

Buckie Area Forum

Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held via Zoom at 7pm on Wednesday 17th January 2024

Present: Christine Allan (CA), Colin Burch (CB), Susan Chalmers (SC), Iain Grieve (IG), Cllr Marc Macrae (MM), Gordon McDonald (GM), Linda McDonald (LM), Kevin McKay (KM), Jim Murray (JM), Tracey Rae (TR), Leah Rossvoll (LR), Morag Stewart (MS), Les Tarr (LT)

Apologies: Neil Johnson, Sue Lane, David Pirie, Jill Sowden, Cllr Donald Gatt, Cllr Neil McLennan

GM opened the meeting at 7pm and welcomed attendees.

New draft constitution: GM led discussion on the main issue of the EGM, the proposed new constitution, adapted from the model constitution produced by the Moray Forum. The intent behind this is to provide all Area Forums with a similar basic constitution, which may then be tweaked to suit the specific local circumstances. Attendees worked through the constitution from beginning to end, and minor changes were agreed.

There was a brief discussion on the possibility of close relatives (e.g. husband and wife) holding office simultaneously. It was agreed that in certain circumstances, such a scenario could be problematic, but it was thought sufficiently unlikely that there was no need to make specific mention in the constitution.

There was agreement that the requirement for Office Bearers to be elected annually (Paragraph 7) was a good idea.

Agreed changes:

Para 5.9: change second last word (you) to we.

Para 6.1: remove words "of Buckie Area Forum" after ASG.

Para line 1: add word "inclusive" to end of sentence.

Para 12.4: change "should" to "shall" in first sentence.

Para 12.4: add sentence "This process will be completed such that verified accounts can be presented at the AGM".

Para 13.1: add after Moray Forum "and any remaining funds will be transferred to Moray Forum for distribution to recognised community groups in the Buckie area (within the BAF boundary). All outstanding liabilities must be met as part of this process."

These changes to the draft version were discussed and agreed by all attendees. This final version of the constitution was then put to the vote by GM, and unanimously approved by the members in attendance.

Update on current activities:

Finance: The treasurer, IG, gave an outline of the current finances. The Number 1 account has a balance of £31308 (£21286 of which is new grant funding for the Hub). The Number 2 account has a balance of £5525.06. The work of the Hub involves a significant number of purchases, many of which have been online orders, and some of which are standing orders.

GM reported that the Hub had received a donation of £500 from the Gordon & Ena Baxter Foundation.

The Hub: GM gave an update on recent activity. Pupils and teachers at Cluny Primary School in Buckie organised a “reverse Advent calendar” event, and handed over these donated items to representatives of the Hub at the school. This event was covered by local press.

Millbank Primary School pupils made a window display showing support for Buckie Thistle in their Scottish Cup 4th round game against Celtic.

Some money from first round grants from the National Lottery Community Fund and Moray Community Health and Mental Wellbeing Funds remain to be spent, and GM, IG and TR will liaise to ensure this money is used by the closing date. The new grant from the National Lottery Community Fund (£21k) has been received. TooCute in Buckie operates the Baby Bank, and has been given £1k to purchase essential items.

The University of the Highlands and Islands has a project to help young people gain qualifications and find employment, and this group is keen to work with the Hub.

There has been a significant rise in referrals from external agencies compared to last winter. This is likely to be for a mixture of reasons, including increasing need in a time of austerity, and an increased public awareness of the Hub. DWP now regularly refers clients for emergency assistance and support.

The Hub opened on Boxing Day and 2nd January, and was busy on both days.

Harbour Advisory Committee: MS reported that minutes of previous meetings will be made available at the latest meeting. MS is our representative for Buckie/Findochty, and IG for Cullen/Portknockie. There was some discussion of communication by Moray Council – CB reported that Cullen CC no longer receives notifications on HAC meetings and business. IC will seek to clarify.

AOCB: CB started a discussion on the need to ensure that BAF is not seen as biased towards the town of Buckie. It was agreed that BAF exists to serve the entire area, and strives to do this in an equitable way. He is working on a new version of the Cullen newsletter (BAF will distribute an electronic version when available).

BAF will take part in the RNLI’s 200th anniversary celebrations in September. The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Date and time of next meeting: 7pm on Wednesday March 20th via Zoom