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DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMUNITY COUNCILS OF MORAY HELD ON THURSDAY 14TH MAY 2009

Present :

Buckie C.C.	Ian Moir
Elgin C.C.	Alastair Kennedy (Chair) Alex Macmillan Murray Ross
Findhorn & Kinloss C.C.	Les Morgan (taking Minute)
Forres	Colin Lipscomb
Lennox C.C.	Mike Reid Sandy Horne Keir Cruickshank
Lossiemouth C.C.	Bill McLean Helen MacIntosh
Strathisla C.C.	Rhona Patterson

In Attendance :

Allan Wright, Deputy Convenor, Moray Council

John Ferguson, Community Planning + Development Manager, Moray Council (Information session only)

Apologies:

Lorraine Dingwall, Forres C.C., Jane Martin, Keith C.C.

1. Welcome

Alastair welcomed all to the meeting, particularly Allan Wright and John Ferguson from the Moray Council and also the new Secretary of Lossiemouth CC Helen MacIntosh. As there was no secretary available, Les Morgan stepped in to take the Minutes. John Ferguson was invited to give a presentation on developments with community engagement.

Information Session with John Ferguson, Community Planning + Development Manager, Moray Council

John gave a presentation on the Moray Council's consultation on proposed changes in the organisation for Community Engagement. The CPP has focussed support for a wide variety of groups including Area Forums and Community Councils and the Council is obliged to take forward initiatives to get communities involved. The Audit Commission will check that 'best value' is being achieved. The Moray Council's proposals are in two parts: Staffing and Financial Support.

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STAFFING: At present there are only 3 support workers plus the Community Council Liaison Officer (part-time post). The Council proposes establishing a Support Unit and John gave attendees a copy of a diagram 'Community Support Unit Staffing Structure – Appendix 1' and explained a new system of Community Support Officers and Workers. He stated that the new staffing structure would not result in new council staff – all appointments would be filled with existing staff. It may be that the Support Officers will be area-based and aligned with School Groups. Also each officer could be given an additional theme, for example 'the elderly'. The staffing structure would be distributed for comments as soon as possible. The consultation will be sent out as soon as possible.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT: John then gave out copies of a draft letter titled 'Community Engagement Fund – Consultation' which will also be sent out as soon as possible. The consultation is to obtain views and preferred options regarding funding levels for Community Councils and Area Forums. No additional funds will be available but existing resources can be re-directed. There are various options to consider, for example block grants or per capita funding.

Cllr Wright pointed out that if the Community Councils' summer recess gave insufficient time for CC discussion, the reply deadline could be extended.

Following a Question and Answer session, the Chairman thanked John for his presentation.

2. **Minute of Meeting of The Joint Community Councils of Moray held on 12th February 2009**

The Minute was proposed by Rhona Patterson and seconded by Alex Macmillan as being a true record of proceedings.

3. **Matters Arising**

Forres CC Clarification of Previous Minute. Colin stated that a local newspaper had used draft minutes and had mis-represented the situation. He queried the publication of draft minutes. The Alastair said that the publication of draft minutes had been discussed and agreed previously and draft minutes were clearly labelled as such.

0845 / 0870 numbers: Alastair read the contents of the CPP reply regarding these numbers. It was conceded that the use of 08XX numbers incurs some cost to customers and that the use of a mobile phone will also incur costs. A new prefix, 0300, is reserved for use by community groups, charities and the voluntary sector and 0300 calls are all charged at the local rate. The CPP is not taking action to eliminate 0845/0870 numbers from services such as health centres etc.

Millbuies : The sign has been corrected, ahead of schedule

Moray Way: Burghead & Cummington CC had been consulted on this proposal. As John Main was not present, his update to the meeting is carried forward.

Action: JM

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Permanent / Temporary Contracts : Alastair had written to the Chief Executive. No reply as yet, carried forward. **Action: AK**

Lossiemouth By-law: Bill stated that the By-law had been recommended and approved. Cllr Wright reported that the formal process of publicising and seeking objections is underway.

Community Councils and Scottish Government Planning Consultations and Publication : An email had been forwarded to all CC's from Alan Cameron, Scottish Government. Rhona Patterson asked if CC's had prior notice of this. All CC's confirmed this was the first notification they had. Alastair to contact and confirm. Carried forward to next meeting. **Action: AK**

Affordable Housing: Alastair had received correspondence regarding Affordable Housing from the Housing Programmes Manager (HPM). Alastair had contacted the HPM to ask that this be sent to all Community Councils, but CCs have not yet received it. Alastair will investigate. **Action: AK**

Gypsy/Travellers Awareness session: Rhona reported that members of the public were encouraged to be more tolerant. It was unfortunate that a minority of travellers caused problems and this resulted in all travellers being given a bad name. It was noted that if other members of the public failed to observe regulations they would be brought to book whereas travellers seemed to be able to 'get away with it'.

Speed Limits at Schools: Rhona updated the meeting on the ongoing communications about speed limits at Newmill and Grange schools. Rhona has been advised that these schools are not being included in the 20mph zone scheme. As it is her understanding that the 20mph zone applies to all schools nationally, Rhona is still pressing this case. **Action: RP**

4. **Correspondence**

Alastair had provided a CPP update which was distributed with the Feb Minutes.

Alastair had written to Bridget Mustard, Moray Council to voice his concern that Area Forums had been asked to comment on the Single Outcome Agreement but Community Councils had not. Alastair also suggested ways in which Community Councils can and do contribute to the Council achieving the Single Outcome Agreement. He will be in touch with her to follow this up. **Action: AK**

5. **ASCC News**

Regional Meeting Elgin 21 Mar: Over 50 Community Councillors from the Highlands and Islands local authority areas attended. The conference was hosted by Moray and deputy convenor Allan Wright welcomed delegates. The morning session was a 'Question Time' with panellists Richard Lochhead MSP, Peter Peacock MSP and Douglas Ross. Many of the questions were on the new national planning framework. The afternoon session mostly consisted of the ASCC 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

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community councillors. Alastair congratulated Tracey on her good work in preparing for this conference and proposed that a vote of thanks be recorded. All agreed

National scheme: The national scheme of establishment for community councils and a code of conduct for community councillors have been issued and adoption is recommended. The Code of Conduct is not enforceable. Moray Council is considering their position on the lower minimum age (16) recommended for Community Councillors.

Pilot Scheme: Les stated there is still the likelihood that Moray Community Councils will take part in a pilot where funds are issued and results. An announcement and details are expected soon.

Training in New Planning Framework: Les has agreed with Tracey that once new Community Councillors are in place in Oct, we will try to get a rep from each CC trained by Moray Council in the new planning framework.

Registering under Freedom of Information: Included in the ICO paperwork to some CCs for the first annual renewal of the £35 registration was information that, as of 1 Jan 09, CCs were obliged to adopt the ICO model scheme for ensuring they comply with the FOI Act, stating how specific information held by the CC can be accessed by the public. When this was queried, the ICO has stated that Scottish community councils **are not** subject to FOI and may disregard any instructions relating to the ICO publication scheme which have been included with renewal documents. The ICO has apologised for any confusion caused.

6. Reports

Community Planning: Alastair advised that he was unable to attend the last meeting of the Community Engagement sub-group.

Licensing: Alex attended the last meeting of the Licensing Forum at which the quorum was not reached and therefore no business was conducted. There appears to be little support for the Forum at present. A planned meeting has been delayed one week in the hope of reaching a quorum. Alex is unable to attend this meeting but is willing to continue serving as JCC rep.

7. CCLO Update

Tracey was unable to attend but provided the following written report.

Notice was sent to all CCs that the current scheme has been revoked as part of the statutory process. Any comments are welcomed in early course in order that they can be considered and included in the Draft. The consultation should be published in early June and prompt responses are encouraged. In the main the National Scheme will be adopted but with minor parts adapted for Moray needs.

Community Councils have been invited to apply for the administration grant. On this occasion it is for 6 months as the current term of office ends on 4th October. (6 month grant plus £35 data protection registration). Also, as you are aware, future

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resourcing of Community Councils and other community groups is currently being reviewed.

There have been 27 enquiries, 4 resignations and 3 co-opted members.

The ASCC conference was hailed as an overwhelming success and Tracey wishes to express her thanks to the great representation from Moray Community Councils.

8. **Support to Community Councils/e-Planning**

Tracey produced a table of information on how 8 other Local Authorities promote their community councils. The table is attached.

The Moray Council e-planning system is now operational. Anyone can access the website and view planning applications on-line.

9. **Treasurer's Report**

Colin Lipscomb advised the current balance stands at £476.40 with bills for about £83 outstanding. Colin stated his intention to stand down in Sep after 12 years service as a community councillor. Any balance remaining is unaffected by the election of new community councillors in Oct.

10. **Information Sharing Session**

Buckie: Ian is pressing Moray Council for 'Entering Banffshire' signage. Harbour development is expected in the future with the possible inclusion of a marina. There is the potential for conflict of priorities between private and commercial developments. He advised others to ensure that if they have an external agency judging who should receive the Citizen of the Year, the agency should not include potential winners, for obvious reasons.

Elgin: Alex updated members on the situation at Deanshaugh Playing Fields. He advised that Moray Council is conducting an internal audit on the problem and he should hear when their report is released to the public. He is pleased to report that the Bus Station has been cleaned up and that Stagecoach has been requested to ban smoking in the stance areas, although it is recognised that this may be difficult as the stances are in the open air. The Elgin beautification work continues with the first floral display near the Oakes. The aim is to have a display at each city entrance.

Findhorn & Kinloss : Les informed the meeting of press coverage on the requirement to register septic tanks and encouraging septic tank owners to register, free, with SEPA before 31 May. After that date there is a significant fee payable. Some members were not aware of this requirement. Police attendance at F+K CC meetings seems to have ceased and our Chairman is writing to the local inspector to express our concern. For Sale signs have been erected at the entrances to the Ex-MOD housing at Kinloss but it is not possible to buy at the moment. The selling agent has advised that they will not be available for about another year and that they are recording details of potential buyers.

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Forres: Colin reported that the issue of the major development at Bogton is ongoing. He gave information on a forthcoming Common Good presentation by experts to be held in Llanbryde on 13 June.

Lennox : Nothing to report.

Lossiemouth: Bill was also concerned about the lack of police presence at their CC meetings. However, the Community Warden attended. A small amount of CC funds is being used to fund local initiatives/projects such as keeping the area tidy. The Lossie Citizen of the Year is a lady senior citizen who puts on an attractive display each Christmas. She was presented with the trophy by the previous winners, the RAF, at a special ceremony led by the Stn Cdr at RAF Lossie.

Strathisla: Rhona also reported the non-attendance of the police at meetings. She expressed disappointment that the school servery went ahead despite views against in local consultation. Rhona was surprised to note that a planning application for a rural property was passed within 6 weeks despite no advert and no neighbour notification. Rhona had been told by Moray Council that there were no more resources available to provide hanging flower baskets. She queried why some areas get them but her area does not, and she is requesting fairness in the allocation of baskets.

11. **AOCB**

Buckie and Elgin reported that the police attend their meetings.

Cllr Wright advised that by Aug the Appeals Panels for the New Planning Act will be operational. These panels may draw on CC opinion and as he was aware that CCs meet only monthly, he wished to fore-warn CCs that a CC member may be requested to attend an emergency meeting at fairly short notice.

Cllr Wright is willing to give an update on the New Planning Act, and the Single Outcome Agreement at the next JCC Meeting.

Ian asked for how long CC Minutes required to be retained. Alastair agreed to find out.
Action: AK

Alastair pointed out that Richard Lochhead MSP is due to attend our next meeting which may need to start earlier, depending on Mr Lochhead.

12. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 13th August, time to be advised, in the Lounge, Elgin Town Hall.

Attached: LOCAL AUTHORITY – STYLE OF PROMOTION (Author: Tracey Rae)