

**The Moray Forum  
Minutes of Meeting held on 16 November 2009  
New Elgin Primary School Annexe**

**Present:**

|                 |                        |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Aileen Marshall | Elgin South Area Forum |
| Louise Ellerby  | Elgin South Area Forum |
| Carin Schwartz  | Forres Area Forum      |
| John Bremner    | Forres Area Forum      |
| Anita Milne     | Milne's Area Forum     |
| Keiron Green    | Elgin North Area Forum |
| Bill Burgess    | Speyside Forum         |
| Alan Beresford  | Buckie Area Forum      |
| Barry Taylor    | Buckie Area Forum      |

**Also present:**

|                  |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Alastair Kennedy | Joint Community Councils |
| John Ferguson    | The Moray Council        |
| Ian Todd         | The Moray Council        |
| Jeremy Akehurst  | The Moray Council        |

**Apologies:**

|              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| John Bremner | Forres Area Forum |
|--------------|-------------------|

**1. Welcome**

Alan Beresford welcomed people to the meeting particularly Bill Burgess from Speyside and Jeremy Akehurst who was here to address the Young carers issue. Alan suggested that we ask Jeremy to give his presentation first and then move onto a discussion on the Budget proposal consultation.

**2. Young carers update (J. Akehurst)**

Alan outlined to Jeremy the forums concern over provision for Young Carers. Jeremy summarised the position with regard to the Carers contract. As a result of an exercise to review the carers provision a decision was taken to tender and contracts were awarded to Crossroads Care and to Quarriers who though they had no experience previously in Moray they were a major experienced voluntary sector organisation. Quarriers began recruiting staff in April with a launch of the project in April. Moray Carers (who previously held the contract) continue to find funding from other sources Jeremy outlined their role. This was in providing information to young carers and family members working in schools Moray Carers. It provides some recreational and leisure opportunities out of Gordonstoun. All 3 of their funding sources are connected with work specifically in schools and are all short term, they are applying for funds currently but this is a difficult environment to do this. There was an issue of the transfer of names and contact details not being authorised for transfer to the new contract holder They made contact with all carers registered with the Carers project of the 250 on Moray carers data base , only 70 gave consent for the transfer of their details . Quarriers have been making

contact with young carers. There is a common and difficult situation in getting the young person to register themselves as carers. It was suggested that there may be a stigma attached. Jeremy outlined other issues over the provision of leisure opportunities to Young Carers. The Chair thanked Jeremy and opened the discussion up for questions and answers. Anita Milne said that there was no provider who gave social and leisure opportunities to young carers that the young carer's project provided peer support and networking. Carin asked why young carers would sign up with Moray Young carers and not Quarriers.

There appeared to have been a difference in the definition of a young carer and this meant that there was a possibility if you had some one in the family who required care then registration was possible, the new approach means that the focus is on the actual young carers. Questions were asked if there were contingency plans in place if Quarriers should find it would not be able to fulfil the contract. Jeremy responded that currently there was a contract in place and as lead officer for services to young he would expect to be informed and then they would look at this in terms of the contract arrangements.

### **3. Minutes of the previous meeting.**

They were approved as an accurate record of the last meeting

### **4. Matters Arising**

**Criminal Justice Bill** There was a discussion on the impact of the new Criminal Justice and Licensing Act on community groups. There was a concern that car boot sales, bring and buys etc would be adversely affected. It was suggested that these charges would be at the discretion of the Council and not the Government. Those attending agreed to encourage forum members and individual local groups to continue to write and raise concerns via their locally elected members and MSP.

### **5. Better Community Engagement Demonstration project**

Chair requested that this agenda item be deferred and that Ian submit an update report for a future meeting. Approved

### **6. CSU Update / Mapping Exercise**

Chair requested that this be deferred and discussed at a future meeting. Approved.

### **7. Budget Consultations**

John Ferguson described how the format for rolling out the meetings was reached. Alistair Kennedy, Anita Milne, Eileen Bush and John Ferguson met and agreed an outline for the meetings based on the council decision to consult with communities. Carin Schwartz was unable to attend that meeting. A further meeting was convened that included Eileen Bush, Cllr Wright and Ian Todd following a Community Engagement Group meeting in Elgin. A more detailed format for the actual launch of the consultation meetings locally was agreed that would include the Chair of the Local Area Forum or Community Council chairing the meeting, a presentation would be given by Alastair Keddie and Mark Palmer on the background to the savings and on the budget situation. Those in attendance would be then invited to participate in 'round

table' discussions on all aspects of the budget proposals. These group discussions would be facilitated by staff from the CSU as well as any local chair people who wanted to be more involved in ensuring a smooth process. The aim of the format was to ensure that most of those attending would have a greater opportunity to have a say whilst allowing senior council officers who would be in attendance to be able to clarify queries and concerns more in depth on the impact of the Budget proposals. Alan Beresford expressed reservations regarding the process. He was unhappy that these were not publicised as 'public' meetings open to all. John explained that the meetings locally were meant to give representative groups i.e. Community Councils, Area Forums and Voluntary Organisations information and an opportunity to quiz senior officers about the budget proposals. It was then hoped that Forums/ CCs etc would gather views from their community and respond on that basis.

Anita Milne stated that Milne's Area Forum members had no problem with the local meeting arrangements. Alistair Kennedy said that he felt that it was a positive move forward for the Moray Council to engage in this way. There were issues, but these were not insurmountable. Carin Schwartz felt that the forums needed to be seen as being constructive and proactive with this exercise. The broad consensus by those present was that the exercise is positive and that any issues that arise require to be taken on board by the council regarding lessons to be learned from this exercise.

Barry Taylor informed those present that after a meeting between chairs of the local CC's and Area Forum it was decided not to facilitate the budget proposal meeting in Buckie on behalf of the council. Barry also informed the meeting that alternative proposals had been put back to the council on how the meeting should be held. Some of the concerns raised in the alternative response were, timescale, public access, senior officer attendance at meetings etc.

John explained that some of the issues raised by the Buckie alternative response were actually taking place such as senior officer involvement in attendance at the meetings etc. The difficulty for the council to respond to alternative structures was the tight deadline required to carry out the consultation. The council have agreed that a meeting in Buckie would still go ahead using the agreed format but would include a longer question and answer session after the round table discussions.

There was a general discussion on the role of elected members in the process. Those present agreed that elected members would be requested to attend.

John informed the meeting that an understanding has been established whereby elected members can attend the meetings in a "listening capacity".

John informed those in attendance that the process would be constantly evaluated after each of the meetings and areas that could be improved on at short notice would be reflected at the next and subsequent meetings. In the longer term, issues raised for improving the consultation process would be fed back to elected members.

**Date of the next meeting 18 January 2010  
New Elgin Primary School Annexe**