



Findochty Community Council Meeting Minutes

Date: 6 April 2026

Time: 7:00 PM

Venue: Findochty Town Hall

Attendance

Community Councillors:

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

Associate members: None

Members of Public: Three

Moray Council: Cllr Warren

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting, confirmed a quorum was present and the meeting duly constituted, and advised that the meeting would be audio-recorded to assist with minute preparation.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: Cllr John Stuart

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Proposed by: Paul Steel | Seconded by: Ron Dawson

4. Community Updates

4.1 Community Police Update

A bi-monthly report was received from Inspector Mark Bayliss, Buckie and Keith Community Policing Team. Key points:

- Disorder on Well Road, Buckie - protest escalated to serious ASB and violence towards officers; reassurance patrols ongoing.
- Vandalism up to 13 incidents in Buckie (previously 9); 3 in Keith (unchanged). One serious assault in Keith - suspect arrested swiftly.

- Smart Moves Project launched at Buckie High School to reduce violence and ASB; Moray-wide rollout planned.
- Road safety operations on A98 and A96 - defects, documentation, and new driver education.
- Nine drug offences (3 supply, 6 possession); large cannabis cultivation uncovered in Buckie. Schools receiving drug and county lines awareness sessions.
- Three commercial premises broken into in Buckie; enquiries ongoing.
- FCC received a positive mention - litter pick, community survey and re-establishment all highlighted.

It was noted: the council recorded its appreciation of Inspector Bayliss's positive community engagement.

4.2 Treasurer's Report

Bank balance: £6,994 (Admin Grant £1,748 | Events £623 | Maintenance £2,009 | General £2,613).

Income: £6 strimmer donation; £285.74 Moray Council admin grant instalment.

Expenditure of £458: survey printing £25 | litter equipment £121 | hi-vis vests £43 | website hosting £95 | planters £80 | paint/preservative £43.56 | Elementor Pro £48.50 (shared with Buckie Legion).

The Common Good Fund balance available for application is £3,079.

5. Community Feedback (Submitted in Advance)

5.1 Climate and Nature Crisis - Resident's Email to MP

The council was copied on an email from a Findochty resident to Seamus Logan MP requesting engagement with the People's Emergency Briefing on the climate and nature crisis, citing local coastal erosion concerns and requesting support for a local film screening.

It was agreed: to draft a supportive response, to be circulated to members for approval before sending.

Action: Secretary to draft and circulate a supportive email to Seamus Logan MP for member approval.

6. Items Submitted by Community Council Members

6.1 Governance Documents - Standing Orders and Policies

The Treasurer presented a proposal to rewrite the council's Standing Orders and associated policies in plain English. The Scheme of Establishment permits adaptation within its framework.

Formal notice was given, as required by the Scheme of Establishment, that revised Standing Orders will be brought to the next meeting for approval. The following documents are in preparation:

- Standing Orders | Financial Procedures | Records Retention Policy | Code of Conduct | Data Protection Policy | Complaints Policy | Audio Recording Policy | Policy on Petitions and Public Campaigns

It was agreed: to proceed. Drafts to be circulated before the next meeting; following approval, submitted to Moray Council.

Action: Treasurer to circulate all draft governance documents to members for review before the next meeting.

6.2 Website Hosting and Administration

It was noted: the council has moved to independent website hosting with full administrative control, as authorised at the previous meeting, reducing reliance on third parties.

6.3 Community Survey Results

The survey closed with 65 responses. Top priorities: coastal paths and outdoor spaces. Dog waste was the most common open-text concern. Some requests (building renovations, toilets, play parks) exceed the council's remit or resources. An internal briefing and a plain-English residents' version have been prepared.

A 30mph anomaly near the old Steadings, inconsistent with the wider 20mph rollout, was noted.

It was agreed: to publish the residents' version with a covering note setting out the council's capabilities and limitations.

Action: Secretary to publish the residents' survey summary with an explanation of FCC's role and remit.

Action: Treasurer to investigate and report on the 30mph anomaly near the old Steadings.

6.4 Seafield Estate - Land Lease and Viewpoint Project

The Treasurer briefed members on discussions with Seafield and Strathspey Estates regarding a zero cost lease of land for a community viewpoint with seating and picnic facilities, modelled on a similar arrangement in Cullen.

The Estate has raised a structural question: whether the leaseholder should be FCC or a separate organisation (SCIO or Development Trust), given the risk of the council failing to form as occurred in October 2025. A Development Trust or SCIO would offer greater continuity and wider funding access. The Findochty and Buckie Development Trust (FAB) was noted as a potential partner.

It was agreed: no final decision at this meeting; matter to be brought back to the next meeting.

Action: All members to read the Seafield Estate briefing document before the next meeting.

Action: Treasurer to contact FAB to explore partnership options, and to seek advice from Susan Chalmers and Becky (EFODO/EFS) on SCIO/trust formation.

6.5 Records Retention Policy

A draft Records Retention Policy was presented, covering permanent retention of minutes, six year retention of financial records, and secure destruction procedures.

It was agreed: in principle. Policy to be circulated for member review and adopted at the next meeting alongside other governance documents. Legacy records to be disposed of once the policy is adopted.

Action: Treasurer to circulate the Records Retention Policy for member review and approval

7. Reports

7.1 Local Councillors - Cllr Sonya Warren.

The following matters were reported:

20mph Rollout

Rollout progressing across Moray; signage operating in Elgin. Moray Council in Easter recess.

School Transport - Stagecoach Route 35. Removal of bus entitlement within three miles of school is causing difficulty in rural areas. Route 35 concerns: missed pickups, app

inaccuracies, lateness and passengers stranded. Some residents have used private hire at their own cost. Engagement ongoing with Stagecoach Northeast management.

Action: Members and residents to report specific Route 35 failures to the Secretary for submission to Stagecoach Northeast.

Action: Secretary to write to Timothy McKay, Moray Council, reporting bus service concerns and night bus no shows.

A98 Road Safety

Poor junction visibility on the A98 around Buckie reported, particularly in evening conditions. Work ongoing with officers.

Bus Shelter Repairs

An application for shelter repairs has been submitted. The stone shelter on the approach road requires particular attention. Passengers are waiting up to an hour in poor conditions.

It was agreed: to encourage residents to contact Timothy McKay at Moray Council directly.

Action: Secretary to write to Timothy McKay requesting shelter repairs, citing survey results and specific locations.

Action: Secretary to request a condition report for the stone bus shelter.

Buckie High School - Learning Estate Programme

Update on the cancelled new school project and the Learning Estate Investment Programme awaited following recess. Capacity concerns noted, particularly in the special needs base due to rising autism diagnoses.

7.2 Sub-Committee Report

7.2.1 Christmas Lights Committee

The Secretary reported that following correspondence from the council, the Committee has confirmed it will operate as a fully independent entity and will source its own public liability insurance. The Committee expressed its wish to continue working collaboratively with the council.

It was noted: the Christmas Lights Committee is no longer a sub-committee of Findochty Community Council with effect from the date of their written communication. The council recorded its appreciation of the Committee's contribution to community life in Findochty.

Member Responsibility Updates

7.2.2 Harbour Advisory Group

Report from the FCC representative:

- Lighthouse repainting planned; 8 berths available; dredging noted.
- Request for a 15mph harbour sign declined under current signage policy.

- Proposal to install a white box at the pontoon entrance and yellow lines to the White Mannie statue to improve pedestrian safety; yacht club representative met with traffic operations engineer to progress.
- A personnel matter from a previous meeting has been resolved.
- Pontoon valuation underway; update pending.

Action: FCC representative to continue pursuing harbour traffic safety measures and report progress at the next meeting.

7.2.3 Maintenance and Gardening

Bins

A bin near the village green has been replaced and chained. Overflow noted at the Crooked Hythe, Mackenzie's Beach and opposite the village green in summer.

It was agreed: to monitor overflow and consider requesting daily emptying at peak locations during summer.

Benches - Crooked Hythe

It was agreed: to approach the Men's Shed or similar group to inspect and advise on repairs.

Action: Member to approach Men's Shed re inspection and repair of Crooked Hythe benches.

Ride-on Mower

The mower has not been used for some time; ownership status is uncertain.

It was agreed: to verify ownership, assess condition, and bring a proposal to a future meeting regarding sale or disposal.

Action: Member to verify ownership of the ride-on mower and report back to the next meeting.

Annual Maintenance Plan

It was agreed: that a consolidated, costed annual maintenance plan should be prepared to reduce ad hoc budget requests.

Action: Maintenance lead to prepare a costed annual maintenance plan for the next meeting.

7.2.3 Defibrillator

Battery at approximately 25% and declining at approximately 1% per month; replacement required at 10%. Replacement pads due November. Estimated costs: battery £300; pads approximately £160 total. Target fundraising: £500.

A prize has been donated by James Gardiner (Glenfiddich distillery tour for two with transport and a bottle of 18-year-old Glenfiddich). A 100 square online lucky square raffle at £5 per square has been prepared but not yet launched.

It was agreed: to proceed with the lucky square fundraiser. If the battery approaches the replacement threshold before sufficient funds are raised, a replacement will be purchased immediately and costs backfilled.

Action: Treasurer to launch the lucky square raffle and seek additional prizes from local businesses.

Action: Member to monitor battery monthly; authorised to purchase replacement if at or below 10%.

Action: Member to purchase replacement pads before November expiry.

8. Any Other Competent Business (AOCB)

No items raised.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 4 May 2026 at 7:00 pm – Findochty Town Hall

Meeting Closed

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8:25 pm

These minutes are subject to approval at the next meeting of the Community Council.