

Meeting Minutes

Meeting on Wednesday 23rd April 2025 at Rafford Village Hall

FCC members present:

Howard Davenport (HD), Peter Taylor (PT), Anna Gatward (AG), Tony Pinner (TP)

Also present:

Andy Munro (AM), Carlo Miele (CM), Paul McBain (PMcB), Kathleen Robertson (KR),
Draek Van der Horn (DvdH), Juli Salt, Rosemary Pannell (RP), Joanna Taylor

1) Apologies:

Carol Bennet Buttacci, Sean Lusk, Scott Lawrence, Tom Hardie (TH)

2) Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes agreed.

3) Current Standing Items

a) Traffic Safety in Rafford

- **Provision of a pavement in Upper Rafford**

No further progress. Outstanding items are:

- Snagging to be completed by the civils contractor.
- Wildflower planting on the verge will be done by Land and Parks Department.
- Roads Dept will remove redundant post.
- EP has proposed some road markings at crossing points.

- **Vehicle Activated Signs**

TH to install remote re-set. **(Action TH)**

TP to liaise with S. McCracken and download speed data. **(Action TP)**

TP reported concerns on frequency of breakdowns, and quality of cabinets. TP will collate a history of breakdowns. TP and PT will write to supplier to seek rectification and/or refund.
(Action TP/PT)

- **Village Entrance Signs**

HD reported that EP had suggested FCC need to make a contribution to costs of signs. HD had contacted one supplier who had quoted around £1000 plus VAT per sign. (10 signs needed in total). After some discussion on the cost, and possible source of funding, KR informed the meeting that TMC were considering a consultation on 20m.p.h. speed limits, which if implemented could mean altering the signs. In the light of this it was agreed not to proceed further for the time being.

- **Lower Rafford to Dallas Dhu road safety**

CM expressed concerns about the safety of pedestrians on the road from Lower Rafford to the Dava Way railway bridge, which is designated as a Core Path. After some discussion on why a road was designated as such, CM drew attention to the following:

- This is a narrow stretch of road, resulting in vehicles driving on the verge in order to pass each other.
- Although there are a few passing places, they are not maintained, and the signage is deteriorating.
- There is no warning to vehicles that this is a narrow road with passing places.
- Vehicles driving on the verges, have resulted in a steep drop-off at the edge of the tarmac.
- The culverts in the verges cause a safety hazard when vehicles drive on the verge.
- The road is frequently used as a through route for timber lorries, which should be taking an alternative route.
- There is no speed limit other than the national 60 mph limit on this stretch of road.

The meeting agreed to review the Moray Council guidance on speed limits, which FCC received when discussing the limit between Lower and Upper Rafford prior to taking the speed limit issue forward to TMC Road Department. **(Actions: HD to distribute, PT to review)**

HD pointed out that Highland Council at least designate 50mph limits on B roads, which would help.

It was noted that FCC had previously reported the state of passing places and signage to TMC roads department. It was agreed that this be repeated **(Action HD)**

KR asked FCC to keep the Moray Councillors in the loop on this subject.

b) **Broadband**

HD reported that we had an enquiry from Richard Lochheads office, asking whether we had received a satisfactory response to our previous request to OpenReach for a database of FINDERNE properties, showing their R100 status. After we answered in the negative, they agreed to follow this up.

c) **Brockloch Field Development**

TP reported that FDT were in the process of preparing documentation to send out for Design and Build Tenders from construction contractors.

TP also reported that further funding would be needed prior to starting the construction phase.

d) **Windfarm Developments**

HD reported that the Planning Application for the Ourack Wind Farm, south of FINDERNE, had been approved. Also that a Pre-Application Consultation was being started for the Corschellach Substation, adjacent to Berry Burn wind farm, with events to be held in Edinkillie Hall on 29th May and 17th June.

e) **Joint Community Council**

No JCC meeting had been held. Next meeting scheduled for 22nd May.

f) **Resilience Planning**

PT reported that a modest amount of Resilience supplies had been received from Moray Council, including Hi-Vis vests, and self-charging torches. These would be divided and located at the village halls. (t.b.c. with Village Halls)

TP reported that the FDT Community Bus would be made available in the case of local emergencies.

g) **Forres Health Services**

No update this meeting, so it was agreed to carry over previous items to next meeting.

TH has received answers to some of the question posed to the Forres Area Health Forum, on behalf of FCC. He is considering how this information can be made available on the FCC website.

TH proposed a further three-part question on the Engage Consult facility:

1. There are differences between the opening times on the iPhone App, the Webpage, and the webpage video. Which is correct?
2. Why is it only possible to submit an eConsult during such limited hours?
If it was available 7/24 it wouldn't affect the number of submissions as all the submission criteria would remain the same and this would allow patients to manage their medical admin at times convenient to themselves rather than effectively only during the working day.
3. In all other interactions with the health system, be it letter, email, telephone, video call or face to face, the name and position of the respondent is always given. Why not on all eConsult responses?

The meeting agreed these questions should be submitted, with the aim of improving the service for all users. **(Action TH)**

4) Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

a. **A940 Road Junction at Edinkillie Church**

AM had previously reported icing on the side road up to the viaduct, and that he had some picture of recent flooding and would send these to PT, who will liaise with TMC Roads Dept. **(Actions: AM, PT)**

b. **FCC membership**

TP reported that FCC had been contacted by a Rafford Resident who is interested in joining the Community Council. Also that FCC have forwarded information to Debra Duke to support her campaign for CC members. PT confirmed that he intends to put his name forward for the next CC term. **(Action: HD)**

c. **Local Place Plan**

HD reported that we have no further information on the acceptance of our LPP from Moray Council. **(Action: HD to follow up.)**

d. Lower Rafford Mini-Wetland

No update.

e. Path to Rafford Church

A further work party to be organised to complete the work, after the nesting season. **(Action: TH)**

f. Community Minibus

It was noted that a change of route, to include Rafford was being processed and would take a few months to be ratified and implemented. Item closed.

g. Smart Meters

HD on feedback form Sean Lusk, who had been acting as a focal point for Smart Meter concerns. Sean has established that if a Smart Meter does not link up correctly to their supplier, householders should ask their supplier for a cellular connection. This is the normal type of connection in Central and Southern England, whereas in Scotland and Northern England a less reliable radio connection is used. If the supplier is reluctant to fit a Cellular connection Householders are advised to contact our local MP, Graham Leadbitter, who is actively working on Smart Meter connection issues.

It was agreed to include this advice in the next community newsletter (Action: HD)

h. Councillors Attendance

TP thanked the 3 Moray Councillors who were in attendance. (Scott Lawrence had apologised due to a last-minute engagement). All councillors said that now the dates of FCC meeting were in their calendars, it was easier to incorporate in their schedules. It was agreed that it was useful if at least one councillor attended, to provide guidance on Moray Council issues, and to pick up on FINDERNE issues.

Item closed.

5) Planning Report (TP)

TP reported that no planning application of any concern for FINDERNE had been submitted since the last meeting.

However, TP raised a concern about the TMC consultation on the proposal for provision for 2 spaces for overnight campervan stays at Califer Hill viewpoint. It was suggested that TMC councillors should have consulted with FCC beforehand.

CR provided some background: when TMC posted up "No Overnight Parking" signs at the councils Aberlour carpark, the community were divided, some not wanting overnight stays, and some concerned about impact of local businesses. So it had been decided to do a public consultation on a number of possible sites in Moray.

DvdH agreed to clarify the criteria for inclusion of sites on the list of possible sites. **(Action DvdH)**

HD reported that he had included a link to the survey in the recent FCC community newsletter.

6) Secretary's Report (HD)

Summary of correspondence received by email to 23rd April 2025: (most recent first)

- 17-Apr: email from SSEN advising of 2 Free Application Consultation events regarding a new sub-station adjacent to Berry Burn Windfarm at Edinkillie Hall on 29th May and 17th June.
- 16-Apr: email from Sean Lusk with an update on his investigation into Smart Meter connectivity.
- 15-Apr: email from TMC environmental Services with Survey on Overnight Stay sites
- 15-Apr: email forwarded from Moray Residents' Association warning about fire risks from BESS Battery Energy Storage Systems.
- 14-Apr: notification of Forres area Tourism Network meeting- 23rd April
- 14-Apr: Local Place Plan Information notice from Forres Community Council
- 14-Apr: Notification of Digital voice events in Buckie. (included in FCC Community newsletter)
- 11-Apr: Email from Richard Lochhead office asking following up on our previous request for info on R100 rollout.
- 4-Apr: email from Rafford resident suggesting RVH get fibre broadband. Referred to RVH committee.
- 1-Apr: Moray West Police newsletter,
- 1-Apr: email for Debra Duke looking for ideas and input of publicising CC Elections
- 28-Mar: Logie School newsletter
- 28-Mar: notification that Ourack Wind Farm Planning Application is approved.

7) Treasurers Report (AG)

AG had provided the following update, based on report issued prior to the meeting:

Bank Balance £21,487.21

- £20k SSEN.
- £582.74 Moray Council Admin Grant balance.
- £240 Stocksigns compensation. (earmarked for sign maintenance)
- £664.47 balance of funding from FDT for LPP

TP noted the FDT had agreed that FCC should keep the LPP balance for the time being at least, in case modification to the LPP were required.

It was agreed that TP and HD be added as signatories for the FCC Bank Account, as 2 of the existing signatories were no longer members.

AG raised concerns about the lengthy process for changing signatories with Royal Bank of Scotland. It was agreed that FCC should investigate the possibility of changing banks. It was suggested that we contact Debra Duke (CCLO) to ask about other community councils experience of different banks.

8) AOCB

none

9) Next meeting

Next meeting: 7:00 pm – Wednesday 4th June 2025, at Edinkillie Community Hall.