



**April
2017**



Happy 21st
to us!

moray
council

HeadsUp

Colin Bell, Head of Environmental Protection

Dear Colleagues,

While Moray Council celebrates a very special birthday, I approach the anniversary of my first year in my post of Environmental Protection Manager. I am hopeful that this is a good enough excuse for a celebration – or perhaps two!

From a personal and professional perspective, the journey so far has been interesting, challenging, sometimes a little scary, refreshing, rewarding, but most of all hugely enjoyable.

Having worked for West Lothian Council in various roles and lived in Linlithgow for 28 years, it's fair to say that I hadn't seen this significant change coming. Change for an organisation, family or individual can be daunting. However, I'm delighted that my family have embraced the challenges of change in a positive and optimistic manner.

So what do I like about my role? It's certainly diverse, front-facing, sometimes testing and intrinsically rewarding and no two days are the same. I enjoy the blend

of both operational and strategic matters, but most of all I enjoy working with a broad range of people. For those of you who aren't aware of the range of services that Environmental Protection Management provide, these are important services such as parks and open spaces, children's play areas, cemeteries and church yards, countryside access, ranger service, school catering, cleaning, janitorial, street cleansing and public toilets.

I'd like to thank my colleagues who have made me so welcome, supported me and generally helped me settle in to my new working life. It's important to try and achieve a healthy work-life balance and I consider myself very fortunate to firstly live in an area of outstanding natural beauty and secondly to manage a service that is so friendly and sociable. I first experienced their sense of fun last Christmas when I walked into what felt like a Christmas scene from the fabulous toy shop, Gimple's, in the movie *Elf*. Not only are events like this good for staff morale, it's an opportunity

to fundraise, something our administration team organise throughout the year so very well. I feel sure that we won't miss the opportunity to celebrate Moray Council's 21st birthday too!

I look forward to meeting colleagues in my service yet I haven't managed to meet, and to working together to face the challenges that are ahead – but also the many good things that working and living in Moray has to offer.



EDITORIAL

Welcome to your April edition of *Connect*! Sorry it's a few days late – and that's not because we've been at the bubbly to celebrate!

So, we're 21 years old. Seems like only yesterday that Moray Council was born, and here we are all grown up. I know there's some debate about when exactly we came into being, as there was a shadow authority for a year while Grampian Regional Council sorted out who got what, but by our fag-packet calculations we've hit the big 2-1.

Our annual budget then was about £100 million and we had about 4,000 staff. We've got a few hundred more people now – and a whole load of new responsibilities as legislation has developed. Our annual budget is now around £200 million, including cash for all the capital projects like new schools, bridges and flood schemes.

We reckon that, as a major employer in the area, Moray Council has contributed a whopping £1.575 billion to the local economy over the 21 years in salaries alone. That doesn't include all the money we've spent locally on suppliers and services, so we have a significant impact on local lives in more ways than we realise. Well done and happy birthday to us!

TEAM CONNECT

Peter Jones
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Raymond Shewan
PUBLIC RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Jess Barbier-Marsden
PROJECT OFFICER

Angus McNicholl
DESIGNER

BLAST

FROM
THE PAST

IN 1996, THIS IS WHAT SOME OF OUR
SENIOR MANAGEMENT
LOOKED LIKE
- NICE HAIR EVERYONE !



1996



Roddy Burns
Chief Executive



1996



Denise Whitworth
Head of HR & ICT



1996



Mark Palmer
Corporate Director - Corporate Services



Happy 21st Birthday Moray Council!

Pop the bubbly, and jangle that key to the door – Moray Council is turning 21! It's hard to believe that over two decades have passed since Elgin Town Council, Moray District Council, and Grampian Regional Council mixed and mingled, so it's time to cut the cake and take a look at how far we've come.

For the two decades prior to 1996, a two-tier system of local government had been in place across Scotland. Responsibility for some functions lay with regional councils and others with the smaller, more localised district councils. During that period, Moray was part

of Grampian Regional Council, headquartered in Aberdeen, whose responsibilities included education, social work, roads and economic development. Other services, such as housing, environmental health, waste management, leisure and libraries, were entrusted to Moray District Council.

The separation of responsibilities often caused confusion among the public and there was frequently resentment that many important decisions affecting Moray were being taken in Aberdeen by councillors from other parts of the council area. As for elected

members, some were regional councillors, some were district councillors – and some were both! It became apparent that the system was not working and that unitary authorities were the way forward, although the change could not be made overnight. Aberdeenshire was designated to metamorphose into the unitary council covering the north-east – with the exception of Aberdeen City – while the new all-purpose Highland Council would take over the huge area previously covered by Highland Regional Council. This left Moray isolated in the middle: which way would it go? East? West? Neither?

After 20 years of being governed from 60 miles away, not everyone was keen on the idea of being tagged onto either Highland or Aberdeenshire and momentum rapidly grew for Moray to go it alone. After a great deal of political 'to-ing and fro-ing,' that wish was granted and Moray became Scotland's second smallest unitary council in terms of population. The decision was announced in 1991 but the switch took five years to progress, including a 'shadow year' in which things were established and got up and running. It was a challenging time for many, a difficult time for some who had to bid to move



Here is Michael Murdoch (left) in 1998, celebrating 23 years with the council with colleagues at Elgin Library.



"When we were doing out-of-hours call-outs 21 years ago, we didn't have mobile phones, so you had to stay in the house at weekends and evenings waiting for the phone to ring".

Michael Murdoch today

to a different new council area, while for others their direct day-to-day working lives weren't as affected.

In 1996, Moray Council began life with 18 elected members and an annual budget of £100 million. The original staffing complement was around 4,000 employees, 800 of whom had been employed by the district council and the balance by the regional council – plus many who were recruited in specially to take on the additional functions such as ICT. Today, 26 elected members are in post with an annual budget of nearly twice their starting figure, and our workforce has gained a few more faces

as well, sitting at 4,500 – that's 10% of Moray's working-age population! Many of you were here from the start and helped ease us through that transition period – to all of you who are part of the '21 Club,' thanks for coming along for the ride and getting Moray Council to where we are today. We couldn't have done it without you!

Connect spoke to a few of you to find out how things have changed over the years...

Michael Murdoch joined the Elgin Town Council in April 1975. "I don't know where the time has gone!" he says. "I've seen a lot of

changes. When I started to work with the council, I never set out to stay this long! But I've been with the council since I was 16. You get to know people and a lot of people appreciate what you do."

When Michael first started as an apprentice joiner, he cycled to jobs – carrying all of his tools on a push bike! "The foreman was the only one with a van, and he went around to the properties ahead of time to drop off the materials," Michael says. In the mid-1970s mini-vans were introduced – instead of cycling with tools now, it wasn't unheard of to tie materials to the roof. Fast forward a decade

and stock vans were introduced for those handling response repairs: these were loaded with a variety of fixtures and materials so "nine out of ten times you can do the job there and then – that's an improvement," Michael says.

"There are better ways of working now. I use a PDA – like a mobile phone – that your jobs get sent to. When I first started it was just a sheet of white paper! When we were doing out-of-hours call-outs 21 years ago, we didn't have mobile phones, so you had to stay in the house at weekends and evenings waiting for the phone to ring with

any emergencies when on duty. When we went out and had done the job, we would then find a telephone box to phone back to see if there were any other jobs before we went home! It's a lot different nowadays with mobile phones."

"There's not so much joinery work now – you used to have to make your own kitchen units and worktops in the workshop, and we used to make a lot of doors as well – it's more fitting these days. We had to take the Elgin holidays – four Mondays in a year. It's a lot more flexible now. The council is quite a good employer. I enjoy working around Moray with a lot of good colleagues."



"We got bigger to support new services - we were processing invoices for District one day and then it doubled the next! I went from having a staff of seven to 18 - I've now got 45".

Diane Beattie

For Teresa Ruggeri, who started with the Moray District Council in 1979, life in the planning department carried on much as usual during the transition stages. "We just carried on in the job that we were all in in the Planning Department," she says. "There was a lot going on, but you just got on with it: if you were told to do something in a different way, you just did it a different way."

Teresa, who started as a Cartographer Tracer and is now a Systems Technical Assistant, notes that the biggest change over the years is the size of the council. "It's huge now! It was always big but you never saw how big it was, with everyone around

the town in different buildings," she says. "They were smaller departments; you knew everybody. It's so big now you don't know the staff that cover certain areas anymore."

Teresa has also noticed that having more flexibility in the workday now has changed the workplace culture. "We all went for lunch together: there used to be a set lunchtime – from 12:30 pm-1:30 pm the whole building was closed. Between 10:00 am and half past ten, and 3:00 pm and half past three, you'd have the tea trolley come around – my mum was one of the tea ladies. Because your break times were set, you'd stop and have a chat then. People go for tea whenever now."

Technology was a big change in the planning department too. "We had no computer at all when I started – we wrote it all down with a pencil and a piece of paper," says Teresa. "The system went live in 1986 but there was only one computer in the department, and it was only for inputting data. In the early '90s we started getting computers, then in about 1997 we went onto the system we're on now so everyone had to get one."

Diane Beattie started work in A&E (no, not that kind – Admin and Exchequer) in 1995, as Team Leader for Income and Expenditure. "It was fun. It was a nightmare – we were all fire-fighting – but we



Diane Beattie with more of the '21 Club' crew: Sandy Livingstone, Linda Duncan, Pat Morrison, Atholl Scott, Pamela Dewhurst, Geoff Roberts, Sandra Preston, Zoe Hamilton and Frank Kidd.



Teresa with her planning colleagues 21 years ago

"There was a lot going on, but you just got on with it: if you were told to do something in a different way, you just did it a different way".

Teresa Ruggeri

were all on the same page. It was like the war spirit, everybody pulled together," she says. But there was a difficult side, too: "Grampian Region went through a horrible time. You had to bid for which council you wanted to go to – Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, or Moray – and some people didn't get what they wanted. You were matched to a job and then interviewed

for it, and you didn't know where you were going to go. For 'District' people, we knew we were staying but didn't know what job we would be doing. And this had been hanging over people's heads since it was announced in 1991!"

"When it was all settled and you knew where you were going, we just got our heads on and got on with it. We got bigger to support new services – we were processing invoices for District one day and then it doubled the next! I went from having a staff of seven to 18 – I've now got 45."

Teresa (in pink) pictured today with fellow members of the '21 Club': Graham Jarvis, Pat Craib, William Clark, Vivienne Cross, Fiona Duncan, Kenneth Anderson and Kevan Sturgeon.



make efficiencies. We are very lean now, so it's hard to make a savings. Other councils are just starting that process. Staff are much better off now – we used to have to clock in and out at the door, now there's flexible working and it's family friendly. But the biggest change is the speed of communication now. In '96 you had emails but only just – everything was done by memos. Now I get 60 emails in a day. It all used to be done on paper. I used to dictate my letters and emails. The citizen definitely gets more value for money now, because it's all so much faster. We've become more business-like."

"It's been a real rollercoaster but I love working here and the variety of what I do – from VAT on bagpipes one day to buying beds in a respite care unit the next. We save over £1 million a year through procurement. When I think back, I'm really proud of what we've achieved. Now, in payments, change is our middle name; we've just gone live with e-invoicing. Most of the stuff we do can be enhanced by technology. Who knows where we'll be in 21 years' time?"

Who, indeed? Happy birthday everyone!

Size and structure are a big change that Diane has noticed over the years. "There was an awful lot more layers back then: the structure of the council is very different now. Some of the processes were archaic; it was easy to

AN UN-PHEASANT INCIDENT

The road sign might suggest a dead end but this plucky pheasant had other ideas.

It flew into the windscreen of council driver Mike McKay's bus as he was on his way to Ballindalloch the other day.

The bird became trapped by the neck in the vehicle's wipers and everyone on board, including Mike, believed it was a goner.

However, Mike stopped his bus, got out and extricated the pheasant ...whereupon it shook itself off and flew off none the worse.



A delighted and grateful Isla Edwards called in on her dad's colleagues at headquarters to show off the wig which she was able to have specially made thanks to their fundraising efforts.

Isla, 12, has suffered from alopecia since she was a toddler and was keen to get a good quality wig as she approached her teenage years.

HAIR TO SAY THANKS

Dad Grant's co-workers in the employment development team rallied round and organised a coffee morning during which Grant had his head saved.

All in all the event raised over £1,200 which went much of the way to meeting the cost of the wig, which Isla had made and fitted by a specialist firm in Edinburgh.

Moray Management Methods

Information security is a 'big' topic.

It's tempting to believe that serious security breaches only happen to other organisations. After all, keeping information safe and secure seems relatively straightforward: our staff are trained, ICT security is pretty tight (look at all the websites that are blocked!) and we look after our confidential data. What could possibly go wrong?

Sadly, it's often people that go wrong. The majority of data protection breaches are due to loss of equipment holding information or accidental losses, such as sending an e-mail to the wrong contact. Posting, faxing, and e-mailing to the wrong contact were responsible for 6 out of 10 security incidents reported in 2016.

Maybe there is a fair bit that can go wrong despite our best intentions, so here's some tips:

THINK!

Rushing with a bundle of papers and reports under one arm and a laptop securely under the other, she unlocks her car and pops them on the back seat before shooting off to pick up her son. While she meets her son, her car is broken into, her laptop stolen and her papers scattered across the car park.

- **Think** before you take it out of the workplace – do you actually need to take that information out of the office?
- **Think** before leaving it unattended
- **Think** about what other people can see or overhear.

CHECK!

Whilst e-mailing case documents to a council colleague the e-mail address has auto-filled from the address book with the wrong recipient. You review the text and click send before realising the mistake.

- **Check** e-mail addresses, contents and attachments before you click 'send', and use the global address list to ensure you use the correct valid address for internal recipients
- **Check** that information you are done with is disposed of securely
- **Check** links and attachments you click on are authentic.

SHARE!

Under pressure and needing to finish off work for tomorrow but also to get home to his family, John e-mails his spreadsheet to his home e-mail address. He knows that technically this isn't right so he password-protects the spreadsheet, just in case someone 'hacks' into it.

This doesn't comply with the principles of Data Protection legislation and is unlawful, whether it is password protected or not.

- **Share** information only using authorised ICT systems that are secure
- **Share** information appropriately – make sure information you send out of the office is secure or encrypted. You should contact ICT for guidance if you are unsure, and make sure you have your line manager's approval.

None of us are perfect and mistakes do happen but hopefully by remembering to **think, check** and take care **sharing** information we can prevent accidental data security breaches.

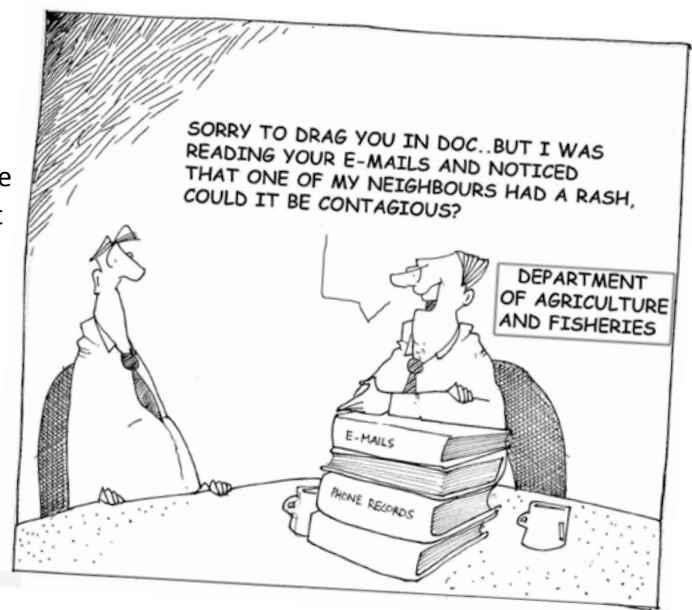
Further advice and guidance on security is available from ICT by raising a call through the ICT Servicedesk as normal, or alternatively email ict.security@moray.gov.uk

Further information is also available here:

http://intranet.moray.gov.uk/Information_management/information_security.htm

Who to contact in the event of a suspected Data Protection Breach:

Graham Jarvis SIRO (Senior Information Risk Officer) at graham.jarvis@moray.gov.uk



HR Noticeboard

RED NOSE DAY

The staff at Environmental Protection at Ashgrove set about raising funds with a giggle for Red Nose Day.

The cakes sold out fast, and the raffle winners were:

Andy Scott & Susanne Greer, who won the mug sets;

David Henney & Audrey Scott, who won the Scottie Dogs; and

John Pearson, who won the 'wee baggie'.

A massive, massive thank you! We have raised a fantastic £255.

REMINERS!

THINK, CHECK, SHARE

http://intranet.moray.gov.uk/Information_management/information_security.htm



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROVISION

From time to time, we may need a bit of extra support, guidance or advice – we may look to family, friends or colleagues for this but there may be times when someone independent or professional is preferred.

The council can help with this via the Employee Assistance Provision (EAP) provided by **timefortalking** which offers psychological, emotional and practical support. The provision includes:

- ☞ 24/7 free confidential helpline
- ☞ general advice and guidance
- ☞ psychological guidance and emotional support
- ☞ face-to-face counselling
- ☞ telephone counselling, and
- ☞ access to information and support through their website.

The key benefits of the EAP include:

- ☞ **Confidentiality:** No one at the council will know that you have called, unless you chose to disclose this.
- ☞ **Completely Free of Charge:** The service is paid for by the council.
- ☞ **Unlimited Access:** you can access information as often as you need to.

The service can be accessed in a number of ways, which means that there is 24 hour provision and they can meet your need whether you need to speak with someone, or just wish to browse some information in the first instance.

You can access the service via telephone or via email through the website:

By telephone – If you wish to speak to someone phone **0800 970 3980**.

Online – The website can be accessed here – www.timefortalking.co.uk (click on the member's area heading, then on the Moray Council logo and enter the password **elgin2016**). Once in the member's area you have access to informative leaflets, details of helplines or contact a counsellor.

Immediate family members (over the age of 16) can also access the service.

Should you have enquiries about this service, please contact HR.

DON'T FORGET:

Friday 14th April (Good Friday) is a public holiday,
Monday 17th April (Easter Monday) is NOT!

Have you filled in your leave request?



WELCOME ABOARD

At the end of March, a Corporate Induction took place for a group of 12 new starts in Moray. Say hello to our new colleagues if you see them and help make them feel welcome!

Each month we feature our new starts, colleagues who are leaving us, birthdays and other special events, so keep your news and photos coming in to: connectnews@moray.gov.uk.



Lily Huuhtanen has joined us as a Residential Care Worker at Cala in Elgin – all the way from Finland!



Kathryn McDonald has moved up from Edinburgh to join us as a Senior Library and Information Assistant at Buckie Library.



Lorna Young is joining us as Active Schools Coordinator in the Milne's ASG from a role at the Scottish Football Association.



Kelly Buchan has been with us for a year and a half as a Residential Childcare Worker at Cala in Elgin – this was her first chance to take part in an induction!



Fiona McIntosh has joined us as relief Day Services for the elderly and will be coming on board with the Home Care team next month.



Ruth Walker is joining us as a social worker from South Lanarkshire Council.



Glenn Fairfoot is a Training Support Worker at Greenfingers, joining us from a self-employment.



Angela Theobald has joined us as a Clerical Assistant in the Corporate Policy Unit from a role at Elgin Youth Café.



Emily Garrow is one of our new apprentices: she has joined us from a role in EE in Elgin.



Cara Rollo is also a new apprentice: she joins us from a background in volunteering and a role at Johnstons of Elgin.



Anne Chadwick is joining us as relief Training Support at Greenfingers from a work experience placement as a horticultural student from Moray College UHI.



Hilda Puskas has joined us as a Development Obligations Officer from Moray College UHI.



Vicki Deacon has joined us as a Social Worker, having moved up from Stirling. Welcome to Moray!



Happy 21st, Claire!

Claire McInnes, a Care Coordinator in the Home Care Office, recently celebrated her 21st in style with the help of her colleagues. They surprised her on her big day with balloons, a card, a stylish cake and lovely pressies. Even her mum was in on the act, sneaking in baby pictures for display around the office. *"I've been so spoiled!"* Claire said.



Spring Chicken

Caroline Howie, Committee Services Officer, celebrated her 60th in style with a week away with 13 members of her family in the Cairngorms. Her colleagues surprised her by decorating the office with banners, balloons and childhood photos and took her out to lunch. *"They've been so nice to me!"* she said.



A 60th Surprise

Elspeth Allan, a Mailroom Assistant, got whisked away on a fabulous surprise Mediterranean cruise by her family to celebrate her 60th – but before she left, her colleagues in the mailroom had their own surprise for her: balloons, banners, a big birthday badge, and a beautiful cake. *"I couldn't believe it. It's a complete surprise!"* said Elspeth.





Happy Retirement, Hilary

Hilary Mott, Clerical Assistant, celebrated her retirement with colleagues in the Corporate Policy Unit after 11 years with us. Hilary started out in Members Support before moving to the Chief Executive section after a year. She is looking forward to spending more time in the garden, looking after her chickens.



Colleagues at the DLO in Mosstodloch gathered round to offer their best wishes to Senior Buildings Maintenance Manager Brian Anderson on his retirement after nearly 42 years.

Brian (centre left) was presented with a fishing rod which he intends to put to good use on the River Spey.

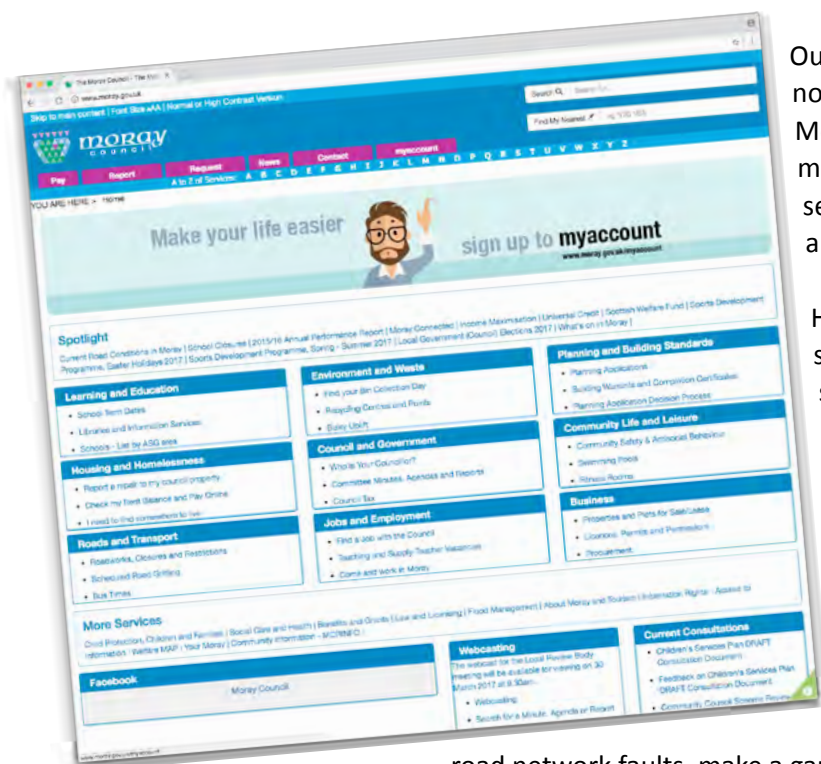
Bon Voyage, Brian!

His council career began in July 1975 as an apprentice joiner in Elgin and he later became a foreman joiner based in Buckie where he spent a number of years before transferring to Mosstodloch.





Have you signed up to myaccount?



Our online customer account portal – **myaccount** – is now available to the masses... or at least the residents of Moray! We're making it more convenient than ever to manage council accounts and services online; it's simple, secure and accessible 24/7. All you need to get started is an email address and internet connection.

Having the flexibility to manage council accounts and services wherever your location and at whatever time suits you is not the only advantage of myaccount. Other key benefits include:

- quick and easy contact – no need to call or visit us;
- automatic population of forms with personal details;
- save forms to complete later;
- view all online requests, transactions and contact in one place;
- avoid re-registration if moving elsewhere in Scotland.

Services now available are the facility to report

road network faults, make a garage application, view housing application status and check rent balance. Each month we'll add new services to **myaccount**, as well as more of the ones that are currently available on our website, including reporting anti-social behaviour and requesting a copy of registrar certificates. Keep your eye on interchange to stay up-to-date on when we've added something new.

The development is part of our '**Moray Connected**' digital services project, which is focused on offering consistent, high-quality services that reflect the needs of our communities and the growing number of online users we have.

Let us know what you think of myaccount. Your opinion matters – after all most of our employees are Moray residents – so this is for you too. Sign up at www.moray.gov.uk/myaccount. Send your feedback to: connected@moray.gov.uk



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