

MEETING OF THE MORAY FORUM HELD 28th June 2010 IN NEW ELGIN PRIMARY SCHOOL ANNEXE

Present	Alan Beresford	Buckie	(Chair)
	Barry Taylor	Buckie	
	Anita Milne	Milnes	(Vice Chair)
	Peter Bush	Milnes	
	Carin Schwarz	Forres	
	John Bremner	Forres	
	Aileen Marshall	Elgin South	
	Louise Ellerby	Elgin South	
	Alastair Kennedy	Joint Community Council	
	Kieron Green	Elgin North	

In Attendance John Ferguson, The Moray Council
Linda Adam, The Moray Council

1. Welcome

Alan welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Anita for chairing the previous meeting in his absence. He then asked everyone to introduce themselves given there were some new faces round the table.

2. Apologies

Ian Todd, The Moray Council

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minute was proposed as a true record of the meeting by Alastair Kennedy and seconded by John Bremner.

4. Matters Arising

ME Support Group

Anita reported that the group is going extremely well and meeting on a monthly basis. Support is being provided by Fiona Rolt and Ann Griffin. The next meeting of the group is on 10th August. Anita stated that the group are grateful for the support from Community Support Unit staff given group members are unable to take on the position of chairperson, etc. Andrew Fowle, NHS Grampian had come along to meet the group and talk about equipment available via the resource centre as well as occupational therapy. The group are going to develop a digital story based on the experiences of group members. Point of contact for the group is Fiona Rolt on 01343 829026 or fiona.rolt@moray.gov.uk

Farmers Market

Alan reported that planning permission for farmers markets has now been given. Carin stated there was an issue in Forres where people didn't want continental markets which would compete with existing farmers markets. John Bremner stated that the proposed site in Forres is the busiest junction in the town. Carin said it had taken a long time in being approved, with the process being started by a community group and then the Moray Council come along, with no consultation.

Travellers Halting Sites

Alan said that no contact had been made with Alastair Kennedy as matters had been overtaken.

Buckie

Carin asked for clarification of the title Community Development Trust. Alan Beresford reported that the Area Forum's Regeneration Group are moving toward Company Limited by Guarantee status. The purpose is to expand the Regeneration Group with a view to drawing down funding. Community Engagement will still be done via the local area forum. Economic Development are assisting. The Regeneration Group are in the process of negotiating a six-month lease on the Town House in Buckie. Carin indicated that the Development Trust Association promotes the transfer and maintenance of community assets. Existing examples in Moray are The Loft and REAP. John Ferguson stated that Ltd Company status gave protection against liability. Buckie Area Forum will have a seat on the Board.

5. Funding Consultation

There had been a good discussion regarding this at the last meeting. John Bremner pointed out that forums need to be clear which option it is given there are two appendices. After further discussion the general consensus was that everyone favoured the full budget figure in Option 2 Appendix B. Louise asked for clarification on how the funding could be spent. Alan said there should be flexibility on expenditure along the lines of Community Councils and that Area Forums should be able to support new groups with seed corn funding, for example, in relation to hall let costs. The question was raised re the possibility of claw back of unexpended grant by the Council. John Ferguson responded this was a possibility given the financial climate. Aileen asked if there was a ceiling on how much money can be held in Area Forum banks accounts which cannot be justified. Carin suggested it was the case that Area Forums do not hold substantial funding in their bank accounts and pointed out the good value achieved by the Moray Council in relation to the amount of volunteer time committed by Area Forum members. Kieron asked what would happen to funding which would have been aligned to defunct forums. John Bremner pointed out that forums cannot be defunct under the constitution.

Alan suggested that individual forums submit their own response plus any comments and he would submit a response on behalf of the Moray Forum by the closing date which is the end of July.

Action: Alan Beresford/Individual Forums

6.CSU Update

John Ferguson advised those present that Ian Todd is currently on sick leave.

He reported that all existing vacancies for Community Support Workers within the Community Support Team had been approved with posts having been advertised for Forres x 1, Elgin x 2, Milnes/Laich x 1. Shortleeting taking place this Wednesday with interviews being held in the next couple of weeks. Carin requested the involvement of community representatives if there is room.

A report had been submitted to the Community Planning Partnership regarding the Laich and Keith Area Forums. The minutes of MCPP have yet to be distributed. With regard to the Laich it was suggested that the Community Planning Partnership strategic role is being done by the Community Council. With regard to Keith it was unclear. It had previously been suggested that the Keith Regeneration Group take on the role of the Area Forum, however, that particular group is not strong with only two members. Alan highlighted the distinct role of the Area Forums in relation to the geographic areas that they cover. John Ferguson suggested a response by the Moray Forum as soon as the minutes of the MCPP Board are published.

Action: Moray Forum

Linda distributed an initial draft of the Area Forum handbook to those present. She outlined the process she has undertaken to date in developing same along with two members of the working group, one from Elgin North and one from Elgin South Area Forums respectively. Linda added that the handbook will contain a CD which will include a PowerPoint presentation which individual Area Forum members can use to promote the Area Forums. Carin queried whether the Moray Forum should be cited among the Partners. Linda explained that there are currently 7 Partners on the MCPP Board, but 13 on the Community Engagement Group. Carin Schwartz suggested that all Partners should be represented on the Board. Those in attendance made a number of suggestions which Linda noted. She was requested to send electronic copies to the Moray Forum so they could take time to read it and make any further comments no later than Friday 9th July to Linda.

Action:Linda/Moray Forum members

Linda went on to outline the handbook would require the approval of MCPP and she was hoping to finalise it in time for the September meeting of MCPP. Once approved she suggested that the handbook, along with the other handbooks currently being developed by the Community Support Team, be launched at community events hosted by the Area Forums. This would provide the Area Forums an opportunity to engage with the wider local community with a view to promoting the Forums, increasing the membership of the Forums and obtaining the views of the wider community in relation to current issues and concerns which in turn would allow for the Area Forum Action Plans to be reviewed and updated.

7. BCE Update

John Ferguson reported back on the Better Community Engagement steering group meeting held on 21st June. He gave an update on the current status of the 6 pilot projects.

John reported that Ian Todd had provided a report to the May meeting of the BCE Strategy group who agreed to support the development of the 6 BCE pilot projects; noted the attached VOICE analysis progress reports; will receive future progress reports from BCE pilot projects in the format of VOICE reports, with input from one or two of the project groups; noted the use of VOICE and recommended a report be submitted to the Community Planning Board to consider extending the use of VOICE across the partnership, including a demonstration of VOICE.

An online version of VOICE will be available come August. NHS Grampian already use VOICE. Moray Forum requested a demonstration of VOICE at their next meeting. Linda agreed to undertake the demonstration.

8. CEG Update

The short life working group established at the last meeting of the CEG of which Carin is now a part was concerned at the lack of involvement of senior staff and key partners in the survey which informed the community engagement framework. It was agreed to redo the survey but to invite key people to participate in a high profile event. The questions would identify the gaps that the partnership needs to improve on for example; leadership to ensure the correct basis for good engagement. The event will take place on 29th June and senior officers, of agencies and Boards will be present. Examples of good practice from other areas and from within Moray will be looked at. The main part of the day will be looking at the Community Engagement Framework and identifying what needs to happen. Carin has kindly agreed to let QWIZDOM be used, this is a tool that can collate and analyse people's feelings on a range of topics, and is a very advanced tool for community engagement. The outcome should provide the basis for the next step and an action plan will be developed. The Moray Forum requested a demonstration of QWIZDOM at the October meeting. Carin agreed to provide this.

9. BIDS – charges being levied on charities

Anita reported that a number of charities who provide services, some of which receive financial support from Moray Council, are receiving invoices from BIDS. The charities concerned are being treated as if they are businesses but are different from retail charities. Concern was expressed that this is being driven by Economic Development as against the towns themselves. It was agreed that Alan speak to Councillor John Russell to clarify the difference between retail and other charities.

Action: Alan Beresford

10. Community Issues

Carin reported that regarding the Small Towns Partnership, an application for funding by Economic Development had been successful amounting to £10,000 for each town. Match funding had to be identified. It is felt that Economic Development are driving the agenda, money has yet to be released and there is a lack of communication. It was agreed that Councillor John Russell be approached if no feedback is received from Fiona or Alan in Economic Development.

Aileen asked if there is a central point of contact for the Community Support Unit. It was suggested that in Ian's absence either John Ferguson or Alison McLaughlin who can be contacted on 01343 554314.

Carin outlined that Transition Town Training will be taking place in Buckie this weekend, at a cost of £40. Useful for learning techniques to engage community. Carin to email details to Anita.

Action: Carin Schwartz

10. Time and date of next meeting

7pm on Monday 30th August 2010 in New Elgin Primary School Annexe