

THE MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC GROUP

THURSDAY 23 APRIL 2009

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillor McGillivray (Chairman)	The Moray Council
Councillor Bell	The Moray Council
Councillor Murdoch	The Moray Council
Councillor Russell	The Moray Council
Rebecca Kail	The Moray Forum
Elaine Brown	NHS Grampian
Eileen Bush	MVSO
Mike Devenney	Moray College
Sandra Dow	Citizens Advice Bureau
Inspector Jim Masson	Grampian Police
Lorna Creswell	RAF Kinloss
Wing Commander Carter	RAF Lossiemouth

IN ATTENDANCE

Community Planning & Development Manager, Equal Opportunities Officer (in respect of Item 5), Lisa Sutherland, ICT Officer (in respect of Item 7), Alan Weaver (in respect of Item 8), Community Planning Officer, Sarah Riley-Evans, RAF Lossiemouth and Cynthia Carswell, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the meeting.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor J Hamilton, Martin Johnson (HIE Moray), Jim Johnston (Moray Chamber of Commerce), Alastair Kennedy (Joint Community Council), Carin Schwartz (Moray Area Forum) and Dave Thewliss (Grampian Fire & Rescue)

1. MINUTE OF LAST MEETING

Sandra Dow advised that she had put her apologies in for the last meeting and the Clerk advised that the minute would be amended to reflect that, thereafter the Minute of the Meeting of the Community Engagement Group dated 22 January 2009 was submitted and approved.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONSULTATION

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning and Development Manager asking the Group to agree the process for consulting with the wider public on the proposals for establishing a Community Support Unit and in establishing a fund to support community engagement.

Councillor Russell advised that there were several literals contained within the document but that he would discuss these with the Community Planning & Development Manager at the end of the meeting.

In response to a question from Eileen Bush regarding what the group would be consulting on since the Council had already agreed that a Community Support Unit be established, the Community Planning & Development Manager advised that the consultation would be on how the Unit would be set up, what the role of the Unit would be and how it should be used and any suggestions would be welcome.

Rebecca Kail commented that it appeared that the decision had already been taken and the public were only being consulted on the three financial options and the main decision was not for consultation. There appeared to be a lot of 'behind the scenes' activity and therefore rumours and speculation had been rife and this gave a lot of scope for people being unsure of what was involved and the process left a lot to be desired.

The Community Planning & Development Manager advised that they were required to consult with staff initially and the staff most affected were those staff joining the unit coming from the Community Learning & Development section. In response to a question on the impact on adult learning work with individuals, the Community Planning & Development Manager advised that the adult learning work could be done by other agencies who would be initially supported to ensure that the work continues. The document would be drafted to include questions and would follow the national standards of engagement and they would use the database on the Community Planning website. Within the consultation document they would be clear on what was planned, be open and transparent and advise of the limitations placed upon them.

Councillor Russell suggested that a press release be issued and the consultation document also placed on the website.

Following consideration, the Community Engagement Group approved the proposals for the consultation process outlined in the paper subject to any amendments highlighted at this meeting and that a press release be issued and the consultation document placed on the website.

3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning and Development Manager asking the Group to consider and approve further work carried out in the Community Engagement Action Plan since the last meeting of the Group.

The Community Planning Officer advised that at the last meeting it was approved that the implementation group would carry out work and identify a lead partner to take the lead on the various milestones. They have tried to spread the load and the College has taken on Action 3, the Police have taken on Action 9 and to date the NHS have not yet confirmed whether they would lead on Action 4. The timescales are challenging in some cases but should be achievable. He further advised that the Task Group was set up in October to create the action plan, they are now ready to move on and become an implementation group and he would write out to organisations and ask for nominations for the implementation group.

Councillor McGillivray asked that the group be kept updated of the plan and when things develop and the Community Planning Officer advised he would do so and that information would also be distributed through the e-bulletin.

In response to a question from Councillor Russell regarding Action 9 “Develop Key Network Systems”, Inspector Masson advised that they have tried to get a system to cover all three authorities and that they were trying to recruit someone at present to carry out this work. Councillor Russell suggested that the date should be re-looked at for completion.

Following consideration, the Community Engagement Group agreed to approve the further work carried out on the Community Engagement Action Plan since the last meeting of the Group, including the identification of appropriate milestones, timescales and lead partner responsibility against each of the actions within the Plan.

4. CITIZENS' PANEL

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning Officer asking the Group to recommend to the Community Planning Board the continuation of the Citizens' Panel for another two years.

In response to a question from Rebecca Kail as to how useful other Community Planning Partners found the citizens panel, the Community Planning Officer advised that some partners have used it found it useful. He further advised that this group have oversight of all community engagement activity, including consultations, and this would help when commissioning work to the Citizens Panel.

In response to a question from Councillor Russell as to the workload of the citizens panel, the Community Planning Officer advised that there had been a

successful consultation on the Single Outcome Agreements that could not have been done without the citizens panel. The Safer & Stronger Group also planned to consult on community safety later this month.

In response to a question from Sarah Riley-Evans regarding the constantly moving military, the Community Planning Officer advised that the RAF situation would be looked at as they were part of the representation of the Citizen's Panel which covers a broad spectrum of representatives in Moray. This could not be looked at until the Citizen's Panel were re-contracted under the new programme.

In response to questions from Councillor Murdoch and Bell, regarding who decides on the surveys issued, the number of surveys per year and inclusion of community planning partners, the Community Planning Officer advised that to date the survey programme has not been finalised as the key actions under the Single Outcome Agreement were still being discussed but this would be brought back to this group and also the theme groups. There are plans to have 3 surveys this year with possibly 4 happening next year. He further advised that the Community Planning Board would have to approve the continuation of the citizen's panel and the use of an external consultancy.

Councillor Russell suggested that all partners should be involved, if they wished to be, in surveys being issued.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:-

- (i) recommend to the Board:-
 - The continued use of the Citizens' Panel as a means of engaging with the local community and informing the decision-making of the board
 - The use of an external consultancy to manage the Panel and future programme of surveys; and
- (ii) all partners being involved in surveys being issued, if they wished to be.

5. MORAY EQUALITY FORUM

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning and Development Manager asking the Community Engagement Group to recommend that Community Planning Partners accept the Moray Equality Forum recommendation to participate in the training that has been suggested by the Forum.

The Equal Opportunities Officer advised that she hoped that more partner agencies would become involved in attending equality training and that this could then cascade through the various organisations. The Community Planning & Development Manager advised that equality groups felt that they could offer this training and it would be useful for partners to have contact with the equalities forum and get the views of those experiencing inequalities.

Wing Commander Carter advised that they already have this type of mandatory training within their organisation and the RAF had not received an invitation to attend the training.

Eileen Bush advised that the MVSO also have a responsibility to train staff and this was already being undertaken by external agencies. She agreed that it would be useful to participate in more training but it was difficult to get staff to do more than what is mandatory and also the costs involved had to be considered.

Mike Devenney suggested that investigations should be made as to what the legal obligation was as a partnership.

Councillor Bell suggested that investigations be made as to what training was done by partners already so as not to duplicate work already being done. Councillor McGillivray agreed that partners should share good practice.

Following consideration, the Community Engagement Group agreed to:-

- (i) look at what being done with other partners;
- (ii) recommend that Community Planning Partners accept the Moray Equality Forum recommendations to participate in any additional training that has been suggested by the Forum; and
- (iii) ensure all Community Planning partners know of the training available and are invited to participate.

6. FAIRER SCOTLAND FUND PROPOSALS

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning and Development Manager inviting the Group to consider how it can contribute to the achievement of the Fairer Scotland Fund objectives and put forward proposals on how the fund could be invested.

The Fairer Scotland Manager advised the Group that the monies were to be used for investment funding to tackle poverty and deprivation and theme groups were invited for ideas which would then be looked at by the Social Inclusion Group to assess the ideas and priorities. The first deadline passed on the 17th April and proposals would go to the Social Inclusion group on Monday 27th April. There would be a timetable drawn up of the deadlines and these would be distributed to the theme groups and would also be placed on the Community Planning website.

She further advised that she had carried out research with key stakeholders and would write to Forums in order to investigate what they felt were the issues within their areas. She had met with the Speyside Forum and was also

working with the voluntary sector in order to build a picture of poverty in Moray. The aim was to identify the key priorities and issues of all partners.

In response to a question from Councillor Russell regarding the nature of the proposals, the Fairer Scotland Manager advised that examples regarding the type of proposals which were being looked at were youth crime, employability of youth and those with mental health, domestic abuse, etc. She further advised that the monetary values of these proposals far exceeds funding available but she would help to support partners to develop their proposals and look at where funding could be obtained from. She advised that there were 12 proposals submitted and out of these 8 were for posts.

Councillor Bell urged caution that projects must also match the Single Outcome Agreement and this should be tightly focused on.

The Group agreed that the priorities for the funding should be set to tie in with the single outcome agreement and the Fairer Scotland Fund criteria. It was also discussed that proposals need to be sustainable investments to tackle poverty and be measurable. The Fairer Scotland Manager advised that there was £400,000 for this year and next year there would be £500,000.

Following consideration, the Community Engagement Group agreed to contribute to the achievement of the Fairer Scotland Fund objectives and put forward any proposals on how the fund could be invested.

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING WEBSITE

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning Officer inviting the Group to consider initial feedback on the revamped Your Moray website and approve recommended actions to be implemented as a result of this feedback.

The Community Planning Officer advised that the website was not being utilised widely as the main source of information on Community Planning and was not being updated regularly. He suggested that content providers are appointed to take responsibility for identified sections of the website and he will be producing guidance on content management and who would be responsible for providing and monitoring information. He stressed this was a Partnership website and the Partnership needed to be encouraged to take greater ownership of it.

Councillor Murdoch suggested that the main problem was that the public were not sure what community planning entails and until they understand this, the website would not be used. She suggested that these meetings could be webcast and have the press involved and when she had asked the Chief Executive regarding this issue, he could not see a problem with having the meetings webcast. Councillor Bell felt it was too early for the meetings to be webcast and include press until such times as the groups were clearer on where they are going.

Sandra Dow advised that the public were not yet engaged into community planning and there should be a campaign to involve the general public and show them what community planning is about and how it affects them.

Wing Commander Carter advised that “YourMoray” was a good website and should be publicised more in the local press and emphasise what community planning was about.

Councillor Russell stated that the website was easy to navigate but that the content was out of date and that there should be a recommendation to each theme group that the website be a standing item on their agendas for them to take ownership. He felt that it was a golden opportunity when delivering the single outcome agreement to the public to advertise the role of community planning.

Lisa Sutherland advised that if the public cannot find up-to-date information they would not return to the site and that the partners need to take ownership of the website. If key people could be identified on all groups then they could be tasked with ensuring information is up to date. Area Forums could also be included and the website could be used as a “shop window” of all the good work which goes on in Moray.

Following consideration the Community Engagement Group agreed to:-

- (i) approve recommended actions to be implemented as a result of the feedback to encourage greater “buy-in” to the website at a strategic level and promote the importance of the website throughout the partnership; and
- (ii) recommend to the Community Planning Board that all theme groups should have a standing item regarding the website so that partners take ownership of the website jointly.

8. DIGITAL STORIES

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning Officer inviting the Group to agree for the promotion of Digital Stories for Public Performance Reporting and to encourage the Partners to create their own Digital Stories.

Mr Weaver gave a short presentation on the role which digital stories could have in community planning.

In response to a question from Councillor McGillivray as to whether digital stories could be put on the community planning website, Lisa Sutherland urged a note of caution as they currently do not have the software to make this available but this certainly could be looked at in the future.

The group agreed that they could be a useful tool and would show what all partners do and where help could be given. The group noted that a lot of partners already have digital stories in place.

Following consideration the Community Engagement Group agreed to:-

- (i) the promotion of Digital Stories for Public Performance Reporting and communicating Community Planning issues and information to the public; and
- (ii) encourage the Partners to create their own Digital Stories.

9. ITEMS FOR NOTING.

Action Notes form Community Planning Board and Theme Groups.

Councillor Russell asked that all action sheets be standardised in terms of font and attendance.

In response to a question from Councillor Russell on Item 6 in the Community Planning Board action sheet from 5 February 2009 regarding Establishing Moray's Alcohol and Drug Partnership, the Community Planning & Development Officer advised it was agreed that the proposals be referred back to the Board as this group did not feel that it was within its role to comment on the proposals but to provide its views on the process of engagement.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 13 August 2009 at RAF Kinloss.