

Monthly Meeting, 14th June 2022

Elgin Town Hall

Attending:

Alastair Kennedy, Alison Stockley, Debra Duke, Eddie Wallace, Graham Jarvis, Hazel Lawson, Jack Wright, James Smith, Joyce Bremner, Katherine Bowditch, Neil Alexander, Richard Dyce, Steve Christie, David Chapman (Associate), Councillor Amber Dunbar, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Jérémie Fernandes, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Sandy Keit

Apologies:

Gordie Wells, James Wiseman, Douglas Clark (Remotely, had to leave early), Brian Irvine, Councillor Peter Bloomfield

Agenda:

1. Welcome & Apologies
2. James Smith, Engineer (Traffic Transportaton) Council Roads Dept
 1. JS gave a detailed explanation for the speed limit of 40 rather than 30mph.
 2. Existing speed or perception. Perception of 45mph signage, will only drop it to 43.
 3. At the 85% percentile of speeds taken in January, 2/3 would cause complaints to police if the speed limit was set at 30mph.
 4. JS discussend features for speed management. The main issue is that there is no property frontage adjacent to the road. Safe crossing points for cycle paths have been planned. As an example, the hexisting speeding on Morrison Rd & Wards Rd occur because there are only developments on one side of the carriageway. GJ pointed out that houses set back on new builds planned for Linkwood. JS open space not good for speed managment. JD highlighted that currently 20m from properties to back fence. RD asked about speeding on the blind bend on North College St. JS offered to have it surveyed.
5. JW discussed the fact that future bus network planning Elgin is under review. Changes couldn't be made through lockdown, but this no longer applies. 70% of bus services are busier. Reviews unlikely to require cuts to services and pre-covid plans shelved. Services for Dr Grays & Wittet Dr, are all under review. Currently staffing levels are OK. Services wher busy for the Jubilee, during the English holidays, and for the Whisky festival.

JW raised the fact that Elgin Bus station was experiencing an issue with youth from about 10:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays. Police & Ambulance services had been in attendance for the last 3 weekends. Data suggested that youths were coming in from Keith, Forbes, & Buckie. Buses to Keith departed 15mins later on Friday evenings. Buses have had to reverse due to police vehicles blocked exit. There had been a meeting that afternoon with several relevant parties (Youth Orgs, Police, etc.). JW felt that the situation cannot continue. AK was unaware of the issue. JW Asked for no press coverage. EW asked the age group involved. JW confirmed that it was 14-17 year olds. GJ suggested that the free fare was the cause. JW numbers – free all over Scotland. Stagecoach had been forced to bring regular passengers inside the bus station. Extra support was planned for summer holidays. SC asked about the New Elgin route 33 closing for 4 weeks. JW said it was delayed for 4 weeks. JD highlighted the road works, and that Wards Rd will be open shortly. JD said that Elgin BID were involved in activities. JW felt that kids playing system of Stagecoach.

AK asked about investment in business? JW discussed the arrival of electric buses

in England. There were 22 in Aberdeen, and another 14 would be added in 18 months. Routes in Moray were not conducive to Electric. Services in winter requires heating. GJ asked about hydrogen-powered buses in Aberdeen. JW said that trials were not going well.

JW will be leaving Elgin to take up a senior post in Aldershot. He had no idea about his replacement. JW asked to keep him in the loop. He will introduce replacement. JW was clear that the bus station situation needs to be sorted over the Summer.

3. Minutes of last meeting: AK asked for a small correction: There “will be” an Action Hub in Rothies. Proposed by GJ, seconded by AK
4. Matters arising.
5. Gulls public meeting – Monday 20th June 1:30pm. NatureScot got in touch – Chris Donald has agreed to attend meeting at Monday 20th June 1:30pm. AK highlighted that all councillors, Elgin BID, GJ, SC, RD, and Jim Grant from Moray Council should aim to attend, and that we all need to support the Gull management plan.
6. Energy Fair – Saturday 25th June 10am. A subgroup of the JCC are organising it. AK said that it was for people with energy issues can get advice. Richard Lohead will be opening it with a speech. Michael Matheson minister for Net Zero, Energy, and Transport.
7. Planning update – no update
8. Old Mills – Update from councillors. AK believed that PB will report back next meeting. JD noted that council have gone in 2 / 3 times, and have charged for clean-up.
9. Councillor update. JD is enjoying his Re-training. The Council now has a Conservative minority administration. SK noted that the first round of Committee meetings having taken place. Some issues North Elgin had arisen: The bypass, the hospital, and developers ensuring facilities in place before housing. JD Bypass works in Wards and Edgar Rd meant that parts of New Elgin were grid-locked. AK Asked about the Hospitals. SK noted that there were issues with dental and maternity provision.
10. Update on High Street parking
 1. GJ met with BID, police, & business. Businesses have issues with disable zones, and at times were unable to get out of their shops. Sandwich boards have been moved, and Police have done some enforcement: Cars were moved on. Teh Council has agreed to review the signage. CCTV cameras are not working, so there is no chance of prosecution. Police took lots of notes on Culber, Lossie, Batchen St. Ther plastic bollards on the Hight St are being removed. RD noted that the parking posters displayed in some shops on Batchen St were giving mixed messengers.
 2. AK asked when Police took over? GJ said that the Council needed to decriminalize. JD noted that only Elgin has a problem. RD asked about the outsourcing of fines. AK wondered if there was a long term solution. GJ noted that the Police could only intervine when resourced were available. GJ wondered if special constables were a solution. The issue needed to be brought to a head. AK asked if the ECC felt that another meeting would be useful? GJ said that the Police had indicated that they were willing to listen, as were the Council. AK suggested we it on an agenda. SK noted that theat once the old Woolworth’s site is completed the issue should improve. RD asked if a traffic gate could be installed at the bottom of Batchen St. JD noted that bollards will be installed once the old Woolworth’s site is completed.

11. Police

1. AK community safety report. DD will ask the Police to change the format. JD asked if councillors could receive a copy. RD noted that the police were planning to attend future ECC meetings.

12. Banking

1. LOIP funding has gone through. There have been several Small transactions. AK noted that the second account issue was still not sorted. AK to sort.

13. Men's Shed update:

1. Now in Pinefield. AK asked that the ECC should fight for cheap rate. AD noted that the topic of concessionary rents had been raised in a Council meeting that day. JD said that the Government were pressurising councils to ensure best commercial value for rentals.
2. Community Assets Transfers: AK wondered how many had taken place? Forres Town Hall, Fishers hall were given as examples. A correctly constituted group was required.

14. City Bid Comiseration

1. AK voice our disappointment.

15. ICO update

1. Deb – direct debit. RD will investigate.

16. Membership / Co-options

1. The following were co-opted:
 1. Neil Alexander
 2. Brian Irvine
2. JB was asked if she was interested.
3. KW expressed her interest, when prompted.

17. AOCB

1. AK: There was a draft community council social media consultation which he will forward it to everyone.
2. AK: DD Looks after JCC. Every JCC meeting there have been requests for Training.
3. SC Teenagers were causing fires in wheelie bins. One incident had knocked out internet access on South St. JD noted that the CCTV not working. SC had expected things to last until at least Friday for reconnection.
4. Website: DD had asked for website info. What tools were available? RD wondered i there not a standarised. The Forres CC were using a site set-up by Gordon Rudimean. RD believed that this was run as a commercial enterprise. AK will circulating the date for a meeting.
5. GJ – decision on meetings in-person only until we can get Hybrid meetings councils. DD will ask Chief Executive when this will be available.
6. DC Wanted to thank the ARI for his recent care. Whilst he was there he noted that the Helicopter service had been running 24/7. He had nothing but praise for NHS.
7. JF. The Positive Action Group was organising planters and street cleaning and was having to pay for plants and equipment. It is not a constituted group. Was there any funding available? JD asked if SPICE had “gone to the wall”. AK noted that they had put in PB bid, then withdrawl their application. The Common Fund should be approached for funts.
 1. AS: As one of two volunteers creating tThe flower display on Lady Hill, she wanted to thank the Cove Bay Nurseries for their donation of flowers.
8. Next meeting: 12th July, with location to be confirmed as the Moray Council Chambers.

