

## Buckie Area Forum

### Minutes of the BAF Ordinary Meeting held via Zoom at 7pm on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Present:** Christine Allan (CA), Colin Burch (CB), Ronnie Cargill (RC), Emily Clark (EC), Susan Chalmers (SC), Ian Collacott (IC), Christine Fairbairn (CF), Ailsa Foulds (AF), Gordon McDonald (GM), Linda McDonald (LM), Kevin McKay (KM), Jill Sowden (JS), Les Tarr (LT)

**In attendance:** Stuart Akass (SA), Eily Webster (EW)

**Apologies:** Pringle George, Iain Grieve, David Pirie, Tracey Rae, Cllr Theresa Coull, Cllr Donald Gatt, Cllr Marc Macrae

GM opened the meeting at 7pm and welcomed attendees.

**Minutes of previous meeting:** The minutes of the AGM were circulated prior to this meeting. Although they will not be formally approved until the next AGM, they were proposed and seconded as an accurate record of business by LM and CB. The minutes of the last Ordinary meeting, held on 13/6/2023, were accepted as an accurate record (proposed LM, seconded CB).

**Matters arising:** None.

#### **Reports:**

**Chair:** GM reported that Moray Area Forum is working to complete a new Constitution, and it is expected that this will be rolled out to other Area Forums. He attended a meeting about the Aultmore Wind Farm development organised by the Swedish company Vattenfall, which will develop and run the project (subject to planning approval). Although few details are settled (other than planned capacity and number of turbines) there will be a significant sum of money disbursed to projects in local communities. This sum is expected to be in the region of £0.5M per year. Details of the grant awarding process have yet to be discussed. GM reported that Ruth Liddicoat, managing public affairs for Vattenfall, had been invited to attend a BAF meeting when plans are more advanced.

**Secretary:** No items to report.

**Treasurer:** GM gave a summary of accounts in the absence of the treasurer. He started by thanking Iain for his work on BAF's finances. Transactions have become much more frequent and more complex as BAF has been handling grants awarded to the Hub. Full details of current finances are available from the chair, and an updated spreadsheet will be made available at the next meeting.

**Moray Local Development Plan:** GM introduced Eily Webster, Principal Planning Officer at Moray Council. Eily gave a clear and detailed presentation of the Local Development Plan 2027 (provided with minutes as a separate pdf). In brief, the new local plan is a consequence of the new Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. This legislation reformed planning, with a stronger emphasis on delivery, encompassing

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NPF4 (National Planning Framework 4). The LDP aims to encourage and improve the use of Vacant and Derelict land (and empowers local councils to do so). The plan has a 10 year timeframe, and aims to have early and meaningful consultations with local residents, including specific groups within the population, such as young people. Eily answered numerous questions, and there was robust discussion. One topic was housing. The Council expects 3450 new houses to be built across the whole of Moray. Eily made clear that essential infrastructure (such as roads, schools) must be completed no later than non-infrastructure building (housing or business). CA, JS and KM raised questions, and KM voiced the opinion that some local access roads are already under stress. GM thanked EW for her presentation and answers.

**Update on Buckie Harbour Masterplan:** GM introduced Stuart Akass, Harbour Operations and Development Manager for Moray Council. Harbour infrastructure work will be done as instructed by council through a commercial company, Arch Henderson. Stuart is keen to set up a community engagement meeting in Buckie, and GM will liaise to organise this. The main focus of work will be on Buckie Harbour, and it is anticipated that upgraded infrastructure will enable the harbour to cope with larger vessels and increased cargo volume. There will be some spillover in work to other harbours (mainly small commercial and recreational fishing and other uses). There may be expansion of the Buckie harbour site to east or west to achieve the planned aims, and a cleanup or improvement of derelict buildings or sites is expected to feature in plans. A topographic/hydrographic survey will be done, and improved electrical supply to the harbour is expected to reduce the need for vessels to use diesel-fuelled generators when in port. The fish market site will be developed as new harbour offices. Increased traffic through the harbour will also increase demand for hospitality venues and accommodation. Tourists should be encouraged to visit the harbour area.

**Harbour Advisory Committee:** In the absence of the BAF representative, no report was given.

**Locality Plan Buckie:** SC gave a summary. A community newsletter will be distributed soon. Items covered will include mental health support, Community Lunches, a survey on dropped kerbs, and the Development Trust. CA noted a meeting with HIE to discuss possible community hub venues/properties. Options include the current Hub space, other local properties which might be appropriate for CAT, or a new build. The local interest in allotments has been recognised by council, and a site is being sought. In response to a request from CB, it was agreed that BAF would distribute the Cullen Newsletter.

**Hub update:** GM gave an update on the Hub. This is busy at the moment, and is expected to get busier over winter. Food vouchers are regularly being given out.

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Over 30 volunteers do regular shifts, and numerous external agencies have weekly time slots (e.g. Moray Credit Union, Social Security Scotland). The Wellbeing Garden to the rear has had significant work done, particularly by Kevin McKay and John Tsaylor, with input and artistic project work from Findhorn Bay Arts. CB asked if it would be possible to “advertise” the work of the Hub and BAF at Cullen Community Lunches – a suitable date will be agreed. GM requested approval from members for the spending plans and this was unanimously given.

**Moray Area Forum (MAF):** GM, who chairs both BAF and MAF, gave an update. A new constitution is expected to be agreed soon, and this is expected to form the basis of a new constitution for other Area Forums within Moray, including BAF. A meeting will be arranged to discuss this. The next meeting of MAF will be held on 4/10/2023. It was noted that although there is currently no active AF in Keith, community representatives have been invited as observers to attend the next MAF meetings.

**AOCB:** The BAF website and advertising were discussed. Currently, the website costs £1k per year to maintain. Advertising as Buckie Thistle FC ground costs £540/year. The website attracts relatively few visitors, and the football hoarding was agreed to be a better use of money. This will be renewed and the website will be discontinued. Awareness can be increased on the internet by use of Facebook.

CA made members aware of the Money for Moray/tsiMoray Just Transition Participatory Budget. Closing date for this fund was 4<sup>th</sup> September, and 32 applications were received from groups throughout Moray. There is a total of £450k available, with a £50k ceiling on individual awards. An online public vote will take place, with a marketplace event in Elgin Town Hall on 30/9/2023.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

**Date and time of next meeting:** Online via Zoom at 7pm on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November.