

Minutes of Meeting of the City and Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council
Tuesday 22nd September 2009 at 7.00pm in the Moray Council Chambers

1. Present

Members: Alex Macmillan (Chairman) Donald McIntosh (Treasurer)
Bryan Watson (Vice Chair–arr 7.22) Murray Ross
Morna Abernethy Alastair Kennedy
Harry Torry George Littlejohn
Anne Glover

In Attendance: Cllr Shand Cllr Russell
Cllr Jarvis Cllr Divers
Cllr Leadbitter Cllr Sharp
Inspector Mowat (until 7.37) Denise Gormley
Mary Dow (Minutes)

Apologies: Lewis Watson (Youth Member)

The Chairman welcomed everyone back to the Moray Council Chambers and to the final meeting of the existing Community Council and advised that nominations closed at 4pm on 22nd September 2009 for the new Community Council.

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 11th August 2009

Previous minutes were approved as accurate.

Proposed: Alastair Kennedy Seconded: Murray Ross

3. Matters Arising from 11th August 2009

9a. Car Sales on Verges of A96 between Linkwood Way and Reiket Lane. George Littlejohn advised that he had noticed the day before that all three garages had cars parked on the grass verges. Alastair Kennedy said that he had been informed that the matter had been passed to the Enforcement Officer for action. Alastair Kennedy agreed to speak with Theresa Ruggeri again regarding the problem.

5. Traffic on Plainstones. Inspector Mowat confirmed that following discussions with Traffic Warden Administration in Aberdeen, it has now been decided to authorise Traffic Wardens to issue parking tickets to vehicles who park illegally on the Plainstones. Inspector Mowat advised that Traffic Wardens would use their own judgement and discretion.

12i. Signage for the Visitor Information Centre. Cllr Russell advised that Moray Council were aware of the opinions of the Community Council with regard to VIC signage and some recommendations will be taken on board including VIC signage on the Lossiemouth Road and by the Laichmoray. Cllr Russell confirmed that discussions were ongoing. The Chairman thanked Cllr Russell for his update. Alastair Kennedy advised that he had passed a copy of the Community Council's report to Alistair Campbell, the Museums and Libraries Manager.

7. Future Funding of Community Councils. Alastair Kennedy advised that he had attended a meeting with John Ferguson and that a new proposal with a later finishing date will be issued. Alastair Kennedy suggested that, when the new Community Council is established, views on the new document be given. He did not feel there would be a problem with regard to resourcing and thanked Denise Gormley for her support during the past weeks and the Chairman echoed this comment and thanked Denise for her help with the publicity of the recent pilot scheme.

16b Toposcope at Top of Ladyhill. The Chairman advised that a receipt for the £2,000 donated to the Elgin Fund for the Toposcope at the top of Ladyhill had been received. The Chairman also advised that he had received an e-mail from Ian Urquhart, Chairman of the Elgin Fund stating that they agree with the Community Council's aims and would also like to make Ladyhill more accessible to all; he would look into this if funding was available.

7a. Pilot Scheme for Community Council Elections. The Chairman advised that the sub-group set up at the previous meeting had met and arranged the publicity for the elections. The Chairman advised that it had cost £391 for an advertisement in the Midweek Extra and the remaining £100 had been passed to the Joint Community Council. The Chairman felt that in view of Elgin's population the money provided was insufficient and he would be advising the appropriate representatives at a meeting arranged on the 5th October 2009 to discuss the pilot scheme. The Chairman thanked Denise Gormley for her support during the pilot scheme and also the Northern Scot and Press and Journal for their publicity.

13. Mosaic on Plainstones. Anne Glover advised that she had sent a letter to Alistair Keddie of Moray Council regarding the poor state of repair of the Mosaic on the Plainstones. She also advised that she had received a reply from Nick Fearne, Arts Development Officer of Moray Council stating that no repair budget or responsibility was agreed at the time of the original project. Moray Council was currently trying to access Town Centre Regeneration Funds from the Scottish Government and funds may be available should the application for Elgin be approved. Cllr Russell said that a meeting had been arranged with Nick Fearne and all Councillors and that this issue will be discussed. The Chairman thanked Cllr Russell for his support.

14a. e-Planning. Alastair Kennedy advised that he had experienced problems with accessing plans and had contacted the Planning Officer regarding this, but unfortunately by the time it was sorted out the deadline had passed. Alastair said that it was eventually agreed that there was a problem at the Moray Council end.

17a. Ambulance Service. Alastair Kennedy and Anne Glover advised that they had made comments on the document although there was very little room to make valid comments.

17b. Community Champions. Harry Torry said that the meeting was held in the afternoon and he was therefore unable to attend. Denise Gormley advised that one person from the Elgin South Area Forum attended the meeting and that Harry Torry had sent comments. The Chairman and Harry Torry were both interested in supporting this.

17g. Chewing Gum Disposal Unit. Cllr Russell agreed to take forward.

17h. Cycle Paths. Harry Torry thanked the Councillors and stated that the path had now been cleared. Cllr Russell advised that it was the responsibility of Morrision Playing Fields Association to keep the paths clear around Morrision playing fields. The Chairman said

that cycle paths throughout Moray were instituted by Sustrans but no maintenance budget was agreed at the time and the only way this could be paid for is if the local land owner adopts these paths. It was agreed that this should be looked at in the future.

17k. Footfall in Visitor Information Centre. The Chairman stated that figures had been received from Cllr Russell as agreed in previous minutes. The figures from April - August 2008 were 13,811 and from April – August 2009 13,345. The Chairman said that the way the figures are compiled has changed since the VIC was opened and the figures in the VIC are recorded by use of a clicker and that during busy times people may be missed; figures from 1st – 18th August 2009 show an increase of people booking accommodation up by 57.8% on the previous year.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Russell for these figures and George Littlejohn requested the footfall figures be updated in six months time.

Alastair Kennedy was encouraged that the figures for the Highlands were up 4% but would like to know how Elgin compares with other areas in the Highlands.

The Chairman advised that the VIC is still in its infancy in its current location and figures were only for this year and it would be useful to monitor these figures and receive more information from Visit Scotland in due course. Alastair Kennedy asked if the Community Council could help in any way. Cllr Shand advised that there had also been an increase in the use of the Library since the VIC's relocation.

4. Police Business & Terrorism Update – Inspector Mowat thanked the people of Elgin on behalf of himself and his colleagues for their assistance and support during the recent floods.

5. Deanshaugh Playing Fields

The Chairman advised that an internal report was issued on the 25th August 2009 and was available on the Moray Council website. The Chairman urged all members to read the report and stated that he was extremely disappointed with the outcome and that it was now up to the Council to decide what happens next. Bryan Watson suggested that the soil from the Flood Alleviation Scheme could be used to put on top of the field. It was agreed for this item to remain on the Agenda until completion.

6. Community Planning – Local Area Forums

Murray Ross had nothing to report on the South Elgin Area Forum.

Harry Torry had nothing to report on the North Elgin Area Forum. The Chairman advised that their next meeting had been arranged for 7pm on 29th September 2009 at Elgin Academy.

7. Committee Reports

- a) Planning. Alastair Kennedy had nothing to report. Bryan Watson reported that the Planning sub-committee supported the application for the Linkwood shopping development and advised that the application has now gone ahead and they were delighted with the outcome. Bryan Watson advised that he had attended a site visit and was happy with the new drainage system that was proposed. Bryan Watson felt that when Matalan opens in Edgar Road it would attract other stores.

- b) Recreation, Leisure & Environment. Anne Glover raised concerns regarding the responsibility of maintaining core pathways. She felt that if there were street lights then it would be the responsibility of the Moray Council. Cllr Leadbitter advised that this was not the case. The Chairman suggested that with all the new major developments coming into Elgin it may be possible to ask them to adopt core paths and also cycle tracks, he suggested the Councillors may want to look into this.

Anne Glover also raised concerns with regard to parking in Moss Street as she felt only having double yellow lines on one side of the road the parking on the other side was causing delays. Anne agreed to monitor.

- c) Roads & Transportation. Murray Ross reported that following a meeting with Jane Innes of Springfield Properties he had received an e-mail from her stating that Springfield Properties were prepared to two planters on the A941 at Glassgreen, one on each side of the road. Murray advised that he and George Littlejohn had met with Jane Innes to discuss the planters but was informed that Springfield Properties were not prepared to provide a third planter on the A96, although they were interested in beautifying roundabouts. The Roads and Transportation Committee did not feel this was appropriate at this time and suggested it may be something that the new Community Council may like to investigate. Cllr Leadbitter said that the issue of additional signage on roundabouts had been discussed previously and concerns were raised with regard to safety, although he felt it was worth investigating in the future. The Roads and Transportation Committee to arrange a site visit with the Roads Department of Moray Council and Springfield Properties to discuss the planters. Murray advised that Springfield Properties would maintain the planters and plants would only be planted in the summer. The Chairman raised concerns with regard to maintenance at the end of the summer season as he felt that if the planters were not tidied then they may look unsightly during the winter.

Murray Ross reported that the Linkwood residents had raised concerns regarding the speed of vehicles along Reiket Lane and were looking into the possibility of having a crossing installed. Murray advised that Moray Council had recently carried out a survey of vehicle speeds and the Roads and Transportation Committee were awaiting the results. He was in support of this crossing as he felt that with the cycle ways now in place it was important to be able to cross the road safely.

Murray further reported that the manhole covers on exiting ASDA have now been repaired and he would be writing to ASDA to thank them for their assistance. He said that he felt that other manhole covers within Elgin were not being repaired quickly enough and that pressure may need to be put on utility companies. Murray wanted the new Community Council to follow this up.

Alastair Kennedy thanked the Roads and Transportation Committee and Moray Council for the repairs carried out on Lesmurdie Road.

The Chairman advised that he had received a letter from Bear Scotland regarding roadworks to be carried out on the A96 between Wittet Drive and Oakwood due to commence at the end of October lasting for four weeks. The Chairman passed the letter to the Roads and Transportation Committee.

8. Correspondence

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

1. £6.75 received from Northern Textiles – cheque to Treasurer.
2. The Community Councillor magazine.
3. Licensing for Public Health.
4. Reply from John Swinney re. Relocation of Civil Service Jobs.
5. Housing Department re. Scheme of Assistance.
6. Bear Scotland re. Roadworks on A96 Oakwood and Wittet Drive.

9. Treasurer Report

Donald MacIntosh distributed copies of the financial statement. The statement of account at 16th June 2009: Number 1 account = £3619.62. On 20th August 2009: Number 2 account = £4228.09. He advised that as per the financial statement the balance as at 16th September 2009 on Number 1 account stands at £1,492.36.

The treasurer also said that two cheques for £45.77 had been issued but not cashed. Anne Glover and Morna Abernathy advised that only one cheque should have been issued for the Young Citizens Awards Certificates. The Chairman asked if Anne Glover, Morna Abernathy and Donald MacIntosh could resolve this matter between them.

Alastair Kennedy was to pay £100 cheque into Joint Community Council's account for the Pilot scheme.

The Chairman asked for all members to put forward any outstanding expenses as soon as possible in order for the accounts to be audited.

The Chairman said that a cheque had been raised for entry into the Coach Drivers Year Book as agreed at the previous meeting. It was also proposed by Donald MacIntosh and seconded by Bryan Watson that £400 to be donated to the Elgin Town Centre Benevolent Trust to go towards Elgin's Christmas lights. This was unanimously agreed. The Chairman advised that he had informed the Elgin Town Centre Benevolent Trust that it would be up to the new Community Council to decide if they wished to continue with this contribution in future years.

The Chairman expressed his view that Community Council members were fully supportive of the people of Moray affected by the recent floods and it was suggested that £400 be donated to the Moray Flood Relief Fund. This was proposed by George Littlejohn and seconded by Murray Ross; carried unanimously.

10. AOCB

- a. Murray Ross advised that he had recently attended the new Medical Centre at Thornhill Road and was very impressed.
- b. Alastair Kennedy thanked Denise Gormley and all committee members for their support during their service as Community Councillors.
- c. Bryan Watson thanked Moray Council for the waste bin at the Wetlands and confirmed this was well used.

11. Dissolution of Current Community Council

The Chairman confirmed that the current City and Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council was now dissolved and thanked everyone for their support over the years. The Chairman also thanked the City Councillors for their support, co-operation and openness on behalf of all Community Councillors.

12. Date and Time of Next Meeting.

To be confirmed.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40 pm.

Additional Note:

You will all be pleased to know that sufficient nominations (11) were received by Moray Council in order that the City & Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council will be re-constituted for a further 4 year term.