme, framework and boundaries which have been in place since 1977/78. These will be reviewed alongside modern administrative boundaries including Local Government ward boundaries. Natural population growth and spread of communities will also be a consideration. The public are invited for a period of 8 weeks to make suggestions as to the areas and composition of the Community Councils. Submissions should be addressed and forwarded by Wednesday 3rd June to the Community Council Scheme Review, Elections Office, The Moray Council: election.enquiries@moray.gov.uk. Once suggestions submitted during the period noted above have been considered, a draft Community Council scheme will be published for further public consultation.

The Joint Secretary also confirmed that she had received notification of a new online boundary mapping tool which visualises the Moray Local Government Ward and Community Council boundaries on interactive maps. The internet-based tool can be found at <http://webmap.moray.gov.uk/imf/imf.jsp?site-boundaries>. This tool will be used in the future for the forthcoming Community Council Boundary review.

8.4 Model Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils

The Joint Secretary confirmed that she had now received the final documents - signed by John Swinney MSP - as follows: Model Scheme for the Establishment of Community Council, Model Standing Orders for the Establishment of Community Councils, Constitution for Community Councils, and Code of Conduct. These documents do not represent any major changes to current operation, with the exception that a quorum amounts to 3 members.

8.5 Regional Association of Scottish Community Councils Conference - held in Elgin on 21st March 2009

The Joint Secretary confirmed that she had received a statement from Les Morgan, Area ASSC Representative on the above conference, indicating that over 50 Community Councillors attended the Conference. The morning session was a Question Time format, with many of the questions being on the national planning framework. Community Councils are statutory consultees on planning applications and in an attempt to speed up and make the planning process more efficient, new Scottish legislation will require applicants for major developments to engage in pre-application consultation with community councils. The general subject of consultation was also discussed and there were suggestions from the floor to improve the Scottish Government's consultation process - in this internet age 'consultation fatigue' is a significant issue and it is important to achieve a balance between under- and over-consultation. Flood Prevention was also discussed and the delay in implementing the measures for Elgin was regretted. Local Community Councillors were told it was important to get the complex and expensive Elgin scheme correct and that this takes time. The afternoon session mostly consisted of the ASSC briefing community councillors on national events of interest, notably the forthcoming issue of a national scheme of establishment for community councils and a code of conduct for community councillors.

Additional conference business not covered in the report was the Scottish Government's forthcoming 'pilot' projects - related to community empowerment - for community councils in Scotland. It is hoped that Moray will be one of the six pilot areas and hopefully this will be confirmed by a government statement at the end of April. If Moray is chosen, it is possible that each of the Moray CCs will be given a budget to spend on a specific project and the results will be monitored to see if the principle is viable.

8.6 Gypsy/Traveller Awareness Raising Session

This event has been arranged for 24th April 2009 in the Lounge at the Elgin Town Hall from 10.00 to 12.30 (with lunch provided). Further details can be obtained from Fiona Simpson on 01343 563321.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting

Thursday 21st May - Deskford Jubilee Hall - 7.30 p.m.

APPENDIX 1

Date	Event	Location
25th April	Coffee Morning 10.00 - 12.00	Bayview Court
6th May	Cullen Pensioners Club Sale of Work 18.30 - 21.00	
16th May	Soup and Sweet	Cullen Golf Club
30th May	Coffee Morning Cullen Methodist Church 10.00 - 12.00	Town Hall
3rd June	Cullen Pensioners Club Summer Outing	
15th to 21st June	Heritage Group Week	Various
17th and 18th June	Cullen Seniors Golf Tournament	Cullen Golf Club