



# Cromarty and District Community Council

Minutes of meeting held on  
Monday 30th October 2017, 7.30pm in the Hugh Miller Institute

**Draft**  
**Minutes**  
**30.10.2017**

## Present

**Community Councillors:** Jacquie Ross (JR) Chair, Diane Brawn (DB) Secretary, Estelle Quick (EQ) Treasurer, Rosemarie Hogg (RH), Alan McDonald (AM), Gabriele Pearson (GP)

**Youth Representative:** Bryn Leyshon (BL)

**Highland Councillors:** Cllr Craig Fraser (CF)

**Police Scotland: Member(s) of the public:**

**Community Council Minute Secretary:** Gillian McNaught (GM)

1	<p><b><u>Chairman's Welcome</u></b> JR welcomed Committee.</p> <p><b><u>Apologies:</u></b> Kenneth MacFarlane (KM), PC Michael Cosh</p>	
2	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interests</u></b> -</p>	
3	<p><b><u>Approval of previous Minutes, 25th September 2017</u></b></p> <p><b>3.1</b> The dates in the heading and item (3) of the September Minutes were corrected. Following amendments, Minutes were Approved by EQ and seconded by KM.</p> <p><b>3.2</b> At the request of the CFPA and <b>agreed</b> by Members, item 10.3 in the Approved August 2017 Minutes is incorrect and should read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Nigg Energy Park Ltd has applied for Planning permission to extend an existing building and use land to store raw materials in connection with the offshore renewables sector. An information meeting is scheduled for 5th October 2017 at 2pm, but other commitments prevent any Members attending. It is suggested that Global General Manager, Rory Gunn meet with the C&amp;DCC to discuss at a time tbc.</i></li> <li>• <i>The next Cromarty Firth Port Authority joint meeting will be held on 18th October at 6pm at the Port Office.</i></li> </ul>	

4	<b><u>Youth issues</u></b>	
4.1	<b>C&amp;DCC Public Meeting</b> - It was noted that there was little youth representation present to offer their views on proposed developments. BL was asked to organise a meeting with younger members of the community, with assistance from Wanda and CC Members.	<b>BL</b>
4.2	<b><i>Do not feed the Seagull signs</i></b> have been printed. DB will laminate and will display in the spring.	<b>DB</b>
4.3	It was reported that a resident could not access their home due to cat mess on the wheelchair ramp. Cats are classed as ‘free spirits’ so there’s little can be done, but it was suggested this situation may be helped by some neighbourly good will.	
4.4	There’s no timetable at the Park bus stop and the display stand is in a poor state. DB will put up laminated signs tomorrow.	<b>DB</b>
4.5	<b>CCDT Membership.</b> Forms are still available in the P.O and residents aged 16 or over can sign up and be eligible to vote on Trust matters.	
4.6	CCTV Camera - follow up and conclusion to <i>item 4.4, Minutes 25.9.17</i> contained in Police Report, (Appendix A).  BL was thanked for his input and left the meeting.	
5	<b><u>Police Report</u></b>	
5.1	Prepared by PC Cosh and circulated prior to the meeting. ( <b>Appendix A</b> ).	
5.2	The Police report is now submitted in a new format and Members <b>agreed</b> it should appear as an Appendix in its entirety.	

<b>6</b>	<b><u>Matters Arising</u></b>	
<b>6.1</b>	(4.2 Follow up repair/replacement of Victoria park perimeter fence with HC). <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>CF</b>
<b>6.2</b>	(4.3 Laminate a copy of the bus timetable for Park bus noticeboard). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
<b>6.3</b>	(5 Post on Facebook Stagecoach information about joint ticketing). <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>JR</b>
<b>6.4</b>	(6a.1 Contact HC about connecting Christmas Lights). No response to date. <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>JR</b>
<b>6.5</b>	(7.2 Contact Wanda with view to making a sign 'do not feed seagulls'. BL to design 5 x A4 notices for park and for CC noticeboard. DB will laminate. Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
<b>6.6</b>	(7.6 Chase HC action on broken gate & fence). <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>CF</b>
<b>6.7</b>	(7.7 Follow up Traffic Management plan with Iain Moncrieff ). <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>JR &amp;CF</b>
<b>6.8</b>	(7.8 Follow up with Steve Barron regarding HC's lack of response to requests for meetings/information). Out of office reply. <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>JR</b>
<b>6.9</b>	(7.9 Update Members on Business Development Team with any new information). Will be discussed in future under CDCT matters. <b>Discharged.</b>	
<b>6.10</b>	(7.10 Follow up on start date for work required on both Slipways). Done. KM update Members on return. <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>KM</b>
<b>6.11</b>	(7.11 Make contact with Eric Softon regarding Community Xmas tree in consultation with Gala Committee and C&DCC. <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>AM</b>
<b>6.12</b>	(7.12 Links bus shelter). Further discussion took place and Members <b>agreed</b> that all practical avenues had been exhausted and that the wooden shelter be taken down in the new year and replaced. CF reported that there is no HC budget for new bus shelters until the start of the new financial year, April 2018. <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>RH CF &amp; JR</b>
<b>6.13</b>	(7.13 Look at documents EQ sent regarding the suitability of the Gaelic Chapel coming under CCDT umbrella). <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>CF</b>
<b>6.14</b>	(Report back on any update from Farmer). No response. ( <i>Minute Secretary's note, see item 11.3</i> ). <b>Discharged.</b>	
<b>6.15</b>	(7.15 Report back on any further information about plans for Cromarty Surgery. Acknowledgement from David Alston that NHS Highland more confident a solution can be found, but cannot give further details at present. <b>Discharged.</b>	
(cont)		

(cont)		
6.16	(7.16 Research the process for requesting memorial benches in Cromarty and report back). Ingrid Jamieson at HC said there appears to be no restrictions other than benches are sustainable and positioned safely. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.17	(7.18 Circulate to members finalised application for Carbon Footprint Reduction grant when available). This is complete and JR expressed thanks to Greg Fullerton for compiling this comprehensive document. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.18	(7.19 organise a follow up meeting about proposed larger ferry bid). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.19	(8.5 Organise Public Meeting at end of September to discuss the CCDT). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.20	(7.22 Seek a response from HC regarding on annual Tractor service). The tractor is serviced and due back tomorrow. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.21	(10.1 Compile list of issues raised by C&DCC and not followed up by HC and send to Steve Barron). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.22	(7.24 Organise next BICC meeting). C&DCC will host the next meeting in December in the HMI. Di Agnew will be asked to attend. DB to organise suitable date with other CCs. <b>Ongoing.</b>	<b>DB</b>
6.23	(7.26 Pass on that no nomination will be submitted at next CFPA meeting). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.24	(7.28 Report back on application to Ward Budget for Lunch Club). Money awarded and paid. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.25	( 8.2 Follow up on HC Annual Grant). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.26	(9.2 Source Solicitor to oversee CCDT work as minuted). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.27	(9.3 Estelle produce poster to advertise Public meeting and send to Jacquie for Facebook). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.28	(10.2 Write letter of thanks on behalf of C&DCC to Fraser). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.29	(11.13 DB attend next CFPA meeting). Unable to attend. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.30	(12.1 Follow up on issues highlighted in his report). Done. <b>Discharged.</b>	
6.31	(14.4 Estelle create generic email address for C&DCC. Diane to manage it and pass information to Di Agnew). Done. Members <b>agreed</b> that their personal emails should be replaced by the CC generic address on CL website. <b>Discharged.</b>	<b>DB</b>

7	<p><b><u>Treasurer's Report</u></b></p> <p>7.1 EQ circulated her report prior to the meeting. <b>(Appendix B).</b></p> <p>7.2 <b>HC Annual Grant</b> - This has now been paid.</p> <p>7.3 <b>Garage rental</b> - Alternative storage for the market stalls etc may have to be found in the near future.</p> <p>7.4 <b>Tractor Insurance</b> has been renewed.</p> <p>7.5 <b>Gala Dance</b> - Due to this year's successful ceilidh, Rhythm and Reel have been re booked for 2018.</p> <p>EQ was thanked for her report.</p>	
8	<p><b><u>Cromarty Community Development Trust (CCDT)</u></b></p> <p>8.1 <b>Public Meeting, 25th October</b> - This was well attended and generated up to 80 new Trust Members. A follow up meeting will be called at the earliest.</p> <p>8.2 <b>Development Officer</b> - an appointment to oversee the Trust's work and explore avenues of grant funding was suggested. Discussion took place about funding sources and the need for a co-ordinated whole town development plan to encompass funding bids by various organisations.</p>	<p><b>JR &amp; EQ</b></p> <p><b>JR &amp; EQ</b></p>
9	<p><b><u>Victoria Hall Report</u></b></p> <p>No report this month</p>	

10	<b><u>Community Councillors' Portfolios &amp; Portfolio Review</u></b>	
10.1	<b><u>Alan McDonald</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Xmas Lights</b> - JR reported £2000 of Gala funds are available to spend. AM will consult with Gala Committee about a sub group, to progress their committee's priority of installing lamp post lights on the Denny, followed by High Street if budget allows.</li> </ul>	AM
10.2	<b><u>Rosemarie Hogg</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tractor</b> - to prevent damage and corrosion, RH will discuss with Roger Young the inclusion of 'removal of grit and cleaning' at the end of each season within the maintenance schedule.</li> </ul>	RH
10.3	<b><u>Gabriele Pearson</u></b> Planning applications received by HC  17/04345/FUL   Installation of rooflight   2 Coastguard George Street Cromarty IV11 8YL- awaiting decision  17/04607/FUL   Alterations and erection of extension to house   Struy House 16-18 Church Street Cromarty IV11 8XA-awaiting decision  17/04608/LBC   Alterations and erection of extension to house and internal alterations to shop/ Struy House 16-18 Church Street Cromarty IV11 8XA- awaiting decision	
10.4	<b><u>Jacquie Ross</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Harbour Trust</b> - six local Artists have provided images to be reproduced as greetings cards on the theme of the sea. The cards will be sold from various venues in town and monies raised will go towards the Harbour Trust's fundraising efforts.</li> <li>• <b>Links</b> - this area will be closed to vehicle access after Bonfire Night.</li> </ul>	
11	<b><u>Highland Councillor (HC) Report</u></b>  <b><u>Cllr Craig Fraser</u></b>	
11.1	CF continues to work on the issues raised in his report ( <i>Minute secretary's note, see Appendix E, Minutes 26.9.17</i> ).	CF
11.2	<b>100 steps</b> - an email received with concerns about broken handrails and walk-boards as well as fallen trees and path erosion.	CF
11.3	<b>Reeds Loop Sheep</b> - the livestock appear to be in a particularly poor state. It was agreed CF would contact the SSPCA again at the end of this week and JR will write to John Nightingale as landowner, pointing out the long standing and escalating nature of these incidents.	CF & JR

<b>12</b>	<b><u>Correspondence</u></b>	
<b>12.1</b>	It was <b>agreed</b> DB would pass on to Minute Secretary a note of correspondence received over the month that should be recorded in the Minutes.	<b>DB</b>
<b>12.2</b>	A response to questions from the C&DCC in July 2017 to the CFPA was received. ( <b>Appendix C</b> ).	
<b>13</b>	<b><u>AOB</u></b>	
<b>13.1</b>	<b>Remembrance Sunday</b> - AM was asked, and agreed, to lay the wreath on behalf of the CC on 12th November. CF will organise and deliver wreath to AM.	<b>CF &amp; AM</b>
<b>13.2</b>	EQ received a copy of an application for funding to CFPA, whose form requests a letter of support from the C&DCC. It has been previously agreed that Members were not in a position to support or otherwise applications submitted to CFPA.	<b>EQ</b>
<b>13.3</b>	<b>Christmas Lights</b> - It was <b>agreed</b> JR would choose appropriate lights, following decisions made by Gala Committee and CC Members.	<b>JR</b>
<b>14</b>	<b><u>Date of next meeting</u></b> <b>Monday 27th November 2017 @ 7.30pm, Hugh Miller Institute, Church Street, Cromarty.</b>	
	JR thanked everyone for attending and for their input. The meeting concluded at 8.55pm.	

## Summary of Matters Arising & Action Points

Reference	To whom allocated	Notes
4.1	Bryn	Speak to Wanda about organising a meeting for younger residents to discuss town developments.
4.2	Diane	Display <i>Do not feed Seagull</i> signs in the Spring
4.4	Diane	Display new timetables at Park bus stop
6.1	Craig	Follow up repair/replacement of Victoria park perimeter fence with HC
6.3	Jacquie	Post on Facebook Stagecoach joint ticketing information
6.4	Jacquie	Follow up with HC about connecting Christmas Lights

6.6	Craig	Chase HC action on broken gate & fence
6.7	Jacque & Craig	Follow up Traffic Management plan with Iain Moncrieff
6.8	Jacque	Follow up with Steve Barron regarding HCs lack of response to requests for meetings/information
6.10	Kenneth	Report to Members on start date for work required on both Slipways
6.11	Alan	Make contact with Eric Softon regarding Community Xmas tree in consultation with Gala Committee and C&DCC
6.12	Rosemarie, Jacque and Craig	Co-ordinate as agreed dismantling of Links bus shelter and discuss with HC new shelter supplied in April 2018
6.13	Craig	Look at documents Estelle sent to gauge suitability of the Gaelic Chapel coming under CCDT umbrella
6.22	Diane & Gillian	Organise next BICC meeting, hosted in December in the HMI
6.31	Diane	contact Kristina to have personal CC emails addresses deleted on CL website and replaced with CC generic one
8.1	Jacque & Estelle	Organise a follow up meeting regarding CCDT
8.2	Jacque & Estelle	Progress the idea of a 'whole town' Development Plan
10.1	Alan	Speak to Gala committee about sub group to progress Xmas lights
10.2	Rosemarie	Contact Roger Young about additional cleaning/grit item for maintenance schedule
11.1	Craig	Follow up on the 4 main issues highlighted in his report in the September minutes
11.2	Craig	Follow up on concerns about 100 steps path maintenance
11.3	Craig & Jacque	Craig to contact SSPCA at end of this week and Jacque to contact John Nightingale as minuted
12.1	Diane	Select items of correspondence each month relevant for inclusion in the Minutes and send to Minute Secretary
13.1	Alan & Craig	Craig deliver wreath to Alan, who has agreed to represent CC and lay wreath on Remembrance Sunday
13.2	Estelle	Reply to organisation requesting CC letter of support
13.3	Jacque	Make final selection of Christmas lights as discussed



**Agenda item 5**  
**Appendix A**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORM**

Command Area	North Highland	Community Group	Cromarty Community Council
Station	Dingwall	Officer Attending	PS Michael Cosh (e-mail)
Data of Meeting	30 October 2017	Location	Hugh Miller Institute, Church Street, Cromarty

**Meeting Preparation**

Ward and Local Policing Plan Priorities.	Activities conducted over the reporting period to support those priorities.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Road Safety</li> <li>2. Anti-social behaviour</li> <li>3. Alcohol Abuse</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5.</li> <li>6.</li> </ol>	High-Viz mobile and foot patrols carried out in the area and also licensed premises checks.
Update on Previously Agreed Actions – See previous OP 55/8 & Relevant Reference on the Area Command Action Tracking Table	
None.	
Update on any local community safety issues / trends within the community and any assistance / information requested from the community. Review IMPACT / intelligence etc	

**"POLICE REPORT 22/09/17 TO 30/10/17 -**

**Between 22/09/17 and 30/10/17 police dealt with 13 incidents in the Cromarty area.**

**These incidents included assistance and advice provided to members of the public by officers, vulnerable persons requiring assistance from partner agencies and road traffic matters. There has been a pro-active efforts made during the time with regards to speed checks.**

**The number of incidents in comparison to other areas within the Black Isle and Wester Ross remains low, however I would like to bring to your attention reports of suspicious activity of persons within the area. There is nothing to be concerned about however local residents have reported a male person with a white van acting suspiciously. Should any similar matters concern you I would urge you to remain vigilante and contact Police Scotland on 101.**

**Regarding matter raised at the last meeting with private CCTV. I can confirm I have spoken to those involved and viewed the CCTV. I have no concerns regarding this and the system was installed due to issues caused by youths. Advice was provided in relation to signage. Given the lack of CCTV in the local area I feel that this system is something which we could use in a productive manner should the circumstances require it in the future.**

**Unfortunately I will not be able to attend the upcoming meeting due to the staffing situation that night, however, if there are any matters raised or requiring clarification then please do not hesitate to contact me.**

**I would like to pass on a message from Inspector David Ogilvie (see below).**

**Kind Regards**

**Michael**

**Any local / Area Command / Divisional / Police Scotland updates / key messages**

“ The nights are again getting darker and the winter isn’t far away so I’d like to take the opportunity to highlight a few seasonal issues that would be worthwhile taking note of as we approach the festive season.

**Motoring** - please advise your members that it would be of great benefit to check that their vehicles are ready for the winter months in terms of servicing, tyres and lights to ensure their safety throughout the poorer weather and dark nights. Speeding continues to be an issue and as the local Inspector I am doing what I can to ensure visibility at up to 17 different locations within my area where speeding has been identified as a concern. I am supported by my colleagues in the road policing unit when they can assist however it should be noted that they cover the entire Division, not just my area. It is always on the approach to the festive season that concerns are raised regarding a perceived increase in drink driving so you can expect increased attention in this regard from the police with a view to identifying those engaging in such activity. Should anyone feel concerned about someone engaging in drink or drug driving but not have the confidence to call the police then please consider calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 who will GUARANTEE anonymity. They will pass the information on but NEVER divulge the callers details to the police, this is an absolute guarantee, it is a promise that has never been broken!

**Security at dwellings** - please remain vigilant for your own and your neighbours properties. Some people use the darkness as a cover to commit opportunistic dishonesties like stealing bicycles, heating oil and other items. Although there are very few instances of this in our area we are not totally free from this type of crime. If you see any suspicious activity whether it’s people on foot or using vehicles please take a good look and obtain as much detail as possible before reporting your concerns to the police. A very good piece of evidence for example is when registration numbers on vehicles are noted accurately as this gives the police a fighting chance of detecting those responsible.

**Online and telephone scams** - I am saddened and dismayed to report that some people are still falling for scams perpetrated by people pretending to members of the public that they represent the persons bank before persuading the victims to send money to other accounts which is then lost. This happens online and via telephone. Those responsible are extremely plausible and use a number of tactics to encourage people to part with cash, in some cases on more than one occasion after they have been persuaded that their money is at risk from fraudsters, a particularly cruel trick. Tell your friends and repeat it, your bank will NOT cold call you to tell you of a problem that requires you to move your money to any other account for “safety reasons”. If anyone does get contacted online, report it via the official bank website and don’t let anyone remotely access your computer (unless YOU have instigated the call with the bank first and are satisfied you are communicating with someone who works for them) and if telephoning the bank, ensure you have terminated any cold call first before phoning the bank. In some cases, the fraudsters actually tell you to call the number on your card so as to trick you into believing you are speaking to a real bank employee when in actual fact the cold caller has simply not hung up and they then pretend to answer your call to the bank as if it’s a new call thus gaining your trust. If your bank contacts you and asks you to move money then it’s fair to say it’s not your bank calling, be vigilant, don’t move any money and report it to your bank in a secure way, in person if possible.

Please have a safe and enjoyable festive season as it comes along.

Inspector David Ogilvie, Area Inspector, Wester Ross & the Black Isle. “

## Meeting Outcomes

Date Raised	Issue	Agreed / Proposed Actions	Area Command Action Tracking Table Reference	Remarks
25/09 /17	<i>CCTV held on private dwelling and concerns regarding public space viewing / recording</i>	<i>PS Cosh to make enquiry regarding the positioning of camera</i>	N/A	<i>Visit made to address. No concerns regarding positioning etc. Advice given. Will be fed back to CC at next meeting.</i>

### Intelligence - SID Log References (If submitted)

NONE.
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### Next Meeting

Date	30 October 2017	Time	1930 hours	Location	Hugh Millar Institute, Church Street, Cromarty.
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### Area Commander Review

Initial		Date	
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### Distribution:

Forward to DCU – FAO Service Delivery Officer, DCU, Divisional HQ.

**Appendix B**  
**Agenda item 7**

<b><u>Finance Report – Cromarty &amp; District Community Council</u></b>			
<b><u>Agenda Item No 7 - Treasurer's Report</u></b>			
<b><u>Period: 25/09/17-29/10/17</u></b>			
<b><u>General Income</u></b>			
Publications sales	£	48.27	Website, Emporium
Highland Council annual grant	£	984.84	
<b>Less:</b>			
<b><u>General Expenditure</u></b>			
Secretarial Services - September	£	50.00	
Website book sales postage	£	1.70	
Cromarty Live website annual fee	£	24.00	
Annual insurance	£	166.01	
Garage rental April-September	£	65.00	
<b>Increase/Decrease in Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>726.40</b>	
<b><u>Fund Income</u></b>			
Cromarty Rising Fund - donations	£	250.00	
Community Development Fund - donations	£	9.74	
Bonfire Night Fund - donations	£	100.00	
Gala Fund - takings	£	20.00	
Monday Lunch Club - CGCF & WDB	£	400.00	
	£	779.74	
<b>Less:</b>			
<b><u>Fund Expenditure</u></b>			
Gala Fund - RhythmnReel booking 2018	£	250.00	
Tractor Operations Fund - annual insurance	£	286.58	
Bonfire Night Fund - fireworks	£	1,546.68	
	£	2,083.26	
<b>Increase/Decrease in Other Funds</b>	<b>-£</b>	<b>1,303.52</b>	
<b><u>Net Assets</u></b>			
Bank & Cash in hand balances as at 29/10/17	£	22,856.93	
Paypal - website sales	£	23.77	
<b>Total Net Assets at 29/10/17</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>22,880.70</b>	
<b><u>Comprising:</u></b>			
Community Council Accumulated Fund	£	2,420.10	
Provision for Guide Book reprinting	£	604.30	
Seaplane Plinth Fund	£	48.93	
Bonfire Night Fund	£	420.57	
Splash & Dash Fund	£	637.82	
Monday Club Fund	£	1,245.00	
Community DevelopmentFund	£	253.42	
Gala Fund	£	7,514.41	
Emergency Resilience Fund	£	242.72	
Open Gardens Fund	£	6.86	
Gluren bij de Buren Fund	£	202.06	
Tractor Operations Fund	£	113.42	

**Appendix C**  
**Agenda item**

**Questions sent via email by Jacquie Ross, Chair C&DCC to Joanne Allday, Marketing & PR Manager, Cromarty Firth Port Authority (CFPA), 25th July 2017**

A number of questions have been put to me and I would be grateful if you could answer these, this would allow us the responses to be shown in the minutes of the next Community Council meeting.

1. Why are these 2 jack-up rigs placed so close to Cromarty (this has never been a necessity before)?
2. How many rigs can be stacked in the Firth? Is there actually a cut-off point or can the Port continue to build the number of rigs?
3. Is there any consideration/assessment made of the impact of these rigs on the economy of Cromarty particularly during the summer tourist season?
4. Can placement of rigs be amended during the summer season to avoid impact on the town?
5. Can the Port Authority pass on information regarding the placement of rigs and the length of time they are stored for? One set of legs has been stored in the Cromarty Firth for approximately 14 years with no sign of moving, are others the same?
6. How many rigs do the Port intend to park in the Special Area of Conservation and for how long?

**Answer sent via email by Joanne Allday, Marketing & PR Manager, Cromarty Firth Port Authority (CFPA) to Jacquie Ross, Chair C&DCC 13th October 2017**

Apologies for the delay in my response. It has been a very busy summer at the Port.

In answer to the comments raised, could you please feedback the following information to your residents. I have included some historical reference which might help people better understand why the port exists and what it was set up to achieve:

Port of Cromarty Firth is blessed with deep, sheltered waters and is very close to the North Sea oil fields. The Port was set up as a Trust by the Government in the 1970s in order to maximise opportunities for local stakeholders (inc. local businesses and the local community) from the North Sea oil and gas fields. This purpose has changed little over the forty years that the Port has been in existence and local people and businesses remain heavily reliant on income from North Sea oil and gas.

As a result of our location and attributes, when owners of the multi million pound assets that work in the North Sea want somewhere safe to store their vessels between projects, they often look to the Firth. Providing the Port is able to offer a safe anchorage, we can accept the vessel. The anchorages are usually pre-approved by insurers and that is the case with the jack-up rigs closest to Cromarty. The seabed near to the Sutors lends itself to providing safe anchorages for these

rigs, which sit on the bottom. (The floating rigs do not have the same limitations and can be anchored where the seabed is siltier.) These anchorages were the last two remaining insurer-approved anchorages at the time these rigs arrived. We appreciate that the timing of their arrival was less than ideal from a tourism point of view, but arrival dates are driven by geopolitics and the price of oil and not by the Port.

Stakeholder groups including Port users, employees and the local community are keen to encourage vessel owners to use the Firth for safe anchorage, as the vessels often bring project work with them when they arrive and depart, which generates jobs and economic benefits to the area.

The sustained low oil price has cost thousands of North Sea workers their jobs and led to more drilling rigs being out of work and looking for a safe harbour until the market recovers. We have been fortunate to be able to protect local communities from the worst of this downturn, through diversification of the Port's business. In terms of economic impact, Port activities generate £275m per annum and 1 in 6 jobs. As a result, Port of Cromarty Firth is recognised as a strategic asset for the whole of Scotland.

The Port is acutely aware of the importance of tourism to the local area. In fact, we generated £14 million this year for the Highland economy through the attraction of cruise ships to the Port. In addition, we have run workshops for local businesses to help them maximise opportunities from the sector, set up a cruise stakeholder group and are in the process of setting up a business group to further assist people to access this business. These activities are far beyond those of a typical Port.

We have seven different stakeholder groups and must listen to feedback from all of them. Our Board and management team then have to design a strategy that balances the needs and desires of the stakeholders with commercial reality, to ensure the Port remains viable for the benefit of future generations. We strive to manage the Port in a way that is sustainable for the Port, the stakeholders and the local environment. This is not always easy, but we believe the co-existence of marine wildlife and industry in the Firth is testament to the fact that it can be achieved.

As a critical stakeholder of the Port, we have taken on board the feedback and, as part of our ongoing survey work, we will seek alternative suitable anchorage points for jack-up rigs elsewhere in the Firth. This will not be a quick solution but is something we can proactively do to try to find additional mooring options for our customers to choose from in future downturns.