



**Elgin North Area Forum  
Tuesday 4th January 2011  
Pinetree House, Elgin Community Church**

**Present:** Kieron Green (Chair), Donald MacKay (Vice Chair), Malcolm Stewart (Secretary), Keith Mitchell, Ronnie Sim, Vera Gaskell, May McGarrie (High Spirits), A B Loveland (Bishopmill United Junior Football Club), Alastair Kennedy (City and Royal borough of Elgin Community Council / Joint Community Council).

**In Attendance:** Cllr Jarvis, Cllr Russell, Cllr Leadbitter, Colin Mowat (Grampian Police).

**Apologies:** Beth Simpson, Elsie Scott, Sheila Hollis, Heather Park, Cllr Sharp, Cllr Shand, Alex MacMillan (City and Royal Borough of Elgin Community Council), Denise Gormley (The Moray Council – Community Support Unit).

**1. Welcome**

Kieron welcomed everyone to the meeting at 7pm.

**2. Minutes from 7th December 2010**

There were two points raised about this set of minutes. Keith Mitchell wanted it recorded that it was himself that had asked the guest speaker about disturbance of historical artefacts. Brian Loveland said he had remembered that the “Witches Hole” was known as the “Order Pot”. After these corrections the minutes were proposed as an accurate account by Kieron and seconded by Donald.

**3. Matters Arising**

**i) Elgin Flood Alleviation Scheme update** - Cllr Russell said that although the Moray Council had previously been assured by the Scottish Government that funding was secured for the scheme, there is now confusion and doubt over funding for it after information received from the Government. A delegation from Moray Council is going to Hollyrood on 17<sup>th</sup> January in relation to this. The scheme is due to commence in April 2011 and be phased over 4 years.

Keith asked what would happen if the required funds were not forthcoming. Cllr Russell replied that he couldn't comment until after the Council had received responses from the government. Alastair said that the matter of spoil removed from the works being used to re-cover the Deanshaugh football pitch correctly had been raised at Community Council.

**ii) Elgin Academy Litter** - Keith said that the mess in the area around the school was as bad as ever and asked if the Forum could talk to the janitorial staff to get their views on the issue. Donald said that staff may be restricted in what they say regarding their opinions. Ronnie commented on the fact that the new school would be opened in the near future and it would be a good idea to have an action group up and running from the start. There had been a litter group, but this has not been active recently. Keith said he was possibly willing to get involved

Cllr Russell said that during the Christmas holidays bins had been set on fire at the school. Luckily there was no damage to the school. Colin said that he wasn't aware of anyone being caught for the offence.

Denise had said previously that we need to try to involve the Student Council, Police, Moray Council and the Forum to tackle the litter problem.

**Action; Malcolm to discuss with Denise.**

**Action; Denise to arrange interaction with concerned bodies.**

**iii) Remembrance Wreath Laying** – Ronnie said that anyone can take part in the Remembrance Day parade and lay a wreath; they don't need to be invited. Alastair clarified that in future the Community Council was considering asking the forums to join their party on the day, as they are also community representative groups. It was agreed that a good example needs to be set from the top and that more people should be encouraged to take part.

**iv) Council Spending Consultation** – Kieron said this is now complete and the spending review is being processed.

**v) New Academy Building Issues** – Keith said that since the contractors were told about the complaints of workers not using the off-road parking facility, the situation seems to have improved. He said he thought that there should be an apology to residents from the contractors or Moray Council with regard to the initial lack of information and considerable inconvenience suffered. The major issue had been the vibrating compactor work. He said he felt he only represented himself at the meetings, but Kieron said that if he wanted to he could attend as a Forum representative to pass on information. Ronnie suggested a letter or article to the Northern Scot. Cllr Russell said it would be good for the Forum to do a leaflet drop in the area.

Keith asked why the rubble from the demolition was not going to be removed. Ronnie said it was the cheapest option and also it was going to be used for the new sports field. Kieron said that residents need to be kept informed by the Council on the matter.

**Action; Keith to draw up a leaflet for the Forum to distribute.**

**vi) Morriston Road Traffic Management** – At the last meeting it was highlighted that crossing the road outside the Academy was an issue for school children due to the amount of traffic and the speed at which it travelled. Although a traffic management review is not planned until after the new school is completed, Cllr Russell had said he would find out if there were any plans to introduce a pedestrian crossing. He reported that he had asked Andy Oliver, but had not had a reply yet.

**vii) Police Issues** – Colin informed the meeting that PC Mike Maloy is to be assigned to the North area of Elgin and will hopefully be able to attend most Forum meetings. Alastair commented that we are very fortunate that the Police attend our meetings, as this is not the case in other areas.

#### **4. Community Issues**

**i) Police Information** – Cllr Russell said that he felt that although the Police regularly attended the Forum meetings and gave responses to issues, they never gave out any detailed feedback on policing issues.

**Action; Malcolm to write to the Police thanking them for attending and asking for some statistics for 2010.**

**ii) Pending Traffic Plans** – Cllr Leadbitter informed the meeting of the importance of giving feedback on the latest traffic plans. Cllr Russell added that there is a public viewing of the plans to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of January. There will be adverts for the viewing in the press very shortly. Alastair said that the Community Council are waiting for a date for consultation on the plans and that they would include the Forums.

**iii) Parked Trailers** – Ronnie reported that there were a number of commercial trailers being left parked in South Lesmurdie (Woodside Terrace). He said that they shouldn't be left on the highway as they don't have road tax and they are causing obstructions. He asked if the Cllrs could complain to the Housing Dept. Cllr Leadbitter said that where there is a mix of Public and private housing, there can be a problem in sorting this type of issue out. Cllr Jarvis agreed to handle this matter.

**Action; Cllr Jarvis to approach Housing Dept about getting trailers removed.**

**iv) Road Damage** – Keith said that since the bad weather, the state of the roads was terrible with many pot holes. He asked if the Forum could do something to promote some action.

**v) Ivy on Trees** – Keith said that there were many trees around the city being smothered by ivy and asked if anything could be done about it. He said that three or four years ago at the junction of West Road and Wittet Drive, a tree that had been covered in ivy and had died off, fell down. Luckily on that occasion it didn't fall onto the road and hurt anyone or cause damage, but other trees could fall as well. He said that numerous trees along Morriston Road and along the river side were affected. Cllr Russell said that if any trees looked to be in a dangerous state, then the Council should be approached. He said that due to there being multiple land owners involved, it may be best if the Forum could maybe look at a particular locality to start with and promote the issue. Alastair suggested looking at the issue with regard to publication in the press. Kieron asked if Keith would write to the Northern Scot. Cllr Leadbitter said he would look into any parliamentary information on the matter.

**Action; Keith to write to Northern Scot to raise the issue.**

**5. Community Group Updates**

**i) Community Council** – Alastair stated that the new Sainsbury's supermarket plans were live on the Moray Council website. The Community Council has been lobbying to improve transport links for Elgin. This includes calling for an increased (hourly) train service to Aberdeen and Inverness, upgrading of the A96 at the traffic lights / railway bridge at Inveramsay in Aberdeenshire. They also oppose the proposed scrapping of Straight-through trains from Inverness to London. He also informed the meeting that a local credit union has been proposed.

**iii) Elgin Ear** – The Elgin Ear has resolved several reports and is dealing with others including;

Overflowing bins at the cemetery – Ongoing.

Suggestion of a notice board for Cooper Park - To be discussed at Community Council and Area Forums as a possible Community Project.

Suggestion of separating age groups at the Elgin Youth Café (eg, over 15 year olds and under 15 year olds) – Under consideration.

Stopping translation of benefits documents – Unable to stop translation as the requirement for this is enshrined in the racial Equalities Act.

Stopping the monthly newsletter for Moray Council employees - Passed to Moray Council and story picked up by the Press and Journal.

**iv) Elgin South Area Forum** – There was no update. The next meeting of this group will be 18<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

**v) Older Peoples' Strategy Group** – There was no update as the meeting of this group on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010 was cancelled due to the weather.

**6. Treasurer's Report**

As the Treasurer was not present the latest financial figures available were for the end of November when the balance of the account was £4,028.43, which included £750 received from the Moray Council.

**7. Correspondence** There had been no correspondence.

**8. A.O.C.B.**

Keith said he was a little confused about the speed limit changes commented on by Alex at the last meeting and asked for some clarification. As part of the changes, the speed limit on Alexandra Road is now reduced from 40mph to 30mph. The start of the 40mph limit at the East of the city has been moved out from near Burger King to near McDonald's. The speed limits at the West end of the city remain unchanged.

**10. Date/Time/Venue for next meeting.**

**The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 1st February at 7pm in Elgin Community Centre.**

With there being no other business to discuss Kieron thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.15pm.