

THE MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC GROUP

THURSDAY 13 AUGUST 2009

OFFICERS MESS, RAF KINLOSS

PRESENT

Councillor McGillivray (Chairman)	The Moray Council
Councillor Bell	The Moray Council
Councillor Wright	The Moray Council
Councillor Russell	The Moray Council
Carin Schwartz	The Moray Forum
Elaine Brown	NHS Grampian
Eileen Bush	MVSO
Wing Commander McCord	RAF Kinloss
Helen Milnes	Volunteer Centre
Lorna Cresswell	RAF Kinloss
Cas Smith	RAF Lossiemouth
Alastair Kennedy	Joint Community Councils

IN ATTENDANCE

John Ferguson, Community Planning & Development Manager, Ian Todd, Community Support Unit Manager and Donna Skene as Clerk to the meeting.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mike Devenney (Moray College), Sandra Dow (Citizens Advice Bureau) and Chief Inspector Mackie (Grampian Police).

1. MINUTE OF LAST MEETING

Wing Commander McCord advised that he had put in his apologies in for the last meeting and the Clerk advised that the minute would be amended to reflect that.

Item 2 – Community Engagement Consultation : Eileen Bush requested an update on developments regarding the impact of changes to Community Learning and Development on adult learning and the consultation with partners that was to be arranged. The Community Planning and Development Manager advised that there were a series of meetings scheduled for early September with learner agencies/organisations, some of whom had been identified as having delivered adult learning programmes in partnership with Community Learning and Development (CLD). The focus of the meetings will be to ascertain the impact of the transferral of some of the CLD staff to the Community Support Unit and what provision the partner

organisation will be able to continue with. Whilst the majority of the learners have completed their learning programme there are a few who may require support to identify their progression to further educational programmes. Meetings will take place with partners in Elgin Library at 10 am and Forres Community Centre 2 pm on Tuesday 1 September 2009. The Keith and Buckie partners will meet in Buckie on Friday 4 September 2009 at 2.00 pm. Milnes and Lossiemouth meeting will be at 10 am on the same day.

Item 5 – Moray Equality Forum : Eileen Bush advised that with regard to this item, the reference to training that it was Elaine Brown, NHS who raised this not MVSO.

Thereafter the Minute of the Meeting of the Community Engagement Group dated 13 August 2009 was submitted and approved.

2. CONSULTATION UPDATE

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning and Development Manager seeking to update the Community Engagement Group on the changes to the consultation on the establishment of a Community Support Unit within the Moray Council.

The Community Planning and Development Manager advised that at the last meeting of this group agreed the process and it was agreed that a questionnaire would be distributed for feedback. A draft was distributed and there was a general concern that this was not an appropriate way forward. He advised that at a meeting on 9 June 2009 with representatives of the Moray Forum, Joint Community Councils of Moray and MVSO it was stated that those organisations named would not participate in the consultation process as was but proposed that as an alternative to a questionnaire there was an opportunity to use the development of the new unit as an opportunity to ensure a more integrated approach to ensuring that community engagement is developed in Moray and to carry out a more detailed and useful consultation. Those present explained that the questionnaire did not take forward the correct approach. Given the timescale regarding reporting back to the council's P&R Committee, and subsequent critical correspondence from the chair of the Moray Forum, it was agreed to instigate jointly an initial mapping exercise involving voluntary and community based organisations that would be the start of a process that would be ascertain the needs of this sector. It was felt that this would avoid duplication of work and demands being put on staff of the new unit. The staff of the new Community Support Unit would have to ascertain the needs of community based groups within the localities anyway therefore, this initiative would compliment a more thorough community needs led assessment at the same time ensuring direct input and influence by community based groups and organisations on how the new unit would respond to their needs.

The financial documents have been sent out with a closing date of the end of August 2009. The joint Community Councils and the Moray Area Forum,

through their chairs have stated that they cannot respond until the activity of the staff and wider community consultation element is complete.

Due to the above, the process will have to be extended.

Alastair Kennedy requested that the Community Planning and Development Manager keep them informed of the new date.

Councillor McGillivray stated that whilst he understood and agreed why the process had been changed he was disappointed that this group had not been kept informed. He advised that he wanted the minutes or correspondence of the decision taken to alter this decision distributed to the group. He advised that any alternation of the agreed process should have been made by the group and not by an Officer.

The Community Planning and Development Manager responded by advising that the Community Engagement Implementation Group would have dealt with this item but the Implementation Group meeting scheduled for July 2009 had been cancelled due to staff illness.

Discussion then took place as to the need for a mapping exercise to be carried out. The Community Support Unit Manager advised that the staff in the Community Support Unit are putting together a list of community based groups that the Community Support Unit intend to meet with as highlighted in the report to the council's P&R committee of 9 March 2009. It is the intention of the Community Support Unit staff to have face to face meetings with representatives of the key groups where possible rather than issue questionnaires by post. Staff of the Unit will be using a variety of methods in targeting and contacting groups over the next few months ie where there are organisations that have community planning partnership staff, support for conducting the consultation would be sought. Eileen Bush advised that the MVSO database with contact details was up-to-date. After discussion, it was agreed that the Community Support Unit Manager would, by e-mail send out his final draft list to the group once completed to ensure that most community based groups would be included.

Carin Schwartz asked when the financial payments would be made to the Area Forums. Councillor Russell agreed that we need to get a message out to Area Forums so that they are not at a financial disadvantage and that clarification was required. The Community Planning and Development Manager agreed to make contact with the Forums.

3. COMMUNITY SUPPORT UNIT UPDATE

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning and Development Manager seeking to inform the Community Engagement Group on the progress in establishing a Community Support Unit within the Moray Council.

The Community Planning and Development Manager advised the group that the Unit was now established and in place and in operation and now providing support in capacity building. The Adult Team had transferred to Chief Executive's on the 1 August 2009 and linked to Fairer Scotland Fund posts along with the Community Council Liaison Officer.

Discussion then took place as to line management and concern was expressed about who now controlled this new unit, what direction and focus and which Committee this unit would report to. Councillor McGillivray advised that the Chief Executive's section reports to the P&R Committee of the Council so there would be a strong link. The Community Planning and Development Manager added that the SOA priorities will decide also HIME and that there will be structure and direction but that ultimately the unit was part of the Council and answerable to P&R Committee of the Council. Councillor McGillivray added that this group have been tasked by the Board to have an overview of Community Engagement within the partnership. There will be times where it is appropriate for the new Community Support Unit to furnish reports and other information for the benefit of the Community Engagement Strategic Group. This will be done via the Community Planning and Development Manager.

Councillor Wright advised that there were 2 strands, first with regard to Community Planning and the work of the unit which supports capacity building ie if groups need assistance then the support workers will provide within the Community Planning framework. Second, as the unit is part of the Moray Council its reporting frame work is to P&R Committee who will give guidance and direction to the unit reflecting input from bodies like the Community Engagement Group and others.

Elaine Brown enquired whether the remit of the Community Learning and Development (CLD) staff transferred to the Unit would be targeting young people. The Community Development and Planning Manager stated that the staff transferred came from the adult team already had community capacity building. The existing youth team still operating within CLD still retained developing community capacity building with young people such as youth forums, dialogue youth initiatives, youth projects in partnership with existing youth organisations in Moray.

Wing Commander McCord suggested that a diagram be drawn up to demonstrate the key areas of community capacity building responsibility between the Unit staff and the staff of the CLD youth team. This would enable a better understanding of where community capacity building was situated in Moray.

4. BETTER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PILOT

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning and Development Manager seeking to inform members of the Community Engagement Group

on the successful bid submitted by the Partnership for a Better Community Engagement Pilot.

Discussion then took place that again the decision to take part in this pilot should have been made by this Group and that this is the function of this group. The Community Support Unit Manger advised that it was not brought to this group for agreement due to the deadline date. Councillor McGillivray added that he is partly to blame but that the group need to be more proactive about communications within the group. Councillor Russell added that a few lines in an e-mail to the group to advise them would have been good. This leads to embarrassment and added that we as a group need to be in possession of knowledge and that it does not take much effort. Eileen Bush added that it would have been useful to know in advance as this was the purpose of this group. Eileen Bush stated that perhaps we need to ask ourselves "is there a need for this group". The Community Support Unit Manager explained that he had contacted the Community Planning and Development Manager regarding submitting a note of interest to the Scottish Government pilot when he was Team Leader within CLD. There was not going to be another Community Engagement group meeting before the deadline expired. It was his understanding that Councillor McGillivray had been notified and agreed with the proviso that the group be kept informed on developments, hence the report submitted.

Councillor Wright added that other Theme Groups were having problems with communicating items within their groups

It was agreed to support the development of the Moray Better Community Engagement local demonstration project. It was also agreed to accept regular progress reports from the proposed new Steering Group.

The Community Planning and Development Manager also asked the other agencies for input to the Steering Group. Correspondence should be passed to the Community Planning and Development Manager or to the Community Support Unit Manager.

It was further agreed that Councillor McGillivray would become a member of the proposed new steering group.

5. DEVELOPING COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS IN MORAY

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning and Development Manager for the Community Engagement Group to consider support for a seminar to take place in Moray to explore the concept of developing Community Agreements In Moray between local residents and local service providers.

Alastair Kennedy advised that he had serious concerns with this item. He felt this should not have come before this group and requested that this item be withdrawn from the agenda.

Discussion then took place as to why this report was submitted. Carin Schwartz advised that she had no recollection of Community Agreements being discussed at the Forres Area Forum and that she was not aware if it had been discussed with other Forums and stated that she would also like this item to be withdrawn from the agenda.

Concern was expressed that the outlines contained in the discussion paper were quite advanced for what would be appropriate in Moray. It was also highlighted that the partnership were already busy and this seemed like a lot of work at a time when the partnership could ill afford the time. After further discussion, it was then agreed it would be considered at another time

6. DOCUMENT STATUS

There was submitted a report by The Moray Forum allowing the Group to consider how documents are presented by the partner agencies to community groups and smaller voluntary organisations.

The Community Planning and Development Manager advised that this item was discussed at the last meeting and that he has worked with Rebecca Kail on this report. The attached example is only a basic idea to highlight the problems and to allow the group to be informed of the process. He thought that this could be developed and used as a standard. Councillor McGillivray thought this was a good idea and a good tool for the group and something that could be used across all groups. Discussion then took place over who would agree how confidential any document was it was agreed that this would be the author who would decide.

It was then agreed instruct the Implementation Group to prepare draft guidelines for the labelling and presentation of documents to community groups and then pass to the Theme Groups.

Wing Commander McCord agreed to provide examples of how the RAF deal with confidentiality and labelling documents.

7. CONSULTATION MAPPING EXERCISE

The Community Planning and Development Manager advised that this item had been covered in items 2 and 3 in the agenda.

8. TRAINING DAY

The Community Planning and Development Manager advised that there was no update on this item at present due to staff illness.

This item would be reported back to the next meeting.

9. WEBSITE CONTENT MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE AND CONTENT PROVIDERS

The Community Planning and Development Manager advised that there was no update on this item at present due to staff illness.

This item would be reported back to the next meeting.

10. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Action Sheets from Community Planning Board and Theme Groups.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be 5 November 2009 at HIE in Moray. The Chair thanked Wing Commander McCord for hosting this meeting.