

Minutes of Meeting of the City and Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council
Tuesday 13th January 2009 at 7.00 pm in the Moray Council Chambers

1. Present

Chairman: Alex Macmillan

Members: Bryan Watson (Vice Chair) Alastair Kennedy
Murray Ross George Littlejohn
Anne Glover Morna Abernethy
Harry Torry Lewis Watson (Youth Rep)

In Attendance: Cllr Divers Cllr Jarvis
Cllr Russell Cllr Shand
Ann Griffin (Minutes) Sgt Colin Taylor (Grampian Police)
Rev Rollo PC Stuart Sim (Grampian Police)

Apologies: Cllr Leadbitter, Cllr Sharpe, Donald McIntosh

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 2nd December 2008

The previous minutes were approved as accurate.

Proposed: Murray Ross Seconded: Alastair Kennedy

3. Matters Arising from 2nd December 2008

3.10b Children's Play Park at Glassgreen. Anne Glover has arranged a meeting with John Main, MD of Springfield Properties. Morna offered to attend this meeting also.

9b. Deanshaugh Playing Fields & Toilet. The chairman had received notification that there are no plans to extend the opening hours of the public toilets to accommodate the proposed opening hours of the new skate park. It was reported that the remedial work for contaminated land and work pertaining to the flood plan had been the cause of the current state of the Deanshaugh Playing Field. It was recognised as a complex issue but the Chairman was not satisfied with the reply from the Moray Council and had since spoken with Bob Stewart. A report is being presented to Committee on the 3rd Feb on the issues and it was agreed that the Community Council would consider this matter again when more information is available. Alastair Kennedy posed a query relating to the original planning application for the work on the field. He highlighted the history of Bishopmill United and suggested that this added weight to the need to enable the club to return to their ground to play football.

9c Reiket Lane. Murray had attended the Elgin South Area Forum Linkwood Residents Group meeting with Moray Council Engineers to discuss the pending work on the Reiket Bridge and Reiket Lane which will be closed to traffic for 6 months from the end of January.

9d. BIDS Project. The Chairman reported that the minutes from this meeting are available in correspondence.

4c Bins at Elgin Bus Station. The Chairman reported that there have been new bins sited at Elgin Bus Station which are covered to prevent seagulls from accessing the rubbish. There had been queries as to ownership of the bus station site.

3.5 Data Protection Act. £35 has been paid for the annual fee for the Community Council to be registered as Data Collectors. The Moray Council have already reimbursed this expense.

4. Police Business

a. The Chairman reported that he had circulated a response from Inspector Mowat stating that the proposed gate at Elgin Bus Station is in the planning stage. It was his view that St Giles Shopping Centre owned the land. He had also passed the information regarding keeping residents on Birkenhill Place and Robertson Drive up to date on matters relating to antisocial behaviour in the area to Andy Jamieson, Anti Social Behaviour Officer.

b. Sgt Taylor and Constable Sim offered that it was recognised that the piece of land by the bus station and St Giles Shopping Centre is an area where drinkers congregate but they are continuing efforts to resolve this issue. They also highlighted their plans to attempt to rid the Town Centre area around St Giles Church of the crowds of youths hanging about there. They felt that it is a community problem which with partnership working has a better chance of succeeding. They said that solutions relating to education, law enforcement, and re-installing railings are all being considered. Historic Scotland is currently being consulted with regard to railings. There was a question raised if there could be a by-law introduced to prevent skateboarders using the Plainstones thus persuading them to use the new skate park and keep them away from the steps of the church. The Chairman expressed that in his opinion, that examples have to be made to ensure that the offending youths were discouraged once and for all. Church officials reported that the church is an A1 listed building and one of the top sites in the country and has to be preserved, that the church steps are being damaged and the church at times has accessibility problems due to the volume of young people hanging about. It was suggested that if social seating was available on the Plainstones then perhaps people would use these instead. It was recognised that not all young people congregating in this area were causing problems with antisocial behaviour, that they were a very small minority. It was suggested that railings had been removed during the war and that they could be reinstated to reclaim the area. The police reported that there were not many official offences being committed in this area, but that litter, drinking alcohol and breach of the peace were the offences most likely to occur. It was difficult to prosecute on many of these offences as there had to be two witnesses to a crime and there were not always two police at the scene. The Chairman expressed frustration at a single policeman not being able to prosecute offending citizens. Alistair Kennedy suggested that the physical barrier, as proposed by the Rev Rollo (Minister of St Giles), may be the best option for the way forward and he proposed to support the installation of railings in the area in principle. Seconded by Harry Torry. It was counter proposed to support in principle the installation of the railings with a disabled ramp if this was required for direct disabled access. Alastair Kennedy agreed the modified proposal and this was seconded by Anne Glover. Carried unanimously.

c. Alastair Kennedy had been asked by Inspector Hugh Mackie via the Joint Community Councils of Moray (JCC) to ask Community Councils to consider adding a permanent item on their agendas to include Counter Terrorism. This was discussed with Grampian Police present and it was said that this would ensure that the community were made aware of any potential problems and also that it would help raise the profile. Alistair stated that he had no problem with it being included on the agenda. After debate, it was agreed that future agendas would include: Police Business/Counter Terrorism.

The Chairman thanked Grampian Police and the Church Officials who left the meeting.

5. Young Citizen Certificates

Harry Torry had circulated a preliminary report on the proposed Young Citizen Certificate Scheme and asked for comments and further discussion on the matter. Debate included timescales, criteria, age groups etc. The Chairman suggested that as this was this Community Council's last year in office, that they should have the scheme in place to hand over to the new council. It was therefore agreed that the first awards should be considered for June 2009 with the preceding year being the qualifying period. It was suggested that alongside the certificates, that an outstanding overall award could be presented perhaps as the "Roma Hossack" award. All suggestions to Harry Torry and the sub-group will further discuss the proposal and bring to the next meeting.

6. Community Planning – Local Neighbourhood Forums (LNF's)

The Elgin North and South Joint-Update was available in correspondence. The next meeting for the Elgin South Area Forum had been changed to Tuesday 20th January in New Elgin & Ashgrove Hall at 7pm.

Alistair Kennedy reported that the JCC had compiled a report on Community Planning regarding the Community Engagement Group and the proposed new Voluntary Sector Forum.

7. Committee Reports

- a) Planning. Alastair Kennedy had nothing to report.
- b) Recreation, Leisure & Environment. Anne Glover had nothing to report.
- c) Roads & Transportation. George presented a report from the Roads & Transportation Committee with letters currently being circulated regarding the infrastructure within Elgin and to who they had been sent. George also reported that the Committee had responded to several road traffic orders including Duffus Road and Pansport Road (where they urged another look at the reduction in parking places), Moss Street, Institution Road, Seafield Street, Seafield Crescent, Maisondieu Road, Glover Street, The Wards, Pluscarden Road, Westpark Road, Rose Avenue, Mayne Road and Gordon Street. Alastair Kennedy said that he felt sympathy for the businesses on the Wards and that there was a need for on-road parking for these businesses also. The group had also taken an on-site visit to Ladies Walk and had suggested that repairs are required. Harry Torry offered to investigate if this path was a Core Path and talk to Ian Douglas.

8. Correspondence

The following correspondence was presented and members were invited to read the following submitted documents:

1. Moray Council letter ref: Deanshaugh & Skateboard Park Toilets
2. BIDS Correspondence
3. Letter from Carillion ref: Reiket Lane
4. Tenants Voice
5. Scottish Government Research into Rural Community Facilities
6. Gypsy/Traveller Awareness Raising Session 24th April
7. Data Protection Registration
8. Proposed sale of ground adjacent to 27 Ashfield Drive New Elgin

9. Landfill Communities Fund
10. Roads & Transportation sub group report and copy letters
11. Invitation from ASCC to all Community Council members in the Highland Region. Alastair Kennedy thanked Moray Council for sponsoring the seminar; the JCC will also make a contribution. Members were asked to indicate their attendance ASAP.

9. Treasurer Report

The absent treasurer Donald McIntosh had passed the financial statement to the Chairman for recording. The statement of account at 16th December 2008 number 1 account = £1564.00 and on 19th December 2008 number 2 account = £5176.06.

10. AOCB

- a. The Chairman reported that he has obtained a copy of the responses to consultation on a proposed Code of Conduct for Community Councils. There was a question about the consultation for this document as no one could remember having seen or responded to the original proposal. It was suggested that George Littlejohn and Alistair Kennedy could investigate this document. The Chairman would collate any responses and forward accordingly.
- b. Anne Glover had received a letter regarding the bins at the Elgin Bus Station confirming they will be emptied and tidied up twice daily. Letter was passed to the Chairman. She also highlighted the Spotlight Magazine which had been distributed to householders in Moray. Extracts from the Community Council Minutes had been published. The Chairman had been in touch with the editorial team and requested that meeting dates of future meetings could be included in future publications.
- c. Murray Ross asked if there were any concerns about the affordability of the recycling programme in light of the economic downturn. Cllr Russell said that because the paper collected in Moray was of high standard, there were no concerns and that it would continue to attract good financial gains. He also confirmed that Moray is not stockpiling recycled materials. There were concerns raised that the Channory Recycling facility was not large enough to meet demand over the festive period. Cllr Russell reported that there was the capacity to increase this facility in the future if necessary but for the sake of a two-week festive period, it would not be considered necessary to increase this facility at this time.
- d. George Littlejohn reported that he had accompanied Ken Kennedy to an area of land which he had felt would be suitable to site a flowerbed for the Beautification Scheme. The Chairman requested that George keep the Area Forums included in any discussions regarding this subject to ensure partnership working.
- e. Alistair Kennedy said that Moray College is also interested in partaking in the Beautification Scheme. He also reported that there is a proposed change to the planning system and a consultation had taken place. In his opinion, the consultation was inadequate and had not does not meet the National Standards of Community Engagement and that the approach taken had been top-down; he will continue to monitor the situation.
- f. Bryan Watson asked if it would be possible to make the Bus Station a non-smoking area as it had a roof and was a public area. The Chairman said that it was privately owned and he would ask Stagecoach for their thoughts on this. *Chairman's Note: The Stagecoach Operations Manager is already investigating the possibility of erecting No Smoking signs at the Bus Station in Elgin.*

- g. Lewis Watson said that the Pupil Council would meet with Mr Bill Anderson, Energy Efficiency Officer at Moray Council, to raise the issue of improving the schools' energy efficiency levels.

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting.

The date of the next meeting of City & Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council will be held on Tuesday 24th Feb at 7.00pm in the Moray Council Chambers.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55 pm.