

Elgin Community Council meeting

10th May 2022 7:00PM

The Lounge, Elgin Town Hall

Attending:

Alastair Kennedy, Jim Wiseman, Graham Jarvis, David Chapman (Associate), Richard Dyce, Douglas Clark (Remotely, had to leave early), Hazel Lawson, Councillor Amber Dunbar, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Jérémie Fernandes, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Peter Bloomfield, Councillor Sandy Keith, Gordie Wells, Katherine Bowditch, Alison Stockley, Brian Irvine

Apologies:

Steve Christie (his lift had not materialised!), Eddie Wallace

Minutes:

1. Welcome & Apologies

2. Minutes of last meeting

1. Proposer GJ, Seconded: AK

3. Matters arising

4. Welcome to newly elected Councillors Councillors Amber Dunbar (Elgin City North), Jérémie Fernandes (Elgin City North), and Peter Bloomfield (Elgin City South), returning Councillor Sandy Keith (Elgin City North), and re-elected Councillors John Divers (Elgin City South) & Graham Leadbitter (Elgin City South).

6. Gulls update / public meeting. AK announced he had finally had contact from NatureScot. JD Concerned as to why they are suddenly interested. GL clear about licences. Members of the committee had heard conflicting advice. GJ discussed the on-going requirement for individual licences. RD Asked if the advice was primary legislation? GL was happy to push for an agreed council policy. Legislation was being tightened. Since November each individual household / tenant was required to submit an individual application. NatureScot had seen the Gull population in decline, and highlighted the migration from the coast to inland. SK asked if the appropriate council officer be briefed by council leaders. AK then read email from Chris @ NatureScot. BI pointed out that seagull population had moved inland due coastal fishing decline. JD discussed Elgin BIDs sonic prevention solution. AS explained that from point of view of South Guildry street, they had previously not been aware of gulls in winter, but that it had worsened last winter. Garden birds need to be considered. AK Pointed out that gulls don't migrate. PB outlined his military experience of gull control for flight safety was that of all the methods tried, only egg removal worked. GJ asked the newly elected council members to take up the Gull issue. JD asked PB if the 'flight exception' ruling that allowed for gull control on airbases applied within Elgin? PB was clear that it does not. AK to organise meeting, to include Jim Grant, Karen Sievewright, Edward Thomas from Moray Council, and Gemma Cruickshank from Elgin BID. GJ suggested that large Social Housing

Landlords be asked as well. PB wondered if the NatureScot policy was the same in Fraserbrough? AK was ask to check their policy. JD wondered if Aberdeenshire have a distinct policy.

7. There was a Poverty Action Hub Event in Rothes covering mitigation measures, Insulation; There will also be an all day conference in the Town Hall on the 25th June. AK to organise meeting via Zoom. AK asked if members could let AK know if they wished to attend. AK highlighted that Moray was one of the worse places in Scotland for fuel Poverty. RD asked if local business such as AES would be invited? Richard Lockhead will be giving the opening address. Funding had been made available from the Government "A Just Transition" fund.

8. Planning Item: Springfield School. AK saw no reason to waste further ECC energy on it. GJ agreed that there no point in trying change it. JD pointed out that the planned changed was only a slight relocation south by several feet.

9. Queens' Jubilee: AK noted that the Avenue of trees in the Cooper park was not going ahead, due to the maintenance costs. GL explained that a group of 7 trees would be planted instead, and it was understood that Moray Council had been approached for funding from the Cooper Park Trust. GL felt that the New Councillors should look forward to their training on the available funds and trusts within Moray. AK noted that Elgin Rotary were running events over the Jubilee weekend in the Cooper Park. GJ felt we would be foolish to run a 'competing' event. AK will contact Nicola Moss re lighting of the Deanshaugh Bridge. GL suggested that there might be an issue about the lights needing replacement. AK if new lights would be available. GL could not say, but highlighted the expense of replacements, e.g. the lights in the High Street fountain had cost £16k.

10. AK explained that SC had wanted to raise the matter of Old Mills. JD noted that there had been numerous meetings over the years, and that in previous incidents, Council Planning officers had been involved. However there were limitations to what could be done. PB mentioned the changed the planning application for storage. GJ raised the vermin problem. JD described the storage of paper panels prior to the fire incident. JD noted that the previous Enforcement Orders had been for specific items only. There had been flooding caused by the lane being blocked, and that flooding was a regular occurrence. GJ asked if compulsory purchase was an option. GL pointed out that there was a long list of other compulsory purchase issues which would then be raised. AK wondered if there should be a Land Reform meeting. GL noted that due process must be followed. GJ cited the Prospect Terrace case in Lossiemouth, where the owner had had to be identified by council, which had taken a disproportionate amount of council time and money.

11. High St Parking. GJ noted that there had still been no response from any MSP, and that the the Hight Street parking situation was the worse he'd ever seen: the Bins beside the opticians on Batchen street exacerbated the situation, and that there were no parking restrictions. GJ felt that there was no likely prospect of prosecution. JD pointed out that business owners had told him that it was simple cheaper to pay the fine. GJ made it clear that car owners identifiable as shop owners. RD asked if

BID were doing anything? JD – yes, they were talking to shop owners. AS highlighted the Batchen street display boards as a particular obstacle.

(BREAK for Coffee)

12. Police: RD mentioned that we had not received a police report in time for the meeting.

13. Meeting rooms – AK was asked to check with Debra Duke if there were meeting rooms available for ECC meetings.

14. Banking – balance Sheet Acct no 2. Promised Elgin BID can get money 15. Station Closure update. AK to contact DC re Complaint about 3 week consultation. GJ complained that th ticket machine, was not a substitute for station manager. GL pointed out that it cheaper to get a ticket to Aberdeen than one to Dyce.

16. Participatory Budget – AK highlighted the Scottish Government commitment that 1% of council budgets will be subject to PB by 2021. Money for Moray had benefitted from £400k over the last few years. Investing in Communities opened this month for next year. In the last round beneficiaries included a lunch club and Fochabers Men's Club. GJ pointed out that 1% of the Moray Budget is about £2.5M.

17. Membership: There was a discussion concerning the co-option of members.

18. AOCB

1. BI asked about the possibility of Stage Coach re-establishing a Town Centre bus route. AK sad that the previous route had been heavily subsidised. RD to email Stage Coach for an update.

2. BI asked about the Poundland site. JD said that completion was due May/June 2023. GJ noted that the scaffolding had been taken down.

4. Rubbish & Litter. Edgar road, Matalan car park is part of the problem with birds. Burn clogged. Does the council have any influence with Robertsons or their Factors?

19. Next meeting will be 14th June. PB gave his apologies in advance.