



September  
2019



PAYING IT

FORWARD

**moray**  
council



SEPTEMBER 2019

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## Editorial

Welcome to your September *Connect*!

Well it's been two months since the last edition of *Connect*. Hope you all had some time off over the summer to relax and enjoy a bit of sunshine.

We're now well and truly back into the swing of things, with another jam-packed edition. If you were eagerly awaiting payday after forking out for childcare or days out with grandkids during the holidays, you'll appreciate the efforts of our hardworking payroll team, who process thousands of payslips each month. It's thanks to their commitment and ability to work under pressure that we all get our wages in the bank each month – thank you, team!

We'll be pedalling for success during Cycle September, which you'll read about on pages [18](#) and [19](#) (feel free to send up some pics of you out and about on two wheels this month!) and we say happy birthday to some of our colleagues, and goodbye to others, in this edition.

Next month sees the return of our popular column from Greenfingers, we're looking forward to it already!



**Peter Jones**  
Communications Officer



**Sharon Dunbar**  
Media & Communications  
Officer



**Angus McNicholl**  
Designer



# HeadsUp

Linda Duncan, Assistant Payroll Manager

## Dear Colleagues

Payroll is not a profession that anyone ever sets out to do, me included. When I finished school I went onto study accountancy but by the end I'd decided I didn't want to be an accountant! I still wanted to do something in finance, and living in Aberdeen I needed a job to pay for my social life!

I joined Grampian Regional Council in February 1989, working in revenues on the cash desk for the introduction of Community Charge.

Again I realised this was not what I wanted to do, though unbeknown to me at the time I spent my days sat next to Allan, my future husband-to-be, so not all bad!

A payroll job came up on the internal jobs list (all on paper in those days) and having done a little bit of payroll before I decided to go for it. Almost 30 years later I'm still in local government payroll so I guess it's the right job for me.

I moved to Moray Council in 1996 as part of the re-organisation, I'd had enough of the party life in Aberdeen by then and wanted to move closer to my family who still lived in Portsoy.

For many years now all employees have been paid

by BACS transfer but I still remember employees being paid in cash. I'm glad to say this is the only reason I have ever been handcuffed! We used to have to collect the money from the bank then the locked bag was handcuffed to us whilst we were escorted to a locked room. Thankfully no-one ever tried to steal the bag (and me with it).

Working in payroll you have to be able to appreciate your own achievements, we normally only hear from employees when something goes wrong, it's definitely not a career path for anyone who needs a thank-you to feel appreciated. As payroll are at the end of sometimes a very long journey for information we are always the first port of call when there's a problem with an employee's pay, but we are only as good as the information we receive. I sometimes refer to payroll as the policy police, we don't make any of the rules but it's our job to ensure they are followed.

Outwith work I'm really lucky that I have a very supportive husband, if something goes wrong in a payrun you'll find me at my desk trying to resolve it rather than at home having tea with my family. Allan and I have two teenage

children, Craig (16) and Rachael (14) who both attend Milne's High School. Like many other parents a lot of my spare time is spent playing taxi driver. Since joining Slimming World four years ago and dropping five dress sizes I do try to keep fit and use my time waiting for dance classes/swimming club to end to go to the gym or sometimes just for a walk. Both children also play cricket but as Allan is a youth cricket coach I leave that one to him.

Although I didn't want to be an accountant I still put my basic book-keeping skills to good use as Treasurer of Milne's High parent council, both my children love the school and I've found the staff really helpful and supportive especially to Craig, who has cerebral palsy, so I wanted to do something to help support the school. Every now and then I'm lucky to find some spare time and I'm most likely to be found with my kindle in hand reading or in the kitchen baking whilst singing along (badly) to some music; my family like the cakes, but not the singing so much!

Best wishes  
Linda





**When you say to people you work in payroll they simply think you press a button and produce their payslip; if only it was that simple.**

**I**f you're going to be nice to anyone at work, make sure it's these guys. They've got the power.

And with great power comes? Well, we all know the answer to that, but it's not us with the responsibility for producing payslips for more than 5,000 employees each month. That falls to our payroll team, who in the last 12 months have processed over £151 million of payments. No, that's not a typo!

Working closely with HR, this team have to calculate changes to pay including: maternity/ paternity leave; sickness absence; holiday buyback; changes to hours or grades; pension; national insurance; additional voluntary contributions; overtime; holiday pay; expense claims; new starts and leavers; childcare vouchers; cycle2work schemes – we could go on and on, but you get the idea!

It's an incredibly complex and ever-changing picture, with the team processing on average 300 changes to pay each month, peaking in

August at over 600 changes – largely due to the new teaching starts. Add 800 travel and subs forms, and 1,600 timesheets each month, and 7,000 sickness absences per year. Phew.

The team of eight – Sarah, Karen, Geoff, Gillian, Diane, Susan, Sharon and Rebekah is led by Assistant Payroll Manager, Linda, known to her colleagues as 'The Oracle', thanks to her 30 years of experience.

*"They think I know everything payroll," she says, "I definitely don't but I normally know where to get the answer.*

*"When you say to people you work in payroll they simply think you press a button and produce their payslip; if only it was that simple. I've seen so many changes in legislation, terms and conditions and technology over the years but it never seems to end, there's always something changing. I'm now on my fourth payroll system!"*

No-one appreciates a deadline more than Linda's team – the consequences of not



meeting it aren't worth thinking about.

*"We sailed close to the wind a couple of years ago, as we were switching from one system to the new iTrent one. In the end, thanks to everyone pulling together, we made it. If we need to stay late, we stay late – there's no other option because everyone has to get paid."*

Linda relies on the dedication of her team, who each specialise in different areas. Take Diane Hershaw, who has looked after the IT side of things as a System Administrator since 2001.

*"The best part of the job – and it can sometimes be the worst, too – is that it changes all the time!"* she says.

*"Every day I come into the office and deal with something different or learn something new. I'm never bored and there's a lot of variety – jumping about from job to job, answering phone calls."*

*"I never dread coming into work because I like my job so much, and I try to do it to the best of my*

*ability."*

One of the biggest challenges for the team was the change in system in 2017 to iTrent, which Diane said took a while to get used to.

*"It was a huge learning curve for me. It took a while to explore and get to know it, so if anything went wrong I knew how to find a solution. We struggled for the first year but I can honestly say it's much better now."*

Working in this fast-paced department can be intense, so the team know the importance of down time.

*"Out of work I'm a bit hyperactive!"* says Diane.

*"I'm always doing stuff in the evenings, going for a run or spinning. When I'm not doing that I'm doing the books or tax returns for both my sisters and brother in-law's businesses."*

*"My daughter is a self-employed performer, so I'm often chasing her around the country or further afield. We've been to Germany, last year it was*

**The best part of the job – and it can sometimes be the worst, too – is that it changes all the time!**



“

**The best part of the job  
for me? Payday!**

”

*panto in Chatham and this year it's Cork in Ireland for panto season."*

Despite the pressure the team are under, you'd be hard pushed to find them slip-up. Because of the nature of the job, they're eagle-eyed and aren't afraid to double-check before processing payments. Even if the team is depleted through sickness or holidays, the show must go on.

*"Sometimes we're short staffed or things are taking longer than usual, and it can get on top of you," says Gillian McCann, who has worked with us as a payroll administrator for the last five years, and this month is running the local government pay run, which 3,700 of us fall under. No pressure!*

*"If I see our pigeon holes filling up with timesheets and expenses claims, and we're not getting through the work I panic, but then I look at Linda and if she's not panicking everything's ok!"*

*"We always manage to get the work done because we're all working towards the same goal. Once we've cleared the decks it feels like a pat on the back – we've just paid 3,700 colleagues."*

*"Most of the calls we get are colleagues phoning for help with something and sometimes tensions do run high. We're dealing with someone's pay and that's important – it's why we all get out of bed in the morning."*

*"The best part of the job for me? Payday!"*

So that all the payroll administrators get to know the mechanics of the seven different pay runs, including teachers, local government, elections, councillors and pensioners, the pay runs are rotated. This month Sarah Brown is tackling the teachers' pay run.

*"Between contracted and supply teachers we have about 1,100 staff. They have their own complexities because they're governed by the SNCT, and have their own pay grades and pension scheme."*

August is a real pinch point, there's an annual influx of teaching staff starting new roles and although the team get advance warning of this, all new starts have to be double checked





as August draws nearer, in case any offers of employment are declined or withdrawn, to prevent overpayments.

*"Timing is hugely important for us," says Sarah, who lives in Forres with her husband and nine year-old daughter.*

*"We deal with colleagues on every level, within every department and that's a great part of the job for me – it makes you aware how many departments there are and how big the council actually is."*

That's exactly what the newest member of the team, Karen Jamieson, is learning.

She started on 1 July, having completed her degree in accounting and finance with Moray College UHI.

*"Making the decision to study was a personal one; I never had the opportunity to do it when I was younger – I went straight into the workplace. I put everything into my studies and was thrilled to get a first-class honours degree, but I lived and breathed it for what seemed like forever! I have really only been able to socialise again in the last year – it's a shock to my system!"*

*"I'm settling in well, everyone has been nice and really helpful. I'm still in the process of absorbing as much info as I can just now."*

*"It's a huge operation here, I've done payroll when I worked in another company, but it was on a much smaller scale. I'm taking my time and getting to*



*learn the ropes, we've got good processes in place and they're there for a reason.*

*"Out of work I like to go for a run or cycle, depending on the weather. When I'm not doing that I'm catching up with my friends, after having my head stuck in books for the last few years they just about remember who I am!"*

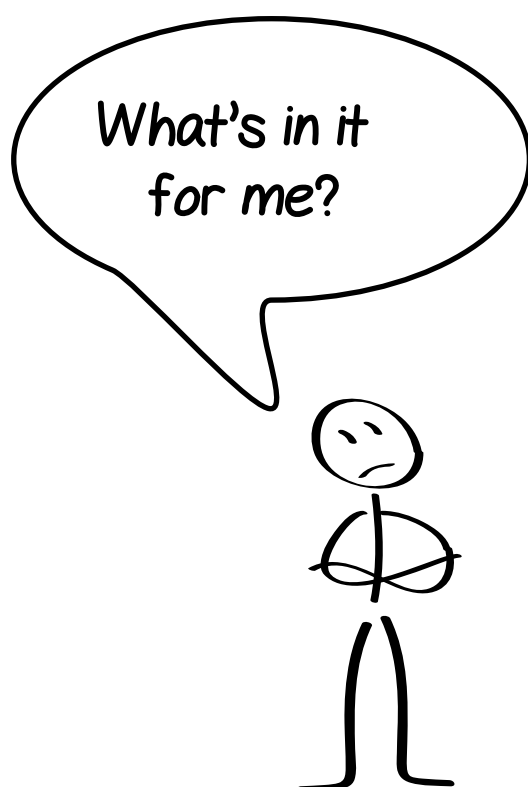
Pssst. Did you know it's National Payroll Week from 2-6 September? There's never been a better time to say thank you to our colleagues in payroll for their hard work in making sure we all get paid every month. Cheers!

**Even if the team is depleted through sickness or holidays, the show must go on.**

# YOUR VOICE

**T**he employee survey goes live later this month. Your voice matters, so please take this opportunity to have your say! It'll be available online and on paper from 9 September to 4 October 2019. Details will be available on the interchange and at team briefings.

Last time round, 42% of colleagues shared their voice and their views, which was up 11% from 2015, and we believe can do better in 2019 – let's see if we can really make a difference.



Results from the last survey were taken very seriously and have driven forward a number of changes, for example:

- focused engagement activity on service areas with lowest survey results and encouraging regular team meetings.
- increased visibility of senior managers through employee conferences, service learning visits, managers' briefings and back to the floor visits.
- elected members' training programme to increase their knowledge of council services.
- regular communications on the interchange and through Connect magazine to keep colleagues up-to-date on events, changes and council news.
- currently piloting a workload management tool to help manage work pressures.
- creation of a workforce culture toolkit to help managers improve communications and overall culture within their teams.

Remember, the survey is not just about telling us when things are not quite right, it's equally as important to tell us when things are right! So if communications have improved, or senior managers are more visible, or you feel more recognised for the job you are doing – tell us!

If you want to shape the future of our council, drive forward change, improve your workplace and tell us what's good, and what we need to improve on, complete the employee survey and make Your Voice count!

**Be heard...**  
**EMPLOYEE SURVEY 9 SEPTEMBER 2019**  
[interchange.moray.gov.uk/yourvoice](http://interchange.moray.gov.uk/yourvoice)



## Rhona goes back to the floor

Corporate Director, Rhona Gunn, went back to the floor for a third time to visit colleagues and get a flavour for the work they carry out on the front line.

This time she donned her gardening gear to head out with Callum Lumbsden and Kevin Barrie from our lands and parks team. They're well-known as the guys behind the wheel of the 'Shrek-mobile'!

*"Shrek still speaks after ages on the front of the van and the kids love him I'm told," says Rhona, "the guys said theirs is also the cleanest van in lands and parks!"*

Time to get some hands dirty, and Rhona joined in with the work leaf blowing before moving on to the more laborious task of 'assisted cuts' - mowing gardens for council tenants who can't manage to cut their grass.

*"It was a bit of an assault course, limboing under clothes lines and around rotary driers, and fancy footwork and sideways moves to dodge dog poo."*

*"I was really jammy and got a lovely day but I can see what hard work it would be in the pouring rain and cold, and couldn't believe how much the grass had grown in only a fortnight for some gardens."*

*"No two gardens are the same and they are all odd shapes, so it took me a while to work out the best angle of attack each time!"*

These visits by our corporate directors are part of the employee engagement programme, and help directors get a better understanding of colleagues' day jobs, and hear any issues or suggestions for efficiencies and improvements from those carrying out the tasks.

Our lands and parks team, which Rhona joined, are responsible for a huge range of tasks which benefit the community, including mowing and maintenance of our parks, roadside cuts, planting, pruning and marking sports pitches.

You can read more about the Back to the Floor initiative on the interchange: [interchange.moray.gov.uk/int\\_standard/Page\\_113639.html](https://moray.gov.uk/int_standard/Page_113639.html)







This September sees the return of National Recycling Week and the theme is: Recycling – it's in our own hands.

Here in Moray householders have a great track record for recycling; in fact we've got one of the highest household recycling rates in the country at 60%.

The main thrust of the promo around Recycle Week 2019 will be asking people to rinse, crush, squash, sort and separate. To help you to do just that, here's a link to our recycling guide which tell you what goes where: [www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file120638.pdf](http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file120638.pdf)

### 2018 Recycling Facts

- 7,541.46 Tonnes of plastics, cans and glass were recycled by Moray householders in their kerbside bins.
- 7,292 Tonnes of glass, paper, cardboard, cans and plastics, garden waste and textiles were recycled at our household recycling centres – that's the equivalent of 162kg per household!





# Building for the Future

Invitations for this year's employee conference have been sent out, so if you received an invite we look forward to seeing you; please remember to RSVP if you haven't already!

This year's conference is about 'Building for the Future'. We're all aware that there are challenges ahead and during the conference we'll consider what roles we play as colleagues in addressing these. We'll be discussing with senior managers and other colleagues the future of service delivery, and what opportunities for change the Improvement and Modernisation programme will bring.

It's also a chance to talk to the directors and heads of service about issues that are important to you, as well as meeting colleagues from across council services.

If you didn't receive an invite but would like to come along, speak with your line manager in the first instance and then contact HR – we'll do our best to accommodate any requests.

*We look forward to seeing you there!*

Keith Grammar School  
11 September  
8.45am to 1.30pm

Elgin Bishopmill Hall  
8 October  
8.45am to 1.30pm

Forres Community Centre  
10 October  
8.45am to 1.30pm

# Employee Conference 2019



Strategy  
Talk

# Older People's Services

HEALTH &  
SOCIAL CARE  
MORAY

The number of older people in Moray is increasing; currently sitting at 23% of the population of the local population, which accounts for 25,000 people. The responsibility for caring for older people in Moray has been devolved to the Integration Joint Board since April 2016 and is delivered by Health and Social Care Moray.

Older people are cared for by NHS colleagues in hospital settings at Dr Gray's and throughout Moray in community hospitals, as well as in the private sector in residential and nursing home placements. We also provide a range of sheltered and very sheltered (support assisted) care placements in partnership with the third sector.

We try to keep people at home in their own surroundings as long as is possible and if they have to access acute care, to get them home as quickly as possible, always trying to maintain as much independence as possible. This is supported by the public health team and our commissioning team, delivering award-winning programmes to promote self-management such as Boogie in the Bar, Men's Sheds, Ball (Be Active Life Long) Groups and MEOC (Make Every Opportunity Count). This approach allows older people to stay active, deal with social isolation and better manage any conditions they have.

Invariably, older people will require services from the council which support their health and wellbeing, and key

to the success of managing this includes social work and occupational therapy in proving quality assessments and assisting to reduce falls. However the bulk of services delivered directly to older people are delivered by Provider Services (internal council services) supported by external partners.

All Moray services are currently striving to incorporate the principles of CAPA (Care About Physical Activity) in partnership with the Care Inspectorate to ensure that we help older people maintain a level of independence for as long as possible.

Health and Social Care Moray provide re-ablement, care at home, shared lives and day care services, all registered with the Care Inspectorate and held accountable through the National Care Standards.

In maintaining standards and working within legislation, as well as preparing for the future, Health and Social Care Moray must have all staff registered with the SSSC (Scottish Social Services Council) by October 2020. In order to meet this, staff must apply before the 13 December 2019. This is a huge task and Moray Council have been working with staff, unions, training and other departments to ensure that we complete the registration of around 450 staff specifically working with older people.



# My time in Moray Council

by Career Ready intern, Keiron Peace  
(sixth year pupil at Forres Academy)



At the beginning of last year I attended an Assembly in school about a programme called Career Ready that was being offered to us, and it compelled me. There was plenty of uncertainty however through the simple fact that I wanted something different to do in my final two years of school, I signed up on the spot. One thing that really caught my eye though, was the placement into the workplace of my assigned mentor, which at that time I had no idea who I'd be with or the business that I'd be with, but optimism ruled and I kept my head held high.

The months went on and I was told I was being put with the Moray Council, at that point my interest peaked and I truly looked forward to getting a good look at my local authority, and I hoped I would get a better understanding of all the responsibility that they held, and as a government organisation the responsibility was already pretty clear.

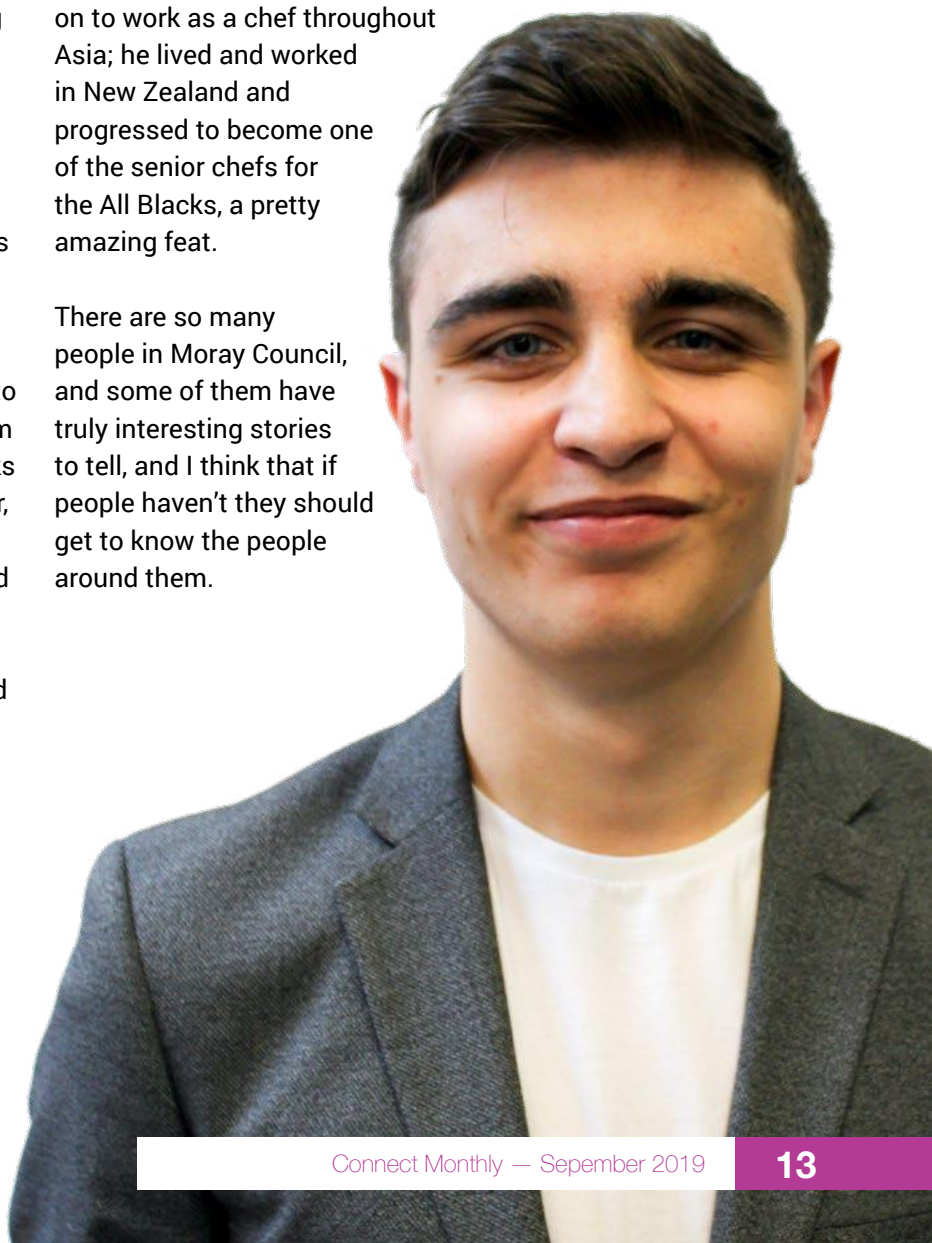
Now over four weeks I have completed my internship with the council and I am delighted to say that it was an excellent experience and I am very glad I took a chance and signed up. Thanks to the determination of my mentor, Rick Cooper, my time here has been very different to the other career ready candidates that have worked in the council, all whom I'm sure have had equally good experiences. My unique time in the council has been a blast as I have managed to see a wide array of departments and meet some excellent people along the way. From the harbours with Duncan Brown to facilities with Gary Munro, I have seen a fair amount over the four short weeks I had, although I'm positive I've only just scratched the surface of what the council does.

But while the things I did were interesting the people I met stood out much more to me than anything else. For example, Duncan Brown, whom I spent a week with working on ideas for the new harbours webpage and getting to know the six harbours the council owns. Before Duncan worked with Moray Council he worked with another local authority, and further back than that he worked in the private sector with BP oil and gas.

Or what about Rick Cooper? My assigned mentor has previously trained with the Association Culinaire Francaise and then went on to work as a chef throughout Asia; he lived and worked in New Zealand and progressed to become one of the senior chefs for the All Blacks, a pretty amazing feat.

There are so many people in Moray Council, and some of them have truly interesting stories to tell, and I think that if people haven't they should get to know the people around them.

**There are so many people in Moray Council, and some of them have truly interesting stories to tell.**



# WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING



Calling all budding bakers and willing volunteers, macmillan coffee morning is on the way and we need your help!

The World's Biggest Coffee Morning takes place on Friday 27 September and is macmillan's biggest fundraising event for people facing cancer. It's the perfect chance to catch up with your colleagues over a cuppa and a slice of something delicious, all whilst supporting a great cause.

However, we cannot do this without your support and whilst we always get a great turnout in HQ Annexe at the coffee morning, we desperately need more volunteers to help serve and to donate baking. Without this help we will be unable to run the event this year.

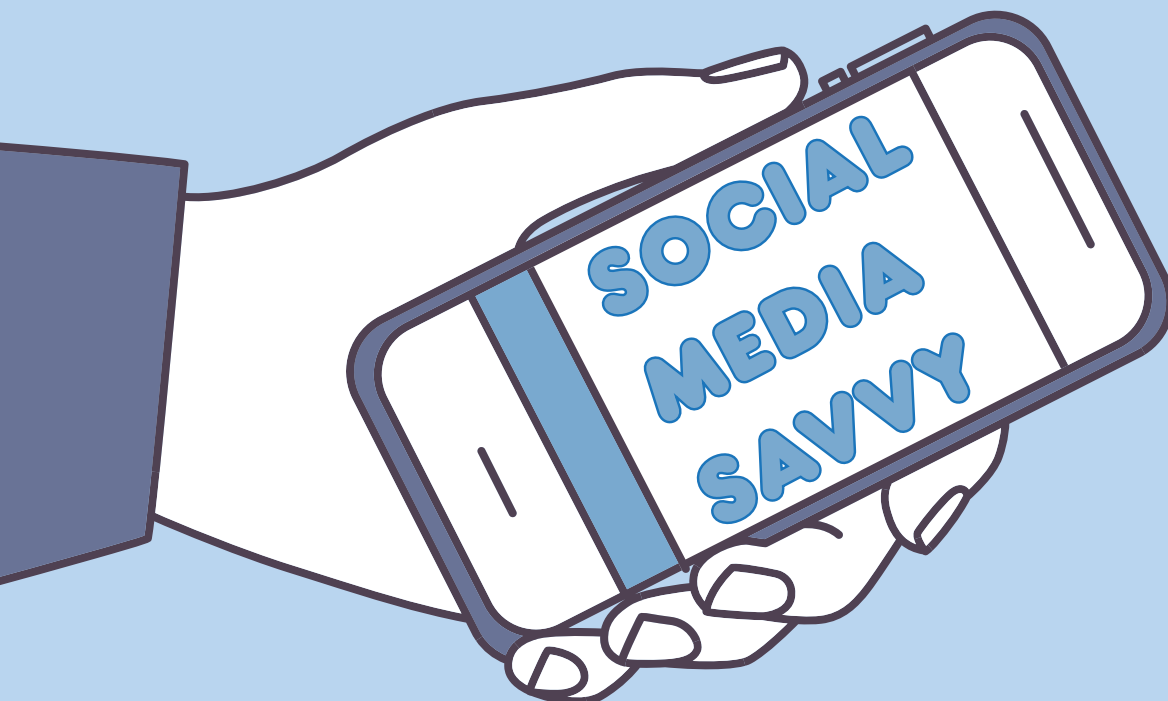
If you're able to volunteer your time or your baking talents please contact Gillian Thomson on x3408 or email [gillian.thomson@moray.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.thomson@moray.gov.uk).

Every two minutes someone in the UK is diagnosed with cancer and so many of us know someone who's life has been affected by it. Last year Gillian and her team made a fantastic £763.67 for macmillan, let's try and make it even more this year and help to support those with this life-changing diagnosis.

## MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT







Hands up if you've got a social media account, or more than one for that matter? You're not alone; there are 45 million social media users in the UK alone and, every day, the average UK-based user spends nearly two hours on social media [Source: We are Social and Hootsuite].

It goes without saying that it's an excellent way for us all to share our experiences, likes and dislikes with our friends and family – and often to a much wider audience. We in the comms team actively encourage wider use of social media to showcase the services we provide, and to engage with the community. Speak to Sharon or Peter ([pr@moray.gov.uk](mailto:pr@moray.gov.uk)) if you're interested in finding out how.

It can be difficult when you see the council-bashers online, or if you've been affected by a decision made at work and think about venting your frustrations. But, how do you make sure you don't compromise your professional reputation, or that of the council, in either your work use or personal use?

To keep you right, take note of the following guidance (which is explained in more detail on the interchange) which says that you shouldn't:

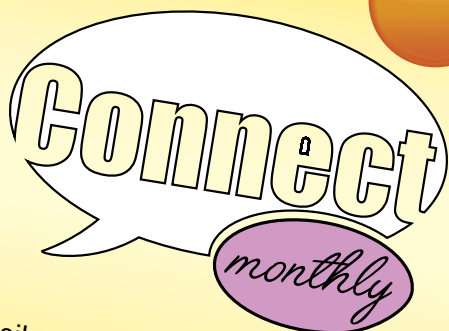
- disclose any confidential work-related info.
- use the council's intellectual property (things produced in your course of employment with the council).
- make statements which could harm the council's reputation.
- criticise or make inappropriate comments regarding clients, pupils, councillors or colleagues.
- use defamatory or derogatory language about your employment or the council.

There's additional guidance from the EIS for teaching staff, and further info for those working young people and vulnerable adults. You can find this at: [intranet.moray.gov.uk/documents/PandPLib/HR\\_Human%20Resources/SDPJ%20Social%20Networking%20Sites%20Guidance%20for%20Staff.pdf](https://intranet.moray.gov.uk/documents/PandPLib/HR_Human%20Resources/SDPJ%20Social%20Networking%20Sites%20Guidance%20for%20Staff.pdf)

Next month – social media: how to respond to customers.

**Hands up if you've got a social media account, or more than one for that matter?**

# HR Noticeboard



email [connectnews@moray.gov.uk](mailto:connectnews@moray.gov.uk) to get Connect emailed to your personal email address, every month.

## Ticks and Lyme disease

With many of us spending time outdoors in grassy or wooded areas it's a good time to keep an eye out for ticks. Most tick bites are harmless and can only cause Lyme disease if the tick has already bitten an infected animal.

Lyme Disease is a bacterial infection that can be spread to humans by infected ticks. It's usually easier to treat if it's diagnosed early.

Symptoms can include a circular red skin rash around the bite sometimes described as looking like a bull's eye on a dartboard, but not everyone gets the rash. Other symptoms include flu-like symptoms such as high temperature, headaches, muscle pain and tiredness.

Speak to your GP if you have any concerns.

## STAR awards

STAR award nominations are open until 13 September.

Get your nominations in while there's still time. Judging will take place later this month and more details will follow soon on the 'Colleagues Choice' award.

## Wear it Pink

The 'Wear it Pink' campaign for Breast Cancer Now is taking place during October, so if you have any fundraising ideas/plans please let us know, email [hr@moray.gov.uk](mailto:hr@moray.gov.uk).





There are many new faces in our schools this year – and not just pupils! A huge welcome to all of our newly-qualified teachers who are taking up posts in primary and secondary schools across Moray. Also hello and welcome to the 40 new starts in our early learning and childcare settings!

We also take the opportunity to say congrats to the new Head Teacher of Elgin Academy, Kyle Scott; in a new feature for *Connect*, whenever there's a new head teacher appointment in our schools we'll ask them to share a bit about their career and life. Here Kyle kicks it off in style...

Former PE teacher in Stonehaven and Nairn, Kyle joined us at Elgin Academy in 2010 as Principal Teacher of PE. He then became Acting Deputy Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, then Acting Head Teacher, before securing the role of Head Teacher before the end of the last school year.

*"It's a huge honour and privilege, and I'm very proud to be*

*recently-appointed permanent Head Teacher of Elgin Academy. This school has been a huge part of my life for the last 10 years and I'm hugely excited about the new challenge of being Head Teacher.*

*"Our new vision of together everyone achieves more is one I'm hugely passionate about, and I'm so excited to work with our pupils, staff, parents and many school partners as part of our team. I genuinely believe that with meaningful collaboration we can ensure our school continues to move forward for our pupils.*

*"Can I take this opportunity to thank pupils, staff and parents for their continued support and encouragement to me during my time at Elgin Academy."*



# GET ON BIKES! AND RIDE

YOUR



**W**e've gone cycling daft this month, quite fitting as it's Cycle September. So whether you're a cycling convert or need some persuasion to get back in the saddle, have a wee read and see if we can tempt you to get those pedals turning!

## *Are you on the right track?*

As a Moray Council employee you can get involved in this exciting pilot project called RIGHT TRACK.

Download the app to see what travel options are available to you for your commute, as well as potential benefits of different types of sustainable and active travel, and connect with colleagues to support each other in making positive changes.

Based on the information you enter about your daily commute, you'll receive access to information, articles and challenges that are relevant to your circumstances and of interest to you. You'll also have the option to participate in fun challenges and earn recognition for choosing active and/or sustainable travel options.

Download the RIGHT TRACK app to get started.

iPhone app: [apps.apple.com/us/app/right-track/id1459253012?ls=1](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/right-track/id1459253012?ls=1)

Android app: [play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ltd.ember.tkh](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ltd.ember.tkh)

Once installed, you'll need to enter the unique company code: MORAY2019

If you've any questions get in touch with Janet MacDonald, our Sustainable Travel Officer [janet.macdonald@moray.gov.uk](mailto:janet.macdonald@moray.gov.uk)



## Take charge with an ebike

Ever thought about taking some of the strain away, or speeding up your journey with an ebike? For those unsure of what it actually is, it's a regular bicycle with the addition of an electric motor and battery. The battery supplies power to the electric motor and can be charged from a regular three-pin socket. The electric motor provides power assistance when the cyclist is pedaling to ease the amount of effort required.

Most ebikes will offer 25 – 100+ miles of pedaling enhancement on a single charge (depending on the make/model of bike) and can be plugged into a normal three-pin socket in your home, garage or workplace. In the UK, an ebike is road-legal for anyone if they are aged 14 and over, and if the assisted speed is restricted to a generous 15.5mph. ebikes not only make cycling accessible to people who might otherwise find it difficult, such as the elderly and those with health problems including asthma and muscle soreness, they also make the journey a lot quicker.

Would you consider using an e-bike? Let us know your thoughts by filling out the survey, available on interchange during September.

### Love to Ride? Take on the Global Bike Challenge!

Do you want a fun way to keep fit? Do you need motivation to keep going? Then the Cycle September Global Bike Challenge is aimed at you.

Our transportation team has teamed up with Love to Ride to encourage residents and workplaces across Moray, and we now have a Local Project Manager who will be working to promote the September Global Cycling Challenge across Moray.

Whether you like gentle rides through the park at the weekend, pop down to the shops with a basket on your handlebars, get stoked shredding trails, or prefer to wear lycra while bagging Strava King/Queen of the Mountains on your carbon-fibre racing bike, all our welcome to join in.

This is your chance to take part in a fun, friendly workplace challenge and encourage your colleagues to take part as well. You can set your own goals, but as long as you register at least one ride of 10 minutes or more in September you will be included in the challenge.

Log onto [www.lovetoride.net/moray](http://www.lovetoride.net/moray) and register your details. It won't take long and soon you will be able to log your rides. You can connect your favourite cycling app (Strava, Ride App, Endomondo or Map My Ride) to automatically update your rides; but if you don't use an app it only takes a few moments to log a ride manually. You can see how you are getting on against the goals you have set yourself and if you are competitive, or just plain nosey, you can see how you compare to others.

### Remember – points make prizes

Ride anywhere, anytime and encourage others to do the same to earn points. The more points you earn, the further you climb the leaderboard and the better your chances are of winning prizes, including:

- Voucher from North58 for two adults to go on one their Wildlife Adventure boat trips
- £40 voucher for Harbour Lights restaurant in Lossiemouth
- £10 for Miele's Gelato in Lossiemouth
- Voucher from Highland Mini Golf (Golf Dedication Centre) for four people on their mini golf course
- Windswept Brewery tour for two

For more details visit: [www.lovetoride.net/moray/prizes?locale=en-GB#individual](http://www.lovetoride.net/moray/prizes?locale=en-GB#individual)

### Tell me more!

If you want to have a chat about Love to Ride or Cycle September, then pop an email across to Anna Vince at Love to Ride ([anna@lovetoride.org](mailto:anna@lovetoride.org)) and she'll be happy to help you out. Alternatively, check out [www.lovetoride.net/moray](http://www.lovetoride.net/moray) for further information.

Happy cycling!



Many happy returns to Mike Rollo, our Building Services Manager. He celebrated the big 5-0 by reliving his youth at Rewind festival with nine year-old daughter, Katie. Looking good, Mike!



Celebrations were held at Ashgrove for Kerrie Walker's birthday in June. Hmmm, not-so-subtle nod to the milestone birthday, we see! Nicely done!



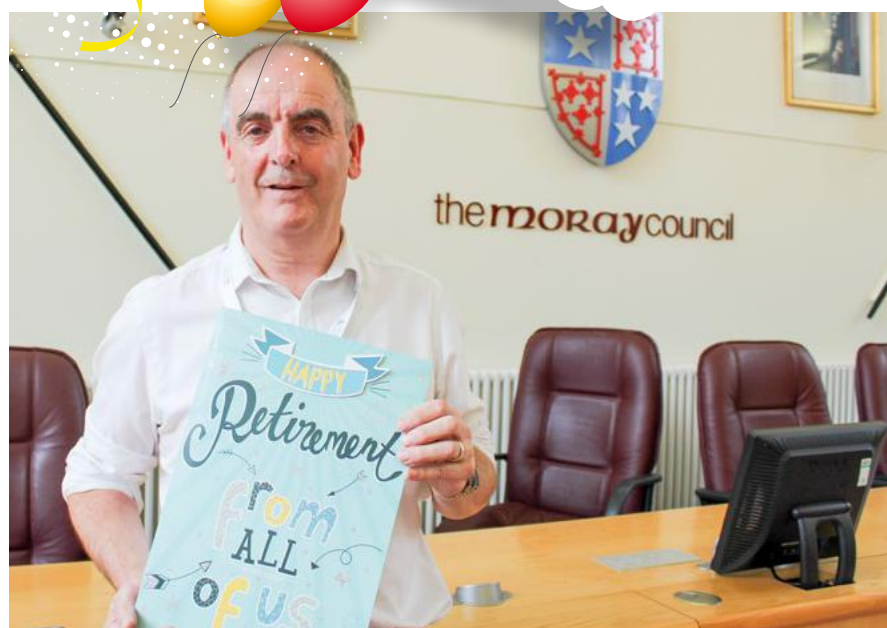
# Happy Retirement!



Around 50 former and current colleagues of Pearl Gray joined her at Milne's High School canteen to wave her into retirement, after 26 years in the council's catering department.

In the week she became a Granny for the second time, Pearl bid farewell to catering, cleaning and janitorial services and stepped into retirement with no immediate plans – exactly as she'd hoped.

Pearl said to her friends and former colleagues: *"It's odd to be retiring – after nearly 30 years here I'll miss the people. It's the team who make the catering department and I'm sure that will carry on."*



Acting Director of Education & Social Care, Graham Jarvis, bid farewell to Moray Council after being with us for 32 years. He started with Grampian Regional Council in 1987, working his way up to Acting Director.

Colleagues gathered in the chamber to hear Chief Executive, Roddy Burns, thank Graham for all his work throughout his career.

Roddy said: *"Graham is one of those people who has always been there for colleagues to support them through the challenges; he has led on major*

*projects locally and regionally, and has played an extraordinary role in the community."*

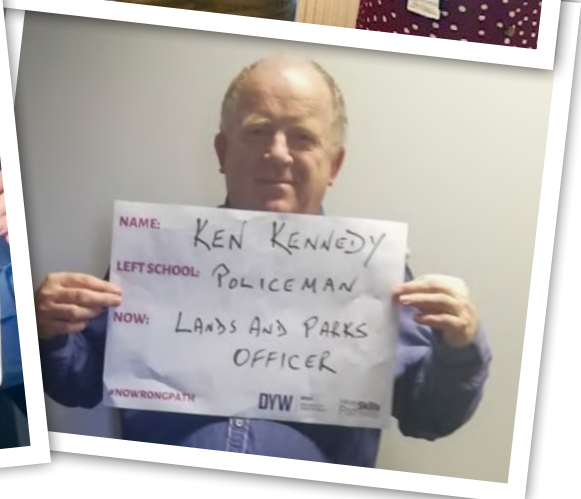
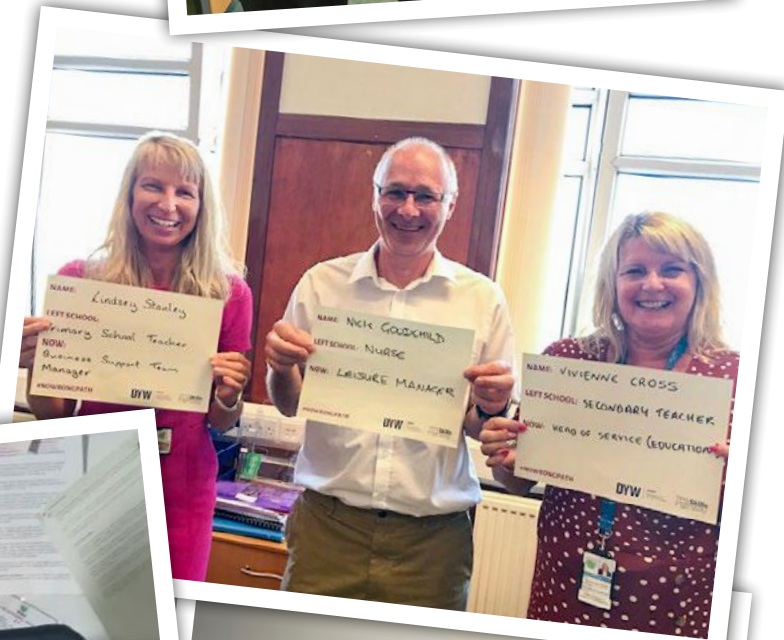
Graham said: *"I didn't even know where Elgin was when I was offered this job, having applied for a role in Kemnay. I've been very fortunate to meet some really good people; I could never have done the work without the wonderful teams I've had around me."*

*"I would like to thank everyone who has supported me over the years. Despite the sometimes difficult decisions we've had to take, I've enjoyed the debate, the discussion and the banter."*

# #NOWRONGPATH

Did you get involved in #NoWrongPath on 6 August? On the same day as pupils across the country received their exam results, colleagues from across the council shared their first jobs versus their current roles.

Thanks to all that took part in this inspiring initiative, reinforcing there's No Wrong Path for our youngsters embarking on the next stage of their education, training or entering the world of work.







# HYDRATE!

**A**s we go to print, we've been enjoying the warm spell of weather. But when we're soaking up the sun, we sometimes forget to stay hydrated.

Anyone can become dehydrated, but some groups are particularly at risk, including babies and infants, older people and those with long term health conditions such as diabetes.

You should drink plenty of fluids such as water, diluted squash and fruit juice to stay hydrated. If you're active, or if the weather is particularly hot, there's a greater risk that you will become dehydrated.

If you, your child or someone you're caring for is ill, particularly with a fever, vomiting or diarrhoea, there's a high risk of becoming dehydrated, so it's important to start replacing fluid as soon as possible.

Signs of dehydration are visible in your urine. Dark and strong smelling urine is a clear sign that you need to drink more fluids. UTIs, headaches, dry mouth, lips or eyes and dizziness are also strong indicators that you may be suffering from dehydration.

So remember to drink plenty through the course of the day to keep hydration at bay!

*Share*

# YOUR Passion!



**D**o you have an interest or passion that you would like to share with like-minded employees?

Would you like to lead an employee interest group or activity?

Think: walking, craft, books, nature, beach cleans, work place sports or music.

Or something more obscure?

Make a suggestion!

If you are interested in leading an interest group or activity for employees, get in touch and the Workforce Culture team will support you in making it happen.

Contact: [hr@moray.gov.uk](mailto:hr@moray.gov.uk)