

Buckie Area Forum

Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held via Zoom at 7pm on Wednesday 8th November 2023

Present: Ronnie Cargill (RC), Susan Chalmers (SC), Ian Collacott (IC), Cllr Marc Macrae (MM), Kevin McDermott (KM), Gordon McDonald (GM), Linda McDonald (LM), Kevin McKay (KMck), Jill Sowden (JS), Cllr John Stuart (JSt)

Apologies: Colin Burch, Alistair Farquhar, Cllr Donald Gatt, Michelle Good, Iain Grieve, David Pirie, Emma Rapley, Tracey Rae, Leah Rossvoll, Liz Souter

GM opened the meeting at 7pm and welcomed attendees.

Minutes of the previous meeting (held on 06/09/2023): These were accepted with no amendments (proposed KMck, seconded SC).

Matters arising: Covered under agenda items.

Chairperson's report: GM reported that he had attended meetings of Fairer Moray Forum, Moray Area Forum, Locality Plan and Buckie Hub.

Secretary's report: IC reported no items.

Treasurer's report: In the absence of the treasurer, GM gave an outline report. A detailed statement will be circulated by the secretary. This will report on the two separate accounts held (old Regen account, and current Main Account, holding Hub grants). Balance is approximately £10k.

Harbour Advisory Group: No report.

The Hub: GM gave an update. The current Public Liability Insurance certificate is now on display in the building. The owner and landlord, Drew Parkes, has agreed to replace the cracked front window (approximate cost £1.2k) and has paid for a replacement fire exit door. The Hub committee requested a system to allow entry from the garden (over and above the required fire exit function) costing an extra £120. GM requested this extra money from BAF funds. This was unanimously agreed by attendees.

A local MSP (Karen Adam MSP) has asked permission to hold a surgery in the premises. The Hub committee agreed to this request, and noted that the facility is available to all local councillors, MSPs and MPs if they wish to hold surgeries. External agencies now have regular attendances on most days (Thursday morning is the only time currently free). The Progress for Parents team has recently started sessions each Monday morning. There was a brief discussion of charging groups. It was agreed that this would be fair for groups with adequate budgets, but groups considered to be providing a necessary service, but unable to pay, should not lose their sessions.

The Hub will open all day on Saturday 18th November for Buckie Christmas Kracker, selling teas and coffees, and providing a bottle stall, lucky square competition, and craft table.

The Hub now has more than enough volunteers, and recruitment will be paused.

KM asked that the thanks of the HMIE team be given to Hub committee members and volunteers for the service they are providing to meet a clear local need. If possible, their final report will be shared.

GM reported that the National Lottery Community Fund had requested permission to use the Hub as an example of how funding was used to help local communities (permission given).

Locality Plan Buckie/FAB Development Trust: SC gave a summary of work. Regular Locality Plan meetings have taken place, and a newsletter has been produced (available at <http://www.yourmoray.org.uk/downloads/file151242.pdf>). It is hoped that tsiMoray can help progress a scoping report on a potential Community Hub building. A council meeting will be arranged to respond to local demand for allotments. No local organisation has volunteered to lead this project, and forming a steering group of interested parties may be the way forward.

Community Lunches are very successful, with participation from Hub and DT volunteers. Pupils from the Special Education Department at Buckie High School, who have attended to observe lunches, have now also volunteered to assist. The collaboration of BAF and FABDT means that the charity status of the DT is helpful in raising funds.

The DT has been awarded £2k from the Beatrice Fund to set up a website. This will be based on those of other local DTs. The DT now has only 4 trustees, and will seek to recruit more.

Moray Area Forum: GM reported on activity. Two meetings have been held recently. Observers from Keith and Strathisla Regeneration Partnership have attended. This group is a limited company, and would not previously have been eligible to attend the forum. However, now that council funding has ceased, Area Forums may have more freedom to encourage or allow participation by other community groups. Moray Council has invited responses to their draft budget – the secretary will circulate a link to the online consultation. Hard copies of the draft proposals are available in libraries. GM stressed the importance of council officers in supporting various community organisations.

Draft constitution: Work has been done to produce a new constitution for Moray Forum. It is hoped that this will serve as a template for all Area Forums. A draft for Buckie Area Forum has been circulated to all BAF members. There will be an EGM on 17th January, to which all BAF members will be invited. Suggested changes are welcome, and should be submitted to the secretary prior to that meeting. A proposed final version will be discussed at this meeting, and it is hoped that members will

approve this. There was some discussion of the draft constitution, and of the membership and format of BAF and Moray Forum. JS (development officer with the Three Kings Association in Cullen) reported that Deskford Community Association committee (part of the 3 Kings) had resigned en masse, but new committee members had been elected. She will provide them with information on BAF.

AOCB: KM was asked if the £1.5M allocated to town centre regeneration was new money, or investment which had already been planned. MM confirmed this was not new money. Approximately £260k is now available for bids through a grant scheme. There was discussion of resilience planning. IC confirmed that there had been no formal contact with local Community Councils. Moray Council has produced a booklet, distributed to all CCs. Interest has varied considerably. KM reported that Lossiemouth has a resilience plan which was used successfully during the recent Storm Babet. Moray Council encourages and supports local communities to produce such plans. Further details are available on the council website at:

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_148721.html

Date and time of next meeting: An EGM will be held to discuss the new draft constitution on Wednesday January 17th at 7pm via Zoom. The next Ordinary meeting will be held at 7pm on Wednesday 20th March.