



The Community Council for the Royal Burgh of Forres

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Council for the Royal Burgh of Forres held in the Tolbooth, Forres, on Thursday 18th June 2009.

Present :-

Community Cllrs J S Bremner, R T Duncan, Mrs E Hayward, R J Hellyer, S D R Kennedy, C T Lipscomb, Mrs C M Pitstra, Mrs K Rosie, S Ferris, A Sinclair,

Also Present :-

Moray Cllr L Bell, T McLaren, Forres Gazette, & members of the public.

1. Apologies:-

Apologies for absence were received from Moray Cllrs J Hamilton, I Ogilvie, I Young & Cllrs Mrs L Dingwall, F Mallon & J Mackenzie.

2. Minutes of Meeting of 21st May 2009:-

The minutes of the above meeting were proposed as accepted, seconded & ratified.

3. Public Session:-

- A member of the public, Mr Gordon Seaton, told the Community Council that he, and other concerned citizens, had started petitioning members of the public in Forres about their concerns over the sale of Common Good Land at Bogton to a developer. He told the meeting that selling the land would not be in the best interests of the common good fund and that the developer had already started to backtrack on the initial promises of relocating the Mechanics football pitch, creating an all weather training ground and a youth facility. In two weeks the petition organisers had amassed four hundred plus signatures against the sale and called upon the Community Council to support their action in drawing it to the attention of Moray Council. He said that while action is needed to finance the rejuvenation of the High Street in no way could Bogton be classed as an extension of the High Street and the proposed development of a supermarket and other retail outlets, with access from the bypass, would do nothing to increase the footfall in the town. Cllr Hellyer pointed out that this development had delayed a scheme to establish a youth facility on the land by over a year, which Moray Council Officers had turned down in favour of talks with the developer. Cllr Ferris thanked the members of the public for raising the issue of sale of the common good ground and Cllr Kennedy recalled that Redco/Milne had said that they would not ask for planning approval until the sale of the land had been agreed. Members proposed that "The Community Council does not want Common Good Land sold at this time". This proposition was raised by Cllr Ferris, seconded by Cllr Hellyer & carried unanimously. Moray Cllr Bell was asked for his input as to the next action and advised that we write to Moray Council, notifying them of the petition, proposal and the ongoing collection of signatures against the development. The Chair thanked Mr Seaton for his diligence in organising the petition & bringing it to the Community Council's attention.
- Mr Alex Ross, Vice Chair of the Forres Christmas Lights Committee, thanked the Community Council for their letter of support backing the FCLC application for funding to enable the High Street Christmas Displays to be upgraded from tungsten filaments to eco friendly LSD lights. When finished the upgrade would reduce the carbon footprint of the displays and also reduce the amount of work involved in repairing and preparing the displays.

4. Secretary's Report:-

The Secretary reported mail from the Scottish Government, Moray Council, The Forestry Commission and Forres in Bloom.

- The Scottish Government had selected Moray as a pilot area to raise awareness of Community Councils and as elections are due each Moray Community Council would be awarded a sum of around £500 to enable promotion of Community Councils. Members discussed the matter & elected to take part in the pilot. It

was suggested that the money could be used to task Forres Groups Action to arrange publicity for the election.

- Moray Council correspondence raised a consultation on proposed funding levels for Community Councils, Area Forums etc. The Secretary agreed that copies of the documentation should be circulated & an extraordinary meeting should be called to discuss the subject.

Another consultation, on the review of opening hours for the Moray Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Service would appear to be to be driven by a need to reduce staffing levels and hours.

The Roads Maintenance Department notified us that the reported ponding of water at the bus stop in the High Street can only be resolved by reprofiling the pavement or providing additional drainage. This problem has been added as a scheme to the future works program.

- The Forestry Commission advised us of reorganisation into fewer teams with Moray & Aberdeenshire being merged into one district and a district office located in Huntly
- The Chair of Forres in Bloom, Lorraine Dingwall, formally approached the Community Council for assistance in funding their Entente Florale entry this year. The meeting after discussion agreed to offer the sum of £200, from the special projects fund towards the event.
- The Secretary told the meeting that he had received a letter from a Forres Academy pupil who wished to attend a Community Council meeting with a view to becoming a youth representative on the council. Whilst not wishing to dissuade him the Secretary noted that his place of residence would make him eligible for the Burghead & Cummington CC but not for Forres.

5. Chair's Report:-

The Chair said that he had nothing to report that had not been covered by the Secretary.

6. External Group Reports :-

- Cllr Sinclair questioned the report that said the old rent office, downstairs in the Tolbooth, was used to store archives. Looking through the windows appeared to show storage of unwanted furniture and display equipment. Cllr Kennedy said that that would be classed as a waste of a common good property which could be put to better use and he supported Cllr Sinclair's proposition to use it as a Youth Café.
- Cllr Hellyer asked Moray Cllr Bell if the Moray Cllrs had received answers from the Chief Legal Officer to questions which the Community Council had asked last December and which we had asked the Moray Cllrs to follow up at the beginning of May. Moray Cllr Bell told the meeting that no answers had been forthcoming although they had put the questions to the Officer in question. Cllr Hellyer said that he was under the impression that the officers of Moray Council had to respond to requests from the elected members and felt that it was time that the officers were notified of their responsibilities.

7. Treasurer's Report:-

The Treasurer advised that the account stood at £1841.11 of which £1600 was ring fenced for expenditure on the Stillborn Memorial Cairn.

8. A.O.C.B:-

- Cllr Lipscomb noted that two years ago Forres had been promised NHS Dental Facilities by Andrew Fowlie and as yet there was no sign of them. He had enquired at the consultation of the new Forres Health Centre/Hospital if there were going to be dental facilities incorporated into it. The meeting requested that the Secretary arrange for a representative of the MCHSCP to attend a meeting & talk to us.
- Cllr Hayward raised the matter of a dropped drain at the junction of High Street & Batchen Street and Cllr Kennedy drew the attention of members to the continuing problem caused by the roundabout at the foot of Tolbooth Street. He asked if a Roads Department representative could also be invited to attend a meeting.

9. Date of Next Meeting:-

- The next meeting will be held on Thursday 16th July 2009

Colin T Lipscomb
Secretary.

Minutes to be ratified by
Comm. Council 16/06/09

John S Bremner
Chair.