

FERINTOSH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 17 JULY 2017 IN FERINTOSH HALL

MEMBERS: Evelyn Campbell, Sally Falconer, Colin Lawrence (Chair), Iain McCallum, Roslind MacNaughton, Bruce Morrison (Secretary), Becky Richmond (Vice Chair)

ALSO PRESENT: 7 residents

APOLOGIES: Margaret Kinsman (Treasurer), Cllr Gordon Adam, Cllr Craig Fraser, PC Mike Howitt, 6 residents

MINUTES: June's minutes were approved (proposed by Evelyn, seconded by Sally) and duly adopted.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

MATTERS ARISING: (excluding actions carried out, carried forward and those considered later in the agenda): **BEAR Scotland reported back that the tarmacking of the Cromarty Bridge** had been done to specification and the expansion joint noise will decrease with wear. **BEAR** has also applied for a new licence to extend the work on Cromarty Bridge now until March 2019; **John O'Groats Trail:** Becky attended a meeting to hear about a plan to put together a waymarked trail from Inverness to John O'Groats including a section entering Culbokie Woods at Greenleonachs and exiting at the recycling area. FCS has given permission for small signs to be put on to existing posts. CCT, also at the meeting, supported the idea since its Woods Group is seeking to support new activities. FCC discussed and agreed to write a letter of support.

FINANCIAL REPORT: In Margaret's absence, Colin reported £54 out to support website development, £21 for Mulbuie Hall hire, £70 to CCT for orienteering event. With up to approx. £1500 earmarked for projects at Findon and Ferintosh Halls, and receipt of the new HC grant, FCC will have just under £5K available for future project support.

POLICE MATTERS: PC Mike Howitt reported on two speed checks in Culbokie carried out midweek at morning commuter time with four drivers warned.

Speedwatch: Bruce reviewed the impact on vehicle speeds following well over two years of Speedwatch activity by up to seven volunteers. Speedwatch activity involves volunteers (wearing hi-viz jackets) standing safely off the road, for short periods of time, in full view of drivers as they approach a speed activated sign. The volunteers do not record any individual vehicle details and only record both the total number of vehicles and the number of vehicles that trigger the speed-activated sign (at the SW end of Culbokie, the sign is triggered at 38mph, but is within the 30mph zone). The impact on vehicle speeds has been measured by THC using speed monitoring equipment, 24 hours per day, for at least a week in June of every year from 2014 to 2017. 2014 was before Speedwatch began and 2017 was 7 months after Speedwatch ceased. The overall conclusion is that there have been highly significant reductions in the numbers of speeding (i.e. over the limit) vehicles and even after 7 months of no Speedwatch activity, most of the improvements remain. FCC thanked the volunteers for all their successful efforts.

FCC agreed with the volunteers' recommendations that without more volunteers coming forward then Speedwatch should stop. However, local residents would again be informed of the initiative and should speeds again become problematic for them and volunteers were to come forward, then FCC would seriously consider re-starting the initiative. THC would be asked to continue to monitor vehicle speeds and asked to move the more accurate sign at the NE end of the village to the SW end of the village where speeds are greater.

Member's Bill proposing 20mph zones: Mark Russell MSP is introducing a bill to Holyrood proposing that 20mph should be introduced to replace all 30mph zones but allowing local councils to create exceptions on a case by case basis. Colin explained that the proposal could be looked at from a national point of view, and particularly from an urban point of view and /or looked at from the rural point of view of the FCC area. FCC consulted with residents who were generally against the bill (4 for; 13 against). FCC discussed the proposal within the rural context and decided that where 20mph zones may be justified then FCC would lobby for those on a case by case basis and not support a national approach.

COOLBOKIE GATHERING, Saturday 16 September: Bruce reviewed the progress towards the much more ambitious event this year, following on from the five successive and successful years established by the teenagers. The teenagers continue to have a core role mentoring the primary school children in the Come and Try Highland Games in the afternoon event at the School. A draft programme was presented demonstrating the programme of events in the morning at the Football field and Findon Hall followed by a full programme at the School in the afternoon with a street dance taking everyone towards the Culbokie Inn in the evening. The organising team consists of at least 15 volunteers from many organisations with many other volunteers already making important contributions. The event is being generously sponsored by Cromarty Firth Wireless Networks Ltd.

Risk assessment documents were presented to the FCC before the meeting in order to confirm that everything is being done to both minimise risks to residents and to ensure that FCC is meeting its commitments within the requirements of THC's insurance policies. FCC was content with the risk assessments to date. Financial risks are also being minimised since the sponsor is being billed directly for all agreed pre-event costs.

CORRESPONDENCE and REQUESTS: THC notified FCC of a consultation on a draft **Gaelic Language Plan:** Becky attended a meeting to hear that the focus is on education and particularly where Gaelic education is already available. Although, therefore, not immediately relevant to the FCC area, Becky noted that parents could lobby for Gaelic education to be made available; **THC** has invited FCC to a discussion on 24 August about the design of a **Community Gateway:** Becky will attend in order to better understand the proposal; **Tour de Coast, Coastal Daymark Project** consultation: this is a proposal to introduce 100 daymarks (obelisks with chips recognisable by smartphone) around the UK coastline in the more off the beaten track places on the coast. The nearest proposed places include Cromarty, Spey Bay, and Helmsdale. FCC decided to make no comment unless approached by Cromarty for a view; **HI TRANS Regional Transport Strategy** consultation belatedly has been put to community councils for comment. The document was considered to be a very comprehensive and well written document with important objectives (e.g. lifeline service, improve safety and integration, inclusivity, access and empowerment) mentioned from the point of view of residents in the FCC area. An extension to the deadline will be requested and, once known, will be put out to the FCC email list and website for residents to comment. FCC would also submit comments (**Action: Evelyn**); **THC Area Roads Programme** will be discussed at a meeting with Iain Moncrieff and further updates requested (**Becky /Bruce**); **Kate Forbes MSP** is holding a surgery in Findon Hall, 5.45pm to 7pm, Wednesday 2nd August: FCC will attend to lobby on the buses issue (**Action: Evelyn**) and the surgery is to be promoted to residents (**Action: Bruce**).

ACTIVE PROJECTS:

Service Requests Outstanding: All actions listed here will be discussed with Iain Moncrieff at the planned August meeting (**Action: Becky /Bruce**). Actions to be carried out include **speed monitoring** on the old Leanaig road, **white lining on B9169** (partly completed west of the A9), most **severe potholes** to be filled but two signs outside **Mulbuie School** have been removed. The remaining outstanding issues

include **Pedestrian crossing** at A835/B9163 junction, **Flooding down** road opposite shop, **Passing places** and broken edges on Mount Eagle road, **40 mph outside Mulbuie School**, **Bus Stop** markings on A9, **Potholes** to be filled in the **Culbokie recycling area** (done by members of the community). New issue arising included a **faulty 20mph** sign before Mulbuie School. FCC agreed to re-visit the concern about the **railings at the junction** beside Mulbuie Hall.

Buses: Considerable lobbying effort continues to be put in by the Culbokie Action Group and by FCC (Evelyn). The absence of the commuter bus service for Culbokie remains, however, and a resident reported that today the late A9 Stagecoach bus failed to connect with the D&E Culbokie bus requiring a resident needing to make several car trips to ferry Culbokie passengers home from Duncanston. Evelyn reported on discussions with HITRANS whose Neil MacRae is recommending a meeting with the A9 Route Manager to explore reducing the obvious hazards to passengers connecting at the Duncanston crossroads. William Gilfillan and Kate Forbes will be invited to that meeting. The latest update from Cllr Gordon Adam is that there have been discussions looking at the costs of reinstating the commuter service and meetings will continue this week looking for a source of funding.

A reduction in the return fare has been achieved from Stagecoach for those showing evidence of journeying on the appropriate morning D&E bus. It was felt, however, that not all contingencies have been covered and the new system will be closely monitored.

Evelyn reported on a reply to her FOI request for an understanding of the way in which the original decisions were taken leading to the absence of the commuter service. The reply has not altered the view that Culbokie residents have been treated unfairly and that many of the objectives of the HITRANS Strategy have failed to be achieved. Once all the evidence is collated, the case that an unfair decision was made will be presented to THC. **Action: Evelyn**

Broadband: Colin reported that a meeting on the 8th September with Edward Mountain MSP and a BT representative has been set up for himself and Becky. A resident reported difficulties obtaining a grant under the Better Broadband Scheme despite success by his closest neighbours and was encouraged to provide the details for discussion at the September meeting.

'Support' project: Ros reported that herself, Evelyn and Bruce had met to renew efforts to create a signposting service for residents. Contact was to be made with the NHS to understand better the way in which all services are delivered in the area. **Action: Ros**

Crask Junction: All the indications are that this project is being strongly supported by both the Officers and Members of THC. However, the final sizes of the budgets are still to be agreed by THC and therefore continuing lobbying is required to ensure that this project remains high profile in order to be listed into the final plans.

Safer Routes to Schools: No report

Port of Cromarty Firth: Evelyn attended the latest quarterly meeting. H&S remains a high priority for improvement following a fatality last year. It is hoped a licence for decommissioning will be received in September enabling the Port to enjoy expanded economic activity. The Nigg Harbour empowerment order is not yet released. There was no information provided on the timing of a renewed licence application for ship-to-ship oil transfer.

FCC Website: Now that the new website is up and running, Becky would like guidance on which consultations and projects should be presented. The COOLbokie Gathering Facebook page is up and running and will be promoted to residents (**Action: Bruce**). The presence of an advert for a house sale was considered inappropriate for an FCC site as interference in normal commercial activities.

Update from Appointees (i.e. LEADER, BICCS, Findon Hall, CCT): **CCT:** Bruce reported that CCT has agreed heads of terms with Tulloch Homes and has gone to the legal phase. **LEADER:** Iain will be attending a meeting in two weeks' time with the application processes requiring improvements and much of the funding still available.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS (only new information included):

Update on Objections lodged:

Beechfield, 2 Houses: Application refused

New Applications:

17/02807/S75D: Braefindon Steading, Removal of S75 Restriction: No comment

AOCB: Colin continues to investigate the possibility of interim elections and will report in August. A spokesperson for PREVENT, the counter-terrorism tactic, has been invited to the August meeting.

INTERACTION WITH RESIDENTS: A resident updated the meeting on a change of circumstances in relation to his water supply.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 21 August, 7pm, Culbokie Primary School

Contact details for comments; to join the email list; to receive minutes electronically:

Bruce Morrison, Secretary, 01349 877127; ferintoshcc30@gmail.com, <http://ferintoshcc.co.uk>;
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