



**Elgin North Area Forum
Tuesday 5th April 2011
Elgin Police Station**

Present: Kieron Green (Chair), Malcolm Stewart (Secretary), Keith Mitchell, Sheila Hollis, May McGarrie (High Spirits), Heather Park, Louise Summers, Alastair Kennedy (City and Royal borough of Elgin Community Council / Joint Community Council).

In Attendance: Alex Bottrill, Debbie Anderson (Community Warden), Cllr Shand, Cllr Sharp.

Apologies: Alistair Fulton (Treasurer), Donald MacKay (Vice Chair), PC Mike Mulloy, Harry Torry, Ed Brumby, A B Loveland, Alex MacMillan (City and Royal Borough of Elgin Community Council), Cllr Russell, Cllr Divers, Cllr Jarvis, Cllr Leadbitter, Denise Gormley (The Moray Council – Community Support Unit).

1. Welcome

The meeting should have been held at Pinetree Community Church, but it had not been possible to gain access so Debbie had arranged to use a room at the Police Station at short notice. Kieron welcomed everyone to the meeting at 7.15pm.

2. Guest Speaker – Alex Bottrill, Senior Project Officer (Sustrans)

Alex gave a presentation on a street design project that has been taking place in Cockmuir Place in New Elgin. The idea is to have a fully integrated approach to promote better use of the space in residential streets to include cycling, walking and enabling children to play safely. Current street design has been wholly centred around cars and this scheme is looking at ways of reclaiming residential areas for other uses as well. Residents were consulted and a design workshop organized, which identified the look and feel of the street to be important with people. Softening of the boundary between road and pavements, as well as trying not to use too many signs and paint markings are ideas being employed. Funding is from the Scottish Government and a second area in Elgin is to be considered. Sustrans' flagship project is the National Cycle Network and Cockmuir Place is adjacent to a cycle path linking it to the network.

3. Minutes from 1st March 2011

There were no issues raised about this set of minutes. The minutes were proposed as an accurate account by Keith and seconded by May.

4. Matters Arising

i) Ivy on Trees – Keith was going to write a letter on this issue to the local MP/MSP and Scottish Natural Heritage. Keith said he had written to the MSP, Richard

Lochhead and passed around a copy of the letter. He hadn't sent it to Scottish Natural Heritage yet as he had been unsure who to address it to at their Elgin office.

Action; Keith to send letter to Scottish Natural Heritage.

ii) Elgin Academy Litter – Louise had spoken to pupils at school and they were not happy with the mess as they felt it reflected badly on them. The school doesn't seem to have a specific policy on the issue other than pupils will be punished if caught littering. They thought teachers (with Community Warden support) could maybe carry out patrols around the Bailey bridge area. She said they were hoping to get the Litter Group going again and raised the possibility of a "Spring Clean". Kieron asked if there were any 5th year pupils who could get involved to continue into next term. It appeared that the problem was mainly with 1st and 2nd year pupils. Debbie agreed with this and said a two week initiative had been carried out recently looking at the problem around both Elgin secondary schools. She said there were no problems with the Academy at the time, but two fixed penalties had been issued near the High School. Cllr Sharp said that if shops had to pay for the packaging then it would reduce in quantity quickly. Louise said Tesco should be involved in finding a solution. May agreed and said to approach the Tesco manager as he is quite helpful.

iii) Parked Trailers – Cllr Jarvis had previously approached the Housing Dept about a number of commercial trailers being left parked in South Lesmurdie. Kieron said the trailer that had prompted this issue has been moved from its original position.

iv) Parking Issues at Cooper Park and Boroughbriggs – Kieron had written letters to Gordon Holland at Transport Moray and Murray Ross at the Community Council about this. There had been no feedback.

v) Deanshaugh Sports Field – Cllr Shand said three quarters of a million cubic metres of spoil will be used for the flood alleviation scheme embankments. The cost of disposing of the excess spoil would be immense, so Moray Council have given a green light for funding for spoil to be used for improving the topsoil at Deanshaugh.

vi) Anti Social Behaviour – Kieron had received police statistics for the last two quarters of the year. These covered crime incidents in the whole of Grampian and were comprehensive, so couldn't be read out in full. The main points were that shoplifting, anti-social behaviour and assault were all reduced, while robbery and theft were increased. There were also fewer staff across Grampian. Interested parties can access the full report from Kieron.

v) Bin at Cooper Park Pond – Sheila had reported on mess being created around a litter bin near the duck pond. Kieron had written to Ian Bruce of the Environmental Department but had not received a reply yet. Louise suggested emailing the Council as this seems to get a quick response. Debbie suggested contacting Grant Speed at Moray Council Land and Parks.

5. Community Issues

i) Ladyhill – May informed the meeting that the council were removing the flower beds at the foot of Ladyhill and grassing the whole area. She said that she wasn't very happy about this as it is a popular spot with locals and tourists alike. She also added that she had heard that a raised flowerbed was being provided at the new Council building. Cllr Shand said he was unaware of external plans for the new

building. Kieron said that the Ladyhill issue would be due to the Council funding cuts.

ii) Fochabers Traffic Issues – May commented on the problems with traffic at Fochabers during the ongoing bypass roadwork. In particular she spoke about people parking on both sides of the main street, affecting flow of traffic in both directions and asked if anything could be done about it. As the road in question is part of the A96 trunk route, Bear Scotland are responsible for it. The Cllrs added that there are to be about a year of roadwork disruptions to go.

6. Community Group Updates

i) Older Peoples' Strategy Group – New funding is now available to assist with changes in care strategy for older people over the next four years. Work is now required to put the strategy into action to produce improvements in service. An Early Intervention and Prevention Event will take place in the Town Hall on 7th April from 1pm until 4pm, to which the Forum is invited to send along a couple of delegates. Sheila, May and Harry said they would be attending anyway. The group's next meeting is on 2nd May.

Action; Sheila, May and Harry to attend meeting.

ii) Community Council – Alastair said the Moray Council Convener had been asked for comments on the Deanshaugh issue.

iii) New Academy Building Progress – Kieron said he was attending a meeting and site visit tomorrow (6th April). Cllr Shand asked Louise if pupils were updated on the work's progress. She said they were sometimes. Residents adjacent to the building voiced their concerns over the size of the building and its proximity to Morriston road. Heather also reiterated the problem of TV reception since the construction commenced. Kieron said he would raise the issue during his visit.

Action; Kieron to attend meeting/site visit.

iv) Moray Forum – Kieron said that the Forum had some concerns over the Council budget consultation process and would be writing to Alastair Keddie on the issue.

v) Elgin Ear – This pilot project has run for a year and has now come to an end.

7. Treasurer's Report

Alistair had sent the account details as he could not attend in person. The balance for 31st March was £3,924.88.

8. Correspondence

There had been no correspondence.

9. A.O.C.B. – Due to Council cuts, Denise will not be able to provide the same level of assistance to the Forum as previously. She will not attend Forum meetings as regularly as before either.

10. Date/Time/Venue for next meeting.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 3rd May at 7pm in Elgin Community Centre.

With there being no other business to discuss Kieron thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.50pm.