

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the
Forres Area Business Association c.i.c.
(FABA) held in Café 1496 on 19 November 2025**

DRAFT

Attending: Members

Paul McBain, Lee McGrath, David Hope, Susan Longmuir, Tina Coffey, Carrie Hughes, Phil Mills, Graham Murdoch, Joanna Taylor, John Mitchell, Alex Wright

Non-Members

Lorna Creswell

Proxies to Chair

Laura Hanson, Gavin Ellis, Jenny Stewart, Jane Duncan Rogers, Tom Harie, Claire Rhind, Amanda Cameron

Apologies

Jenifer Walker, Roy McDonald, Dawn Mclean

Agenda

Welcome

Report on the activities of FABA

Consideration of the Accounts to 31.5.25

Ordinary Resolutions for the appointment of Directors

Discussion of the future of FABA

AOCB

Welcome

Joanna welcomed those who had joined the meeting, thanked them for coming and also thanked those who had provided proxies. She confirmed the meeting was quorate.

It was agreed Joanna should act as Chair of the meeting. This meant she also had use the proxies given to the Chair.

Minutes of the AGM November 2024. No comments were raised and these were adopted, proposed by Carrie and seconded by Phil.

Report on the activities of FABA

Joanna reminded the meeting that FABA is a c.i.c. and that it has to report its activities to the Regulator of CICs to show how it has been serving its community (form CIC34).

FABA works in several ways:

- Events
- Social media, its own and others

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- Meetings with others; reminding others about the importance of a thriving business community to a thriving community.

Events include:

Presentation to GSA and others about FABA

Magic Tenner – this was less popular than in the past as businesses found it more difficult to find offers. We do not plan to run this again.

Moray Tourism BID – we hosted an event at Café 1496 for all interested parties, although no one from VMS attended.

Benromach Distillery tour – a sold-out event

First Aid training – a sold-out event led by a member that led to First Aid at Work certification. We would like to do another one in due course.

Two other events were cancelled due to low take-up. Both were daytime events and the meeting discussed the best time for events. The overall view was that breakfast and evening times are probably best, but different businesses give different preferences.

FABA had done a survey of views from members about what they wanted in 2024 and one of those related to young people. The second cancelled event was a youth related activity, and we will continue to explore how to address this.

Consideration of the Accounts to 31.5.25

JT reminded the meeting that the accounts had been circulated. They show a small surplus of £362 for the year. FABA is not yet in a breakeven position as the surplus was due to a late payment for an event in the prior year. There are reserves but it is not the Board's intention to draw on these. There are a number of fairly fixed costs such as the accounts, which the Long Partnership support with a discounted fee, insurance and membership administration.

In response to a question on future income Joanna said the Board aim is to grow membership rather than raise subscriptions. It was suggested that the Board consider paying for some publicity. Joanna explained that on social media FABA had focussed on Facebook but is now also using LinkedIn, which the meeting supported.

John questioned whether there was a budget for events. Joanna explained that the aim was that events breakeven. The biggest costs are the hire of the rooms and FABA is grateful to Carrie for making Café 1496 available free of charge. If members had access to other possible locations at little or no cost that would be of interest.

A further event with Wastebusters, ReBoot and Utilities might be a possibility. There is also a possibility of a crime prevention and business safety talk from Richard Russell of Police Scotland.

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There were no questions on the accounts. Joanna noted that these did not need approval by the members, they are approved by the Directors and have been filed with Companies House.

Ordinary Resolutions for the appointment of Directors

The following, who had retired by rotation in accordance with the Articles, were re-elected nem.con

Gavin Ellis

Graham Murdoch

The following, having been co-opted by the Directors had resigned in accordance with the Articles, were elected nem.con

David Hope

Lee McGrath

Joanna advised the meeting that sadly Claire Doughty was standing down as a Director as at this meeting. She has been involved in running FABA and its predecessor FBA for some ten years and felt it was time to stand back. Joanna thanked her for all she has done and for confirming that she remains committed to supporting FABA, its members and its community.

Discussion of the future of FABA

Alex asked about the types of businesses who are members. Joanna said this was a good question and that she did not have an up-to-date analysis. It is quite a range, from larger employers like AJ Engineering to single person businesses, and it might be interesting to refresh and circulate the results.

One of the aims of FABA is to encourage businesses to support other businesses. Susan suggested the publication of a membership list, with short profiles supplied by members, would help this. Joanna confirmed that this had been considered before but had failed due to lack of resources. It should be reconsidered, with members providing a short paragraph and contact details. It would be for members to ensure the content and links were up to date. We would need members to agree what could be shared or published as some members have emails are personal rather than business emails.

David suggested the businesses could also be profiled on LinkedIn on a rotating basis.

Linked In is a useful business tool and could perhaps be the basis of a talk.

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Communication to and between members was discussed and the idea of a WhatsApp group for quick messages and queries was considered to be a good idea. This would be on an opt-in basis.

Lorna asked about the difference between FABA and organisations such as FSB and Moray Chamber of Commerce. Joanna explained FABA was a local association with a local and personal focus and did not seek to compete with larger, professionally-staffed organisations. David suggested that this be explained on the website.

There was a brief discussion about the possible benefit to FABA of joining Moray Chamber of Commerce. While some thought this would be beneficial others were less sure and did not want duplication of information through routine forwarding of emails.

Joanna thanked Tina for forwarding of emails through Forres Area Forum as some key points had been picked up that way. Joanna had recently asked Moray Council to include FABA on circulation of key Forres business-related matters but had been told there was already adequate circulation. Paul will look into this.

Paul asked about the promotion of business opportunities. As an example at the Post Office there is only have one postcard of Forres and there apparently has been no 2026 calendar produced as Tez Watson is retiring. How can we let members know of demand? The WhatsApp group might be useful for this.

Paul asked about the gap left following the failure of the BID ballot for Moray Speyside Tourism. Joanna recapped the position for those who did not know about this and explained that Visit Moray Speyside still existed as a company and had some money, about which she understood legal advice was being taken. Moray Council have appointed consultants to write a Moray Tourism Strategy, and Joanna explained that she had input in various ways in support of the Forres area. She has emphasised the important of having a destination marketing organisation; there should not be a vacuum between Visit Scotland and local businesses. Whether tourism is 100% or 10% of a local business it is important to the health of the local economy. How it might be funded is a difficult question, and she noted the possibility of the “bed tax” in Moray in the future, as has been adopted elsewhere.

Joanna brought the meeting to a close at about 18.45 and thanked everyone for attending on a cold and wet night.

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Joanna Taylor
24 November 2025