



Findochty Community Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday 2nd June 2025

Time: 7:00 PM

Venue: Findochty Town Hall

Attendance

Community Councillors:

Anne Braidwood (Chair), Jeffrey Masterson, Ron Dawson, Paul Steel, Paul Kerrison

Associate members: None

Members of Public: 1

Moray Council: Councillor Warren

Apologies: None

1. Welcome

Welcome from Chairperson

Anne Braidwood welcomed everyone to the meeting. Full membership in attendance.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

5th May 2025: The minutes were reviewed and accepted as an accurate record. Proposed by Paul Kerrison and seconded by Ron Dawson.

3. Community Council Scheme of Establishment

Moray Council have sent through a link to the Community Council Scheme of Establishment Review – 2nd Consultation Period.

Our Community Liaison Officer has asked that we consider the document, Paul Kerrison, summarised changes for us:

- **Scheme Dates Updated.** The document has been updated to reflect the new operational period of 2025-2029 replacing the previous 2021-2025 timeline
- **New Constitution Approval Requirement.** Each Community Council must submit a new or reapproved constitution at start of each term to ensure continued compliance
- **Clarification of Co-opted Members.** A new clause clarifies that co-opted members become full members after 6 months, at which point they are no longer counted in the co-option limit (one-third of total members). This provides a clear path to full participation and voting rights.
- **Youth Membership Introduction.** A new provision allows each Community Council to appoint up to two youth members (aged 16–18) with full voting rights (excluding votes on co-option). These positions encourage younger community involvement and have a two-year term.

- **Ex-Officio Member Clarification.** Elected representatives (MPs; MSPs) are ex-officio with no voting rights to ensure they can engage with Community Councils without influencing votes or internal decisions
- **Inclusion of Community Planning Partners.** Community Planning Partnerships, Local Area Forums, and similar bodies have been added as entities with which Community Councils are encouraged to engage. This broadens collaborative opportunities beyond just Moray Council.
- **Expanded Grant Use Guidance.** List of items which administrative grant can be used for has broadened. Includes IT/hardware, mobile phones, promotional materials
- **Deadline for Constitution Approval.** This needs to be within four months of a Council's inaugural meeting. Failure means default use of Model Constitution
- **Automatic Resignation Clauses.** If a member moves out of area or no longer on electoral roll, they are considered automatically to have resigned
- **Safeguarding Responsibilities.** We are encouraged to adopt Moray Council safeguarding policy for children and vulnerable adults
- **Leave of Absence Option.** Adds flexibility and supports members facing temporary life events without forcing resignation.
- **Complaints Procedure Reference.** Formal procedure now referenced in Constitution. Creates a mechanism for addressing grievances and maintaining standards of conduct
- **Private Meeting Clause.** A clause allows Community Councils to hold meetings or parts thereof in private when agreed in advance, with public notice. This change recognises the need to occasionally discuss sensitive matters confidentially.
- **Updates to Data Protection Language.** Updates from DPA 1998 to GDPR 2018, aligning with current legal requirements
- **Electoral Area Clarification.** Polling district information and community council area descriptions have been updated to reflect accurate boundaries and subdivisions, improving transparency and eligibility understanding
- **Redundancies Removed.** Duplicate or overly complex wording in sections like Standing Orders and the Constitution has been streamlined for clarity and usability

These changes were unanimously agreed.

4. Community Police Scotland Update

The full report contained 5 areas which have been summarised by Paul Kerrison

- Anti-Social Behaviour, Violence and Disorder
 - Fire raising in Buckie and one in Cullen
 - No robberies, one serious assault and a few smaller assaults
 - Continued engagement with communities regarding offensive weapons; cyberbullying; substance misuse; hate crime
- Road Safety and Crime
 - Six drunk/drug driving
 - Keith, parking complaints; engagement with retailers and public
 - Ongoing motorcycle safety campaign, hi-vis patrols; unmarked vehicles and IAM rider training

- Serious and Organised Crime
 - Pro-active policing led to recovers of cocaine; cannabis; ketamine; Pregabalin and £3k cash
 - Case study: car stopped in Keith led to drug seizure and driving offence detection
 - Acquisitive Crime
 - No home break ins; two rural outbuilding thefts
 - Two cars stolen (keys left inside)
 - Public urged to lock cars, remove valuables and double-check vehicle security
 - Protecting Vulnerable People
 - Elderly residents lost £60k+ to scams including gift card fraud and phishing
 - Scammers use pressure tactics, official logos, QR codes, and emotional manipulation
 - Residents encourages to be sceptical and avoid clicking unknown links and report issues
-

5. Treasurer's Report

Report presented by Paul Kerrison:

Bank signatories update: waiting for one query to be resolved.

The Community Council noted receipt of a generous £500 donation to the White Mannie project. As the fundraising target had already been achieved, and in line with our commitment to restrict all funds to this specific project, Paul Kerrison contacted the donor to offer a refund.

The donor kindly declined reimbursement and confirmed their willingness for the contribution to benefit other village initiatives. The Council wishes to formally record its sincere appreciation for this exceptional generosity, which will be allocated to community improvements in consultation with members.

The Treasurer detailed recent financial activity:

Expenditures included:

- £1,235.62 Painting of inside public toilet block
- £26.00 White Mannie - paint
- £60.00 Secretary Honorarium (Apr/May)
- £218.57 Travis Perkins - shed base

Income:

- £1,191.32 Crowdfunder - White Mannie
- £74.52 Keystore Collection Bucket
- £60.00 Donation (see honorarium outgoing)

Bank Balance: £9,628.08 (includes all grants)

- Admin Grant: £1,896.03
 - Events Fund: £623.10
 - Maintenance Fund: £4,965.08
 - General Fund: £2,143.87
-

6. Community Feedback

- **Brown bin permit**, has now been received.
- **Dog poo bags** were discussed.
 - The dispenser at Little Hampden has been vandalised. This unit appears to have been installed privately (not Community Council)
 - The other four bag stations remain operational and fully stocked
 - The Community Council have been informed of a fifth station
 - Previous Committee discussions referenced possible additional stations being supplied through a Keystore contact

Actions: Paul Kerrison to look at the fifth location; Anne Braidwood to speak to Keystore

- **Noticeboard.** No discussion at this meeting
 - **Berth in Findochty Harbour.** Berths have been released by the harbour master and access granted.
-

7. Harbour Public Toilets Update

- **Interior painting works** have been completed and the associated invoice settled
- **External painting** is approximately 75% finished
- **New signage has been installed**, with potential for one or two additional signs to be ordered (costs expected to be minimal)
- **Installation of new internal fittings**, including:
 - Replacement toilet roll holders
 - Additional soap dispensers
 - Handles fitted to the rear of cubicle doors
- The following concern has been noted regarding the recently installed facilities:
 - The new sensor-activated lighting system has been observed to provide insufficient illumination during daylight hours

Actions: Councillor Warren agreed to contact Sharon Mair at Moray Council to review sensor settings

8. Community Council Website

The site is progressing well; we receive a steady stream of visitors. History, events page and gallery are most popular. As ever, we need to keep information coming.

9. White Mannie Restoration Update

The statue painting has been successfully completed, with excellent results. The Community Council extends its sincere gratitude to ***Ian and Vanessa Ramsey*** for generously volunteering their time and expertise to undertake this work.

Attention now turns to the base restoration. Paul Steel advised that the contractor is scheduled to re-render the base around mid-June - confirmation of the exact date is pending.

Action: Paul Steel to contact contractor to pin down firm start date

10. Boat and Bus Shelter

Boat Display Completion: The boat installation, including the Welcome sign, is now fully complete and has been well received. Some additional planting may be required to enhance the area further.

Bus Shelter Refurbishment: Repainting the bus shelter was proposed as a new project. Paul Kerrison and Paul Steel have volunteered to lead this initiative.

Action: Paul Kerrison & Paul Steel to progress the bus shelter project

11. Crooked Hythe Sign

Paul Kerrison proposed renovating the historical sign at Crooked Hythe, focusing on updating the existing sign while maintaining a like-for-like approach to preserve its authenticity on the stone plinth. The group agreed that improvements should enhance rather than replace the existing display.

Photographs of the first and last boats built at the boatyard are available; however, photographs of the middle boat depicted (BF1947 *Valkyrie* - the first vessel to enter through the channel) have been more challenging to obtain. It was suggested that the Buckie Fishing and Heritage Centre might be a useful resource, as they maintain an extensive digital archive.

Additionally, Councillor Warren recommended consulting Professor Peter Reid, a prominent local historian, for further insights.

Action: Paul Kerrison & Anne Braidwood

12. Community Resilience Group/Moray Fire and Protection Donation

The group discussed potential uses for the £250 donation from Moray Fire & Protection Service. The SSEN representative advised that thermal flasks would be a practical purchase, as experience has shown attendees often do not bring containers for hot water. After consideration, the group agreed that procuring larger, loanable flasks would be the preferred option. Foil blankets were also suggested as a worthwhile addition.

Action: Paul Kerrison and Anne Braidwood to look into purchasing flasks.

Power Capacity Concerns

Ron Dawson highlighted that the current generator lacks the capacity to simultaneously support lighting, heating, and hot water demands. Further discussion touched on the possibility of a joint bid to expand battery storage, though this has not yet been progressed. The group noted the impending deadline for such bids (end of the month) and acknowledged that the costs associated with a power survey were currently prohibitive.

Action: Paul Kerrison to speak to Joe Innes regarding joint bid.

13. To note reports from Local Councillors

Councillor Warren.

- Councillor Warren updated the group via Chair:

- **Street Lighting Update**

The supplier has identified suitable replacement streetlights, and progress is expected soon. It was noted that a significant number of lights across Moray still require replacement.

- **Library**

Although Buckie Library is not currently part of Moray Council's closure plans, upcoming transformational discussions may pose future challenges for the facility.

- **Care at Home Services**

Discussions are ongoing regarding care-at-home provision. Concerns were raised that Moray is perceived as a lower priority within NHS Grampian's service planning.

- **Buckie Central High School public meeting**

A public meeting with Moray Council representatives is scheduled for 17th June, with limited attendance capacity. Anne Braidwood confirmed that two tickets have been secured via EventBrite, and Paul Kerrison will also attend.

- **Review of Waste Facilities**

Potential reductions in dump sites are under consideration, with Gollachy, Fruchnie, and March Road locations currently under discussion.

- **m.connect Saturday Service Update**

The demand-responsive door-to-door service (operating 9 am–5 pm) has now been implemented. Residents wishing to advocate for an extended service, similar to Speyside's model, are encouraged to write to Nicola Moss, Head of Service.

For any additional questions or support, attendees were advised to contact Councillor Warren, who remains available to assist.

14. Town Hall Update

Ron Dawson reported all was fine in regards to the Town Hall. Things operating as normal.

15. Reports from Community Council Subgroups

- **Harbour Advisory Group**

No meeting held since the last Community Council meeting. Next meeting scheduled for 23rd June.

- **Christmas Lights**

No updates from the committee, aside from confirmation that new lights have been purchased.

- **Maintenance & Gardening**

Paul Kerrison and Paul Steel reported that the shed construction is now complete, though space is somewhat limited for the ride-on mower.

It is believed the ride-on mower belongs to the Community Council and is currently stored at Andrew Slater's property.

Planter Maintenance: The Community Council has taken responsibility for eleven new planters, following feedback from residents who are no longer able to maintain them. An estimated £50 in additional plants will be needed.

- **Defibrillator**

Ron Dawson (RD) provided the following updates:

Monthly inspection confirmed the battery remains functional (currently showing two bars), though replacement will be needed soon.

A recent issue with the alarm being triggered (potentially due to nearby football activity) has now been resolved

17. AOCB (Any Other Council Business)

Change to Meeting Start Time

The Chair, Anne Braidwood, proposed adjusting future meeting start times from 7pm to 6pm. After discussion, members agreed to trial this new arrangement. It was noted that the change would be reviewed periodically, with the option to reconsider if needed.

18. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 7th July 2025 at 6:00 PM

Venue: Findochty Town Hall

Meeting Closed at 8:25 PM