

Minutes of Meeting of the City & Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council,

Tuesday 9th July 2013 at 7pm held in the Moray Council Chambers

1. SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES

MEMBERS:

Alastair Kennedy (Chair),
David Chapman,
George P Littlejohn,
Pat Paterson,
James Wiseman (Minutes).

Bryan Watson (Vice Chair)
Steven Christie,
Aidan Milne (Youth Member),
Cheryl Robb,

Gordon Methven (Secretary),
Anne Glover,
Steven Milne (Treasurer),
Mary Wall,

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr John Divers,
Cllr Graham Leadbitter,
Sandy Gallacher(Stagecoach),
Robin Hope (Elgin FC),
Inspector Gordon MacDonald (Police Scotland).

Cllr Patsy Gowans,
Kayleigh Heisart,
Steven George(Stagecoach)
Hazel Lawson (Northern Scot),

Cllr Barry Jarvis,
Michael McGovan,
Graham Tatters (Elgin FC),
Alistair Whitfield (Press & Journal),

APOLOGIES:

Murray Ross,
Gordon Wells.

Cllr Barry Jarvis,

Cllr Mike Shand,

Alastair Kennedy acknowledged Cllr James Allan's recent illness and wished him a speedy recovery on behalf of the city & Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council.

WELCOME

Alastair Kennedy took the Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in particular two young people. He introduced the guest speakers from Elgin City FC.

ELGIN CITY FC – 3G PITCH

Graham Tatters, Chairman of Elgin City FC, and his colleague Robin Hope, Community Football Officer, gave a presentation asking the Community Council to comment on allowing the use of a piece of Common Good land to develop a 3g football pitch at Lesser Borough Briggs. They explained the savings a 3G pitch would give the First Team who currently have to travel to Inverness and Dingwall to train, and the benefit of a safe local training area for the football development programme which currently helps some 800-900 people from 3yrs to adult interested in football. A 3G pitch could deliver £50k/year of savings to the first team. It was explained that Elgin FC would manage the use of the pitch for football development at no cost to the community. The project requires an adjustment to the flood alleviation works and 20m x 70m from the existing Borough Briggs football ground.

There was a general discussion and it was resolved to decide off line via email discussion. In the course of the discussion it was understood that there were no issues for the helicopters that land occasionally in Borough Briggs. Flood lights would be provided on the new pitch and caution was urged over the reduction in capacity at Borough Briggs.

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES – 11th JUNE 2013

Steven Christie proposed, seconded by George Littlejohn, that the minutes of 11th June be accepted as a true record of that meeting. There were no objections.

3. MATTERS ARISING

KING STREET: James Wiseman said that he still had no explanation of the decision from the Planning Officer and would follow it up.

GLENMORAY: James Wiseman to arrange a meeting with the Manager of Glenmoray Distillery and SPICE regarding the floral display.

ORIENTEERING EVENT: Alastair has obtained the banners and they are to be deployed a week ahead of the event.

COACHDRIVER's HANDBOOK: The Elgin Entry has been submitted.

4. AGENCY UPDATES

4a. POLICE – Insp Gordon McDonald

Inspector McDonald did not offer any statistics as he was delegated to attend the meeting at short notice but offered to answer any questions instead.

TRAFFIC WARDENS: Gordon Methven asked about Traffic Warden cuts. Insp. McDonald said this was recent and the extent and timescale was unknown.

SPEEDING: Alastair Kennedy mentioned a letter received by the Community Council about speeding on South Street. Insp McDonald to forward letter to road policing Sergeant Chris Wheelan for response to next Community Council.

POLICING: George Littlejohn had noted a Government statement that there were 1500 more police "on the beat" and asked if this was true locally. Insp. McDonald explained that B Division extended from Forres to Laurencekirk and deployment was flexible but that Elgin did not suffer.

STREET PASTORS: Mary Wall commented that the Street Pastors were working well.

4b. STAGECOACH UPDATE – Sandy Gallacher & Steven George

SERVICES: Stagecoach are awaiting a decision from Moray Council about funding cuts before deciding which services are to be withdrawn.

STANCES: Cheryl Robb had experienced busses stopping in the wrong stance at the bus station and people had missed busses as a result. Alastair Kennedy was aware of this happening in Inverness too. Sandy Gallacher reiterated that when busses are in the wrong stance Drivers must get out and advise waiting customers. Sandy said he would remind all his drivers of this requirement

SIGNAGE: George Littlejohn had met with Stagecoach and discussed the signage on the Inverness Airport bus.

FARES: Cllr Graham Leadbitter had noticed inconsistent fares Fochabers – Elgin and Cheryl Robb had found inconsistencies on the Airport bus too. Sandy Gallacher thought this might be due to poor communication prior to uploading prices and undertook to look at this.

4c. COMMUNITY WARDEN – No Report

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

5a. PLANNING

BREWERS FAYRE: Bryan Watson had reviewed the Brewers Fayre extension application and confirmed that there were no issues with it. He commented that it was pleasing to see the investment being made to double the capacity.

LICENCING HOURS: Following an application for extended opening hours for catering establishments many views were expressed. Cllr John Divers explained the regime employed by the Council of pubs closing 1:30am, catering closing 2:30am and night clubs closing 3am which Gordon Methven confirmed was successful in reducing late at night trouble in town. David Chapman pointed out the lack of service stops for through the night traffic and Bryan Watson echoed that in relation to night shift working on the road. Steven Milne added that down town could be treated separately from out of town as it was unlikely that many people would walk out to the periphery of the town. Cheryl Robb pointed out that any new late hours regime could be tried out. Kayleigh Heisart suggested trying a one hour close down like Tesco. Cllr Barry Jarvis added that any establishment that wished to stay open late would be mindful of their own safety and security at the time of making an application.

5b. RECREATION & LEISURE – Anne Glover

FLOWERBEDS: Anne Glover had sourced a specialist who has offered to look at repairing the urn at Lady Hill. Anne reported that the urn is made of plaster which we had previously been unsure. Watering the flowerbeds is a logistical problem in terms of getting enough water to the site. Anne Glover asked if the previously promised £50 could be used for the purchase of a water barrel from Argos.

5c. ENVIRONMENT – Mary Wall

Mary Wall reported little progress on Fare Trade this month due to a family visit.

ALLOTMENT: Mary advised that the allotment subscription had been paid. Cllr John Divers added that Rebecca Kail had met with Richard Hartland regarding allotments and now 6b areas have been identified for allotments.

5d. ROADS & TRANSPORTATION – George Littlejohn

BUSSES: George Littlejohn had met with Stagecoach at the Elgin Bus Garage 17 June 2013.

Route 11 to Inverness Airport and Inverness City: We contend incorrectly destination signed to Nairn only. Route 11 is to be further investigated by Elgin Stagecoach management to enhance clarity of the route for intending passengers – the front-of-bus information screens to include Inverness Airport and the final destination, Inverness. On Friday July 5th George received a call from Sandy Gallacher re the routes in Question. Sandy advised that an IT part-program had been sent to Elgin from Aberdeen to change the format which was necessary to change the program. However, the wrong parts had been sent. The correct input has been asked for to upgrade the system.

Routes 33A & 33C from Lossiemouth to Elgin: We wished a further upgrade in destination signage to affirm Elgin as the principal destination and the districts in Elgin for the final destination also on the screen eg Elgin to Pinefield / Thornhill / Manitoba.

RAILWAY: 21/6/13 George Littlejohn Replied to letter from Abellio – Netherlands Railways: This was regarding our submission to them for the new ScotRail franchise 2014 onwards, and our submission on InterCity Trains, plus the Aberdeen – Elgin – Inverness main line infrastructure upgrade, including a better service schedule to and from the City of Elgin Mon / Sat. This to match the a.m. rush hour service Elgin / Inverness / Elgin Mon Sat.

24/ 6/13 George contacted the Department for Transport, the U K Government regarding the InterCity Express Project – Replacing the Class 125 Express trains that ply between Inverness / Aberdeen to London. Spoke to a Mat Dillon, Deputy Director of the ICEP.

The Project is at concept design stage with the consultants. Train consist will be 9 coaches; Carry 627 passengers- 100 more than the Class 125's at present; Overhead electric power traction pick-up between London / Edinburgh; 5 powerful diesel engines under floor will power the 9 coach train Edinburgh to Aberdeen or Inverness; Will be more fuel efficient; Seating plan in standard class will include 8 tables, as is in coaches at present; More room between airline type seats; Wifi throughout the trains; Convenient luggage space throughout; Improvements in journey times within Scotland & between Edinburgh & London; Hitachi's new factory in preparatory stages of construction near Newcastle at present, where these new trains will be built; Some may be in service by 2015 / 16.

GUEST SPEAKERS: 21/6/13 On behalf of the Chairman, George wrote to our M P and M S P, Angus Robertson and Richard Lochhead respectively inviting them to be our guest to speak at one of our monthly meetings during 2013. Dates were supplied. Angus Robertson's P A has replied with a positive date for the October meeting 13.

ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL: George attended Moray College 24/ 6/ 13 – the New Elgin High School outline exhibition. He filled in a questionnaire and commented on good landscaping be part of the overall school grounds.

ELGIN ACADEMY: 26 / 6 / 13 George attended the official opening of the new school at Elgin Academy. Guest were entertained by students and staff prior to and during the opening ceremony. Post opening ceremony, guests were entertained in the main staff room for nibbles and light refreshments. Tours were offered to guests, so he took the opportunity. He was guided around all facilities by a well informed 6th year girl pupil. Quite impressive from what the old school had to offer. George said he was impressed by the amount of light which gets into the classrooms and common rooms. From Languages to trades engineering to music to gym and sports field, the students of the new Elgin Academy are well served. When questioned, students like their new facilities: More presently stay in school for meals than used to be the case, due perhaps to the up to date food hall, serving freshly cooked meals at lunchtime. From a two story building at the north end, to the south an amphitheatre leads to a three story school at its bottom step. George said that taking all into consideration, and representing the C&RBofECC, he was duly impressed with the new Elgin Academy.

COMFORT SCHEME: 30/ 6 / 13 Comfort Scheme – Stirlingshire want their CPS scheme to augment facilities that they already own. In Moray, the first thing that Moray Council seem to zero in on is Public Toilet facilities: The easy option? It is worth pointing out that the City of Elgin had one of the cleanest Public toilet facilities in Scotland, on North Street: This was closed in rounds of cuts in recent years, we were told costing the Moray Council £50,000 per year to operate. Their are different ways to look at a £50,000 investment, when it comes to a Downtown location catering for local and out of town Moray people, travelling business people and tourists alike. Does the image of the City come in to play somewhere from an importance perspective? After reading Stirlingshire's report on their CPS scheme and what they wished to achieve, we in Moray have much to think about, and much catching up to do.

George confirmed that our Eight Acres Floral Bed has been dug over and a summer show of flowers has been planted.

5e. YOUTH

Alastair Kennedy welcomed the input from the young people present and asked them to form a Youth Sub-committee.

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING

6a. ELGIN NORTH AREA FORUM - No report.

6b. ELGIN SOUTH AREA FORUM

Steven Christie reported that the South Area Forum discussed the New Rail Bridge, South Forum Action Plan, New Elgin Road Closure and expect to discuss school rolls at their next meeting.

6c. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CITY OF ELGIN (SPICE)

Steven Christie reported that SPICE is now formally constituted. It is also registered with the "Your Neighbourhood" project which is part of the Beautiful Scotland campaign.

ALEXANDRA ROAD: Steven Christie reported positive responses from TESCO, Gordon & McPhail and Moray Council regarding clearing of shrubs at Black Friars road. BEAR Scotland need to be involved.

COMFORT SCHEME: various options were discussed for SPICE to consider.

7. EDUCATION

7a. ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL

7b. ELGIN ACADEMY

7c. PRIMARY SCHOOLS

8. TREASURERS REPORT

No 1 Account £2837.39

No 2 Account £3,173.68 as before.

9. ONGOING TOPICS

9a. DEANSHAUGH PLAYING FIELDS – No Update

9b. OLD MILLS

It was noted that the site had been cleared and it was understood that there may still be some concerns over the site.

9c. MORRISTON RUNNING TRACK

10. EVENTS

10a. SCOTTISH 6DAY ORIENTEERING EVENT

Banners purchased and arrangements made for their deployment.

10b. COMMUNITY AWARDS – Ongoing, No Update

10c. TRAINING

21 September 2013 Windfarm Training – James Wiseman to attend.

10d. INVITATIONS

CINEMA: Bryan Watson thanked Martin Thomson of the Moray Playhouse Cinema for hosting a Community Council visit to show our appreciation for the investment in Elgin. The manager had reported 50% increase in attendance. Bryan to write to the Cinema.

11. JCC UPDATE

12. CONSULTATIONS

13. CORRESPONDENCE

14. AOCB

FUTURE APPOLOGIES: James Wiseman tendered apologies for August and Alastair Kennedy advised that Catherine Sinclair will take the minutes.

15. CLOSE

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 13th August 2013 - 7pm at Moray Council Chambers

CLOSE: There being no further business to discuss the Chair thanked all those present for attending and closed the meeting at 9:20pm

CITATION: These Minutes were adopted as a True Record of Proceedings:

Proposer: _____

Seconder: _____

Chair: _____ Mr Alastair Kennedy

Date: _____