

**Extraordinary Public Meeting
Monday 19 January 2026 at 6:00 pm
Crossgates Community Centre**

A public meeting was held to discuss recently-revealed proposal by Fife Council seeking to ‘strategically realign leisure, culture and community services to be more resilient, inclusive and community led...while addressing challenges such as aging infrastructure and changing usage patterns’. Proposed changes were intended to form part of £2.1 million cost saving to FC over the financial years 2025/26 – 2027/28. Crossgates Community Centre – formerly the Miners’ Welfare Institute, which has served the village and its residents for over a century – is among 27 community halls and facilities in Fife that the proposal targets for ‘lease/ community asset transfer’ or other action.

Some 55 people attended this meeting, including community council members, Crossgates residents, and representatives from Fife Council. Those present were encouraged to hear that all four of the latter – Cllrs Linda Erskine, Alex Campbell, Darren Watt and Bailey-Lee Robb – were opposed to this proposal, which all agreed were poorly researched and ill-conceived as regards Crossgates and its needs.

Following the meeting and a period of fact-finding that has thoroughly documented current use of the Centre by residents and groups, Community Council chairman Gordon Black drafted a letter to Cllr Erskine, the text of which summarises the discussion that took place. The text of this letter is below.

TO: Cllr Linda Erskine, Spokesperson on Communities and Leisure, Fife Council
FROM: Gordon Black, Chair, Crossgates Community Council
DATE: 25 January 2026
RE: Public meeting of 19 January 2026 at Crossgates Community Centre

As promised here are my thoughts and those of the people who attended the meeting in Crossgates Community Centre on 19 January.

There were 55 people in attendance, including yourself and three other Councillors – Messrs Alex Campbell, Bailey-Lee Robb and Darren Watt. I am grateful to you all for coming along with your unwavering support. Your thoughts and commitments went a long way to taking a lot of the anger from the meeting.

I have to say that I was amazed at the number of people who attended and the number of the group who looked to have their say. When you consider that the facility has been around Crossgates for circa. 150 years, with the Miners’ Institute being established some 100 years ago, this is testament to the enduring legacy and the warm feelings that the Community has for the facility.

Let me start by stating the figures that I have been able to get hold of:

Number of days the facility has been used	305 (Full calendar year 2025)
Number of people who used the facility	
1 Apr – 31 Dec 2025	10,472
If taken for a full year based on above	13,614

I have also listed the groups who use the facility. It is clear from the information that the facility is well used, but there remains room for growth, especially during the day. It was also stated that during Covid, as you would expect, the numbers fell dramatically.

The Crossgates Centre, unlike others, has benefitted from the hard work of the Crossgates Primrose Group. They have worked hard to build support for all the activities they have brought to the village for all age groups, using the Centre for a significant number of their activities. Their considerable efforts are reflected in the growing numbers that use the Centre.

Points raised that need to be fully considered before a decision is arrived at by Fife Council:

- Polling Station.

The Community Centre is the only “Polling Station” in Crossgates available to the public. With the Church of Scotland deciding that both the Church and Church Hall are to be disposed of, it is difficult to see what facility would be available for a Polling Station, as the only other Fife Council building in the village is the School. Is the plan to disenfranchise those in Crossgates who, through no fault of their own, will find it difficult to go to an alternative facility? Maybe it will encourage more people to use the postal system? For most of the elderly, polling day provides an opportunity to engage with others, and helps them to overcome isolation, loneliness and any mental health issues.

- Warm Spaces.

It is important to note that part of the Community Centre is also part of the Village’s warm space facilities. If the Community Centre and the Church are both closed, the village will lose both warm space facilities. I do not see the benefits to the Community or residents if this is the case.

- War Memorial.

There is no mention in the proposal regarding what is proposed to happen to this iconic memorial. Currently the memorial, which has been in situ for many years, is designed as an indoor memorial. Has any consideration been given to how relocating it could be achieved? As I understand it, it is not a simple process to move one, but unless another indoor venue can be found then the only option available would be to commission a new memorial for outdoors. Has this been factored into the calculations?

Looking at the War Memorials Trust - Relocation of war memorials - War memorials are extremely emotive objects and, as a result, the issue of their relocation can be controversial and needs to be handled sensitively. War Memorials Trust believes that, where possible, a war memorial should be preserved in its original location. The relocation of a memorial can be a high risk and expensive project. The Trust only supports the relocation of a war memorial if its current position is putting the memorial at risk, or if it is no longer accessible to the public for commemoration. It is important to think seriously about whether this war memorial needs to be relocated.

I cannot think of any place in the centre of the village, a prominent position, where one could be established. Fife Council only have one other building, the school, but surely this is not an appropriate site. I do think that if the Centre is to be closed pending sale, that the War Memorial could become a “bridge too far” for the Residents, and this could lead to significant opposition.

- Crossgates Bowling Club.

The closure of the Centre would prove to be a considerable issue for the Crossgates Bowling Club. The Club is linked to the centre, with the Clubhouse being part of the overall building, with which they share heating. The Bowling Club is thus one of the two Warm Spaces in the village. From information provided to me, I understand that the bowling club have a long lease.

While I am not sure of the length, it seems clear that, should there be any change to the Centre, the future of the bowling club will be precarious. The Bowlers currently pay an annual rent of £1,200 and contribute towards heating and water. Over the years, the Club have spent considerably on their “green”, the results of their labour being recognised by the Governing body, with local and national tournaments being held on the “green”. If I had been engaged to advise them about any break in Lease, I would have suggested to them that they look for a considerable sum in compensation. At this stage there is no evidence to suggest that they could rely on any new owners/leaseholders to satisfy the lease conditions that they currently enjoy. Has any consideration been given to this in the calculations in the paper Table 2 – Summary of Savings? It would have been good to see the assumptions made in the paper that arrived at these figures. It would highlight the actions that would be required to take place in order to achieve the figures, otherwise it is just a figure for a paper!

- Summer Hub.

In addition, the Centre is used by the Council as a Summer Hub for families who are less well off, providing meals for families during the school holidays.

- Clubs and associations that use the facility:

Primrose Trust – including the following activities:

*Food Bank

*Youth Club

*Lego Club

*Pickle Ball

Community Council

Crossgates Greenfingers

Fife Council – Special needs

Alzheimer’s Society

Majorettes

Dance – Centre Stage Performing Arts

Badminton Club

Pilates

Crossgates Baby and Toddlers Group

Craft Group

Walking Group

I am sure that there may be more that I have forgot or am not aware of, but I do think that the case is very clear that this facility is well used – one that our community cares about and supports.

- Options.

While I am more confident after the meeting that closure of our centre looks to be almost impossible to expect, it seems likely that Fife Council officials wish to stop it being ‘Directly Managed’, and have it become a facility that is run in a different manner. If I am correct, there are 3 options: (1) Management Committee, (2) Leased to a Community Group, or (3) a Community Asset Transfer (CAT). If there are other options, may we hear them?

The issue that I have with these three options is that, as a Community Council, we have no idea what they entail. What would any party that takes on the Centre be obliged to do under any one of them? Had the paper explained how savings were to be achieved under each of the options, it would be clearer to an interested party what they would need to consider should they wish to proceed.

- Repairs & Maintenance.

It is well known that the centre is presently in need of maintenance. Would Fife Council bring the facility up to standard before any new operator takes it on? If I was to be part of any Group looking to go into any one of the options I would like to know what issues, if any, the organisation might face in the short, medium or long term. Or would Fife Council continue to bear the cost?

- Heating.

Heating plant is considered to out of date and in need of replacement. Would this be left to the new occupant? I also understand that there is a facility in Glenrothes, where Fife Council can control the heating in our building. Would this remain in place? Any new operator would wish to be in sole control of heating – after all, their funds would be paying for it.

- Agreements.

What agreements would Fife Council require? Copies of such documents supplied to the Community Council would increase knowledge and help any interested individual or group to pull together a suitable proposal. Is there a reason that Fife Council do not wish to release this information?

You witnessed the feelings of the meeting and the support from the Community for keeping the Centre open. It is difficult to get people out on a Winter's night, but many made the effort as they feel strongly about the Crossgates Community retaining their Community Centre. I also acknowledge the positive comments from all of the Councillors about the retention of the facility.

I hope that the meeting of the Working Group on 29 January starts a process that will echo the words in the paper "Future of Leisure – Inclusive & Community led". My current reading of the Officials paper is that it is a long way from delivering on this front. I believe that we are a community that desires to retain its Centre, but to retain it in the proper format so that going forward it's a facility that all can be proud of without the need to be a drag on anyone's finances.