

## **Elgin Community Council Minutes**

**Time: October 10th, 2023 7:00PM**

*Town Hall, Elgin*

### **Attendees:**

Alastair Kennedy Steve Christie David Chapman Graham Jarvis Douglas Clark  
Brian Irvine Joyce Bremner James Wiseman Hazel Lawson Katherine Bowditch  
Alison Stockley Richard Dyce Councillor Amber Dunbar Councillor John Divers  
Councillor Sandy Keith Councillor Graham Leadbitter Councillor Jérémie Fer-  
nandes

### **Apologies:**

Councillor Peter Bloomfield Neil Alexander

### **Absent**

John Cryans

### **Minutes:**

1. Welcome & Apologies
2. Police update
3. Minute of last meeting
  1. Prop: JB Second: AS
4. Matters Arising
5. Stagecoach update (JC)
  1. JC was unable to attend.
  2. AK Commented on the new Moray-wide timetable.
  3. DC Not 35 & 10. Changes good, generally much improved past couple of weeks.
  4. AK felt that Stagecoach should be congratulated for this.
6. Finance (SC)
  1. 2 Grants received Oct-Sep: £2,322.07
  2. Expenditure:
    1. Venue hire £456
    2. Subs £59.99
    3. Website £90.58
    4. Tug of War £720 Total expenditures £1591.66
  3. DC asked if we were paying subs to Transform Scotland? SC was pleased to say we were classed as free.
  4. JW asked if the amounts were excluding funds held for other groups. SC said that other groups now have sub-accounts.
  5. AK Asked if we could get wreaths?
  6. GJ Congratulated SC on the work.
7. Joint Scottish Forum – do we wish to join?
  1. GJ asked what was the purpose? We should wait until they have a purpose. Do they have any powers? AK No, they have no powers.

RD asked what were the costs? AK said that there were no costs. In the past ECC had hosted their annual meetings here. They held an annual conference. GJ suggested that we keep an eye on it and see where it goes.

8.
  1. JCC 50 years celebration event
  2. AK attended an event in Holyrood.
9. Democracy Matters
  1. AK noted that we held an event a few years ago. JW said that it was useful for networking with people from other areas. Senior council officials were at the tables. JW said that there was some discussion of the timing of busses. BI said that if there opportunities for networking, then this was no bad thing. JW some events for future plans for Grant Lodge had been held. RD asked when a decision needs to be made. AK term for applying to transfer services to us. AK will resend the email. People should get back to AK by 5pm 12th Oct. GJ said it was a good title, but wondered what the draw for people was.
10. Parking – including parking at Elgin Cathedral
  - GJ raised the issue of a doubling of the parking day rate. JD mentioned that the rate was £24 in Edinburgh, making it a bargain in Elgin. JB expressed concern about the contradiction in terms, where efforts to reinvigorate the center of Elgin were accompanied by increased charges. The question was raised about why a request had not been made to the Scottish Government to decriminalise parking, allowing the Council to manage local parking and potentially become self-sufficient. AK suggested exploring the possibility of using some of the £2 million in funding. GJ provided examples from other areas. SK noted that the police were not actively enforcing parking regulations.
  - GJ emphasised that the primary authority to address this issue lies with the Council. SC pointed out that Batchen St shop owners were becoming aware of the parking situation, but parking on the left-hand side continued to obstruct shop entrances. AK inquired about the views of elected members. GJ raised the question of whether non-Elgin residents wouldn't object to using some of the £2 million in funding. There was discussion about the likelihood of such funding being categorized as capital rather than revenue. Concerns were voiced about the sustainability of enforcement after decriminalization, the need to review all traffic restrictions, and statutory requirements. GJ highlighted the significant revenue generated from parking fines. It was noted that local authorities do not have the same powers as the police in addressing parking violations, as parking is considered a criminal offense. BI suggested focusing on a smaller area for effective enforcement. AK expressed a desire to see car park attendants. GJ questioned the possibility of expanding staff. AK suggested enforcement hours from 11 AM to 4 PM. GJ pointed out the absence of staff dedicated to traffic management. JB mentioned the issue of pavement parking in

December, with a potential exception. GJ discussed the rising bollard situation, indicating that it couldn't be addressed until North Street development was completed.

- JD noted the situation on Batchen St and Plain Stones. GJ noted the absence of parked cars on Inverness High St. JW referred to a previous consultation on High St access. GJ mentioned funding and the tendering process for bollards. AK brought up the reduction of available parking due to the closure of two car parks. GJ inquired about the repair of the multi-storey car park. JD mentioned that parking is a recurring topic in every committee. RD expressed an interest in knowing the prioritization of issues. JD mentioned the Elgin Town Center plan. BI noted that there was no committee specifically focused on parking. JB raised the question of whether the Levelling application was related to "Levelling up." The discussion touched on the Elgin-centric perspective and how other Moray towns were affected. JD mentioned that only seven towns in Scotland were receiving the funding, which came as a total surprise to councillors.
11. JT PB Update (AK)
  12. Voting open - rural little groups. And Elgin Men's shed. Closes this Friday. Complaints about 10 votes, AK good platform. JTPB.Scot.
  13. Transport forum (DONM – proposed for 10th October)
  14. AK can't believe that the forum is same time as ECC. ECC on the Forum since the start.
  15. Planning – Findrassie and Elgin South Changes
  16. JW Findrassie Master Plan.
    - GJ, BI, DC, and AK discussed recent event. No particular problems reported by AK.
    - Changes driven by changes in legislation, including JW's Green Corridor extension.
    - GJ emphasized better linkage. The A941 re-alignment has been removed.
    - Planned consultations were discussed. JW inquired about densities.
    - GJ emphasized the need to avoid car domination and allocate space behind houses for parking.
    - DC noted that Robertson will take over once initial houses are built.
  17. Elgin South Changes.
    - Pre-application for the cemetery on Link-Wood road was discussed.
    - AK highlighted the need for parking.
    - GJ emphasized ensuring adequate parking.
    - AK suggested considering hard-standing between rows.
  18. National Local Place Plan Seminar.
    - Documentations have been circulated.
    - JW offered to summarize the content.
    - SC inquired about the number of affordable houses received.
    - JW mentioned changes in the balance of affordable housing and expected a consultation.

- AK suggested keeping an eye on the ratio of affordable to non-affordable housing.
  - AK noted that all affordable housing on Silver Crest was not included.
19. Education
  20. JB reported on Fiona Davidson at High School. The meeting scheduled for September 29th was agreed upon, but Fiona is currently off-sick and unlikely to return before the break holidays. JB will have S6 students attend the meeting, and AK inquired about their enthusiasm, to which JB replied that they seemed keen.
  21. Media & Engagement Strategy
  22. BI will discuss this matter further.
  23. Elected Members Update
  24. AD highlighted that parking is the biggest issue and suggested the need for a town council in Elgin.
  25. SK attended a meeting with Landshut pupils with AD. Twinning matters were discussed, with Councillor Allan being in charge, although he is currently unwell.
  26. ECRG (BI)
  27. BI discussed the Elgin Community Resilience Group's request to become a sub-group. GJ commended their work.
  28. AK expressed that BI needs a restart on a smaller scale, and it's unclear where the group is heading. There were concerns about the grand plans of an involved officer. BI emphasized the need for focus and a central location in Elgin rather than multiple locations within Elgin.
  29. JB inquired about the flooding issue, and BI confirmed that it falls within the group's remit, focusing on the wash from houses rather than the height of the road.
  30. Police Focus Group (BI)
  31. BI reported that Napier Uni was contacted regarding the Focus Group, with four more people needed. JD highlighted the need for JCC participation Moray-wide, and the next JCC meeting is on November 9th.
  32. Any Other Business (AOBC)
  33. AK raised a debate about funding, with rural councils receiving smaller grants per capita. Various funding options and expenses were discussed, including venue hire, access costs, and other expenses.
  34. JW mentioned previous discussions on funding and emphasized the importance of a cost-effective approach.
  35. GJ referred to the Hall Rental Grant Scheme and suggested looking at models for youth groups in rural areas.
  36. AK highlighted the need for transparency in claiming expenses to provide the Council with a clear idea of CCs' costs.
  37. Douglas C discussed off-peak fares and the scrapping of the cheapest tickets.
    - AK raised the question of reaching out to the transport minister.
    - Douglas C mentioned that he would draft a letter to Fiona Hyslop /

Richard Lohead. He will take the bus rather than train.

6. JB asked for an update on Pinefield, asking if people have already moved in.
7. SK mentioned there are 32 properties already occupied.
8. SC noted after last meeting, there was a consultation on Allocations Policy.
9. DC asked if there was Clash Gour update? AK had nothing to report. DC asked about Elgin energy? JD also had nothing to report. DC noted that it was supposed to be starting in 2024, and operating 2025. The sites had been sold to a Spanish company. The Grid won't be ready for 10 years. AK said that Zero-carbon Moray will discuss.
10. JW wanted to warn people that using MS Edge's - AI should be aware that content is being harvested.
11. RD notified members that he was resigning as secretary, due to other commitments, and that a replacement should be sought.
12. Date of next meeting - 14th November 2023