



Speyside Area Forum

Tuesday, 15th June, 2010
7.30pm

Tomintoul Primary School

MINUTES

1. Welcome & apologies

Attending:

Chair: Sandy Henderson
Hugh Fraser
Anne Oliver
Steve Oliver
Bill Burgess
Jean Oliver
Janice Smith
Andrea Fuller
Derek Clark
Andy Main
Patricia Grant
Jenny Herschell

Aberlour Community Association
Aberlour Community Association
Archiestown Village Council
Archiestown Village Council
Carron Community Association
Dufftown
Dufftown
Edinville Community Hall Council
Glenrines Community Centre
Grampian Police
Kirkmichael & Tomintoul Community Association
Kirkmichael & Tomintoul Community Association

In attendance

Rhona Patterson
Derek Murray
Bill Ross
Ann Davidson
Jim Hart

Community Support Officer
Moray Council – Roads Maintenance
Moray Council – Roads Maintenance
REAP – Cairngorms Park Consultation
Secretary

Apologies

Heather Shaw
Donna Smart
John Fleming
Pat Shanks
Rita Marks
Charlie Alexander
Cncllor. Fiona Murdoch
Cncllor. Pearl Paul
Jim Anderson
Margaret Stuart

Community Support Officer
Craigellachie
Dufftown
Edinville Community Hall Council
Glenlivet & Inveravon Community Association
Knockando Community Association
Moray Council
Moray Council
Rothes Council
Rothes Council

2. Moray Roads Maintenance – Messrs Bill Ross & Derek Murray

Messrs Ross and Murray explained that 2009-2010 Winter had been registered as the worst for between 20 and 50 years, as such, unprecedented in the experience of Moray Council (MC) staff. Quantities of salt, ordered before Christmas were subject to the UK demand, where severe and protracted adverse weather had been experienced, and salt was mixed with sand in the ratio 1:2 in order to prolong supplies. Other options such as molasses, grit or brine were discussed but had been dismissed on the basis of both effectiveness and cost. It is estimated that the road clearing operation this year cost approximately £1 million extra in Moray.

Throughout Moray there are 18 priority routes (a brochure is available through Moray Council and local libraries), serviced by 36 drivers working shifts, and constrained by time directives. The severe and dynamic conditions necessitated that on occasions routine priority clearance operations gave way to emergency requirement, such as vet access.

Mr Ross explained that the plant in operation in Elgin, in some instances of newer design, was inappropriate to deal with the heavy snowfalls experienced in Speyside. All equipment was properly and regularly maintained. It was recognised that a small gritter in Tomintoul might have been more effective, but the situation required the available equipment to be used. 3 snow blowers are available in Moray, and use of smaller blowers for pavements is contentious with residents and/or road users.

Moray Council take professional meteorological advice on weather forecasting in addition to temperature sensors in Rothes Glen, Laich of Moray and Cabrach. The information, including private sensors and operators advice from 7 depots throughout Moray is fed back into a thermal model for the principal roads.

In response to a question raised by Grampian Police, who frequently received calls for assistance at the start of the "travel to work" period from stranded and distressed motorists, due to blocked roads and hard packed snow it was pointed out that no, or limited, gritter service is operated between 9pm and 6am, due to operatives time directive constraints, costs and temperature effectiveness. With little night-time traffic, additional gritting which requires vehicular traffic for efficient spreading, would be ineffective. 24 hour coverage is provided for emergencies and RTAs. Pre-gritting will take place if frost is forecast to occur during the night period.

Operations caused snow to be banked up at the side of roads and Moray Council felt that the decision to uplift snow had been the right one – working from the population centres outwards.

For next year, in spite of budget cuts, it is unlikely that Moray Council will be less well prepared and they are looking to work more with local communities to address local conditions and needs. SAF were pleased about the contractual deployment of local farmers (26 throughout Moray and mainly in the Keith – Tomintoul corridor) to supplement the Council operators.

The availability of grit bins at strategic sites was appreciated by SAF and Moray Council indicated that this service was being considered to be increased next year. SAF indicated that piles of salt/grit would suffice if bins proved costly.

The Chair thanked Messrs Ross and Murray for visiting with SAF and discussing their insight of not only the Winter's experiences but also the snow clearing operations and plans. Brochures of the priority routes were left.

3. Minutes of previous meeting – 20th April, 2010

These were approved by Jenny Herschell and seconded by Patricia Grant

4. Matters Arising

- 3.2.4. The new LEADER model is applicable to Moray only and is now closed.
- 3.8. Heather Hopper. This matter is now closed.
- 6.1 Maggie Knockater: It has been identified that the village falls under the joint catchment of Speyside and Keith. It is suggested that as most occupants reside in the Speyside area then Speyside Area Forum should assume representation responsibility. It was noted that the current HGV diversion from Rothes was causing additional concern, however there was no representation from the community. Ms Rhona Patterson offered to try to contact the community to solicit their interest.
- 4. Midnight Football League: Contact for this programme is Graham Stewart, Street Football, Elgin Community Centre, Tel. 01343 548040. Mobile: 07972 178 790
E-mail: graham.stewart@moray.gov.uk. This matter is now closed

5. Update Community/Action Groups

A statement from Craigellachie Community citing the progress and success of the new Brickfield Playpark was read out. SAF acknowledged that success and looked forward to the opening day in July (date to be announced)

6. Treasurers Report

The Treasurer reported a current effective balance of £2,173.30.

The Treasurer announced that she is reluctantly resigning from post effective immediately due to family pressures. The Chair thanked Mrs Smith for her dedicated service since the inception of the Area Forum and wished her well. The Treasurer's books and accounts were passed to Mrs Rhona Patterson who will attempt to identify a new treasurer.

7. Community Issues

- Maggieknockater Speed Limit and Street lighting. As no representation was forthcoming from the community any further action was deferred.
- Withdrawal of local bus services Route 337. Mrs Anne Oliver outlined the situation through Archiestown where the #337 bus service has been withdrawn completely. A letter on behalf of the village council had been written and a response received, suggesting that nothing could be done due to budgetary constraints and that the village should contact their local councillor. It was recognised that several other services had been curtailed in the recent review. It would seem as if lots of opinions have been voiced but few letters of concern written to the Council or bus operators. Realism was expressed in that while the withdrawal of service was regrettable and likely to cause inconvenience to some, the level of use of the service was generally poor and uneconomic. Rhona Patterson is to take up the issue with Councillor Paul, who, it is understood, has expressed concern at the withdrawal of service.

8. Correspondence

Incoming:

Community Fund raising Challenge	SEE ME: Local Grants scheme
Outfit Moray – Mountain Bike Sale	Financial Inclusion Strategy (2 page Foreword distributed)
Archiestown Bus Service - distributed	Local Transport Strategy – Consultation (response due June 25 th)
Street Sports Summer carnival – July 10th	Minute from CPP Community Engagement plus Appendix

Local Transport Strategy (LTS): Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the secretary would respond to the consultation expressing concern about amount of documentation to be considered and about the fact that it would appear that decisions, contrary to the intention of the LTS about transportation to the rural communities, have already been implemented.

CPP Community Engagement: The appendix to the minutes of the CPP Community Engagement meeting was discussed and concern was expressed that the position put forward for SAF was somewhat inaccurate. It was agreed that a more accurate depiction of SAF activity would be provided to the Secretary and a letter written to the CPP manager.

9. Any Other Competent Business

- Mr Derek Clark expressed concern at a new Council policy for refuse collection which obligated members of the Glenrinnnes communities (Bellandy and Croftglass), resident in dead-end lanes, now to carry their refuse approximately 2 miles to a communal "Wheelie Bin". It was agreed that the secretary would write to the Council, expressing concern and requesting clarification about the Council Policy, potential reduction to Council Tax, alternative options considered and the potential impact for fly-tipping.
- Future Speakers/Guests
 - Mr Gavin Morgan – Moray DOE – It was agreed to defer this possible speaker until 2011
 - Care in the Community – Mr Douglas Reid. (Dufftown Hospital). It was agreed to try to engage this possible speaker for the September meeting of the Area Forum
- New CSU Representative for Speyside – Mrs Rhona Patterson, based at Aberlour library, introduced herself and provided her contact details as 07966 120586
- Ms Ann Davidson – REAP – introduced herself and expressed her interest in the Cairngorms National Park plan, which was likely to be of particular interest to Tomintoul and Glenlivet Communities
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10. Dates & Venues for future meetings

The next meeting was agreed to be at Glenrinnnes Community Centre on July 27th, 2010 at 19.30

The subsequent meeting on September 21st was agreed to be held in Dufftown at 19.30. It was agreed to invite Mr Douglas Reid (Speaker on Care in the Community) to this meeting. It was further agreed to defer Mr Gavin Morgan of Moray DOE at this time.

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