

Minutes of Meeting of the Elgin South Area Forum
Tuesday 19th March 2013 at 7pm held in the NEON Building

1. SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES

MEMBERS:

Aileen Marshall (Chair)	Steven Christie (Vice Chair)	James Wiseman (Minutes)
Mary Dow	Rebecca Kail	Alastair Kennedy(C&RBoECC)
Elizabeth Scott	Daniel Scott	

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr John Divers, PC Jo Ellis	Cllr Graham Leadbitter,	PC Scott MacKay
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2. APOLOGIES:

Marilyn Kelly Cllr James Allan	Linda McKenzie Christine Clerk (Treasurer)	Catherine Sinclair
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WELCOME

Aileen Marshall took the chair and welcomed everyone.

POLICE

Aileen Marshall noted the bulletin previously circulated and asked the police representatives if they had anything to add.

PC Scott MacKay said that they were looking forward to Police Scotland and that it is not expected to affect policing in Elgin much.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

15 JANUARY 2013

Steven Christie seconded by Cllr John Divers proposed that the minutes of 15 January 2013 be accepted as a true record of the meeting. There were no objections.

19 FEBRUARY 2013

Steven Christie seconded by Alastair Kennedy proposed that the minutes of 19th February 2013 be accepted as a true record of the meeting. There were no objections.

4. MATTERS ARISING

All matters arising were taken during the meeting under the relevant agenda items.

5. COMMUNITY ISSUES

NHS MEETING

Alastair Kennedy reported that the meeting with Richard Carey of NHS Grampian was a good meeting, covered a lot of current issues and nothing was dodged; also that it had been discussed at the Elgin Community Council where it was felt that the lack of a whistleblowing scheme had led to the recent bad publicity with the media being the only avenue to highlight serious problems that burden individuals at work.

Aileen Marshall proposed that Richard Carey be invited back in a year's time and this was generally accepted.

- **It was agreed that Richard Carey be invited back in about a year for a follow up visit.**

MORAY COUNCIL BUDGET

Aileen Marshall opened the discussion by inviting comments. Various topics were discussed and the following was noted.

Public Toilets are a necessity and enable greater use of public transport. It was thought that it was a condition of the Licencing Act to allow use of toilets. Toilets are not signposted in Elgin. Perhaps reinstating the Tourist Information Centre as a hub in the centre of Elgin could be an opportunity to solve this problem.

Libraries facilitate IT which is important for job searches. Cllr Graham Leadbitter said that lending books was typically only 40% of a library business they also offer information, meeting space and access to IT and arguably IT learning and access is important to recovery and Moray's future. Rebecca Kail said that it can be difficult to get on a computer and asked if some computers could be prioritised for job searches and online applications. Steven Christie said that welfare applications are also online and create a demand for the IT facilities with each application taking 3hrs or more to complete. Additional pressure would be brought if IT access is concentrated in Elgin or elsewhere. Alastair Kennedy asked if there was a community option for libraries. Cllr Graeme Leadbitter said that moving a library out of a school can reduce the viability of the school because of the extra space. Alastair Kennedy said that the library should be the heart of the community.

James Wiseman said that scrapping the Western Link Road would release funds and asked Cllr Graeme Leadbitter how many libraries could be saved if the road was scrapped. Cllr Graeme Leadbitter said that all the libraries could be saved and all the classroom assistants but a report on the impact on Elgin of abandoning the Western Link Road was being brought to a meeting of the Full Council on 27th March 2013.

Alastair Kennedy said that some of the current proposals were contradictory to the Moray Economic Plan which was created at great expense and investment of time and should not be ignored.

- **ACTION: It was agreed that Aileen Marshall would write to the Moray Council (Roddy Burns, Allan Wright and the 3 ward Councillors for Elgin South) to highlight these discussions.**

SANDY ROAD & WESTERN LINK ROAD

Aileen referred to her report of a meeting with Richard Hartland which focussed on Community Engagement.

See also discussion above on Western Link Road.

Aileen Marshall said that if the Western Link Road was abandoned the Council would lose credibility having marched the Community to the top of the hill twice re this project only to march it down again. A lot of money has already been spent. It was not clear whether the proposal was to postpone the scheme until funds became available at a later date, or to abandon it altogether. From the point of view of affected residents this was an important distinction.

Rebecca Kail reminded the meeting that Living Streets had offered to speak on a roads topic and proposed that they be invited to do so at the next opportunity. Aileen Marshall noted this outlining some current plans.

ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL

Aileen Marshall made a final call for names to attend the visit to the new Elgin Academy on 26th March 2013.

Mary Dow reported that a meeting on 11th March it was confirmed that Start on Site is still planned for March 2014 and completion is due August 2015.

Aileen Marshall said that it would be important to know that the new school was going to be fit for purpose and to participate in establishing the community use of facilities.

SPICE

Steven Christie reported that SPICE had worked on its¹ constitution and a litter pick is planned for 20th 21st April 2013. SPICE is also considering taking a redundant shop in the High Street for the Tourist Information Centre, toilets, and possibly more. The shop would have the potential to become a general hub.

WELFARE BENEFIT CHANGES

Aileen Marshall referenced an article in the Northern Scot on welfare reform. Steven Christie highlighted the potential chaos that could occur on the introduction of the welfare benefit changes. He said that he understood the IT may not be ready and previous reforms were chaotic when the IT didn't work properly. Steven Christie also said that the most problematic change would be the move to payment in arrears which would create short term cash flow problems for individuals.

FOOD BANK

Aileen Marshall noted the food bank was a duplication of Community Food Moray but collaborative working was planned.

HITRANS

Aileen Marshall advised that Frank Roach of Hitrans was going to speak to our 18th June 2013 meeting re the Rail Freight Pilot.

GMD PATH LIGHTING

Aileen Marshall reported that the lighting on the path adjacent to Glen Moray Drive had been raised with the Community Council. Alastair Kennedy reported that he has passed this matter to George P Littlejohn and Murray Ross to look into it. Rebecca Kail noted that there was also a lot of leaf litter on the path too and Alastair Kennedy agreed to pass that on to George & Murray.

- **Action: Alastair Kennedy to pass on comment about leaf litter on the path at Glen Moray Drive to the Community Council (George P Littlejohn & Murray Ross)**

CYCLE PARKING AT MORAY COUNCIL HQ

Rebecca Kail reported that the cycle parking rack at the Moray Council Headquarters had been moved to a less helpful location and replaced by a sign. She asked that the cycle parking rack be reinstated to its² original position and commented that it had been moved during a gap in Hitrans involvement. Cllr Graham Leadbitter suggested that the Planning Application would resolve what should be there.

- **ACTION: It was agreed that Rebecca Kail would draft a letter to Moray Council for Aileen to send.**

ALLOTMENTS

Rebecca Kail reported that the allotments group are struggling and the AGM is coming up.

Cllr Graham Leadbitter noted that the current administration are not keen on allotments in that a policy exists but there is no money allocated. Rebecca Kail added that there was a legal requirement for the Council to provide allotments. Aileen Marshall suggested inviting Richard Hartland or another officer to the Allotments AGM. Cllr John Divers asked if the allotments group had approached developers to which Rebecca answered yes.

- **ACTION: Rebecca Kail to draft a letter to the Community Planning Partnership on behalf of the South Forum regarding allotments (Aileen to send).**

COMMUNITY AWARDS

Alastair Kennedy reported that Gordon Methven was seeking expressions of interest from local groups to form a committee to deliver a Community Awards event, he outlined the idea and referenced the Celebrate Maidstone example.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

Aileen Marshall reported on behalf of Christine Clerk that the balance in the South Forum Account was £5,673.57

7. FORUM ISSUES

FORWARD PLANNING

Aileen Marshall advised that Catherine had offered to do the April Minutes and there were no objections.

JOINT FORUM SURVEY

Aileen Marshall noted that the North Forum was in abeyance as office bearers had not come forward.

Cllr John Divers and Cllr Graham Leadbitter both complimented the South Forum on how it was run.

MEMBERSHIP FORMS

Aileen Marshall reported a suggestion to merge the North & South Forums but expressed reservations that it could be too big and the issues facing each were different.

INSURANCE

Aileen Marshall advised the meeting the South Forum was currently not covered by Council Insurance. This was being looked into by Moray Council.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

Community Empowerment Consultation Feedback Circ 22/1

Budget Consultation Feedback Circ 22/1

Minutes ECC Circ 23/1

Oldmill Info Circ 24/1, 6/2, 19/2,23/2,25/2, 7/3(2)

REAP Jobs Circ 24/1

Local Policing Plan Circ 26/1

Creative & Caring Info Circ 26/1

ENAF Papers Circ 28/1

Moray Passenger Forum Circ 29/1

EHS Info Circ 30/1

SPICE Info Circ 1/2, 2/2, 4/2 (2)

Chewing Gum Demo Circ 6/2, 12/2

ECC Papers Circ 11/2, 11/3

NE Bridge Litter Circ 11/2

Community Empowerment Consultation Feedback Circ 18/2

Community Awards Circ 19/2

SPICE Constitution Circ 20/2

Elgin Civic Group Circ 21/2

NE Nursery School Acknowledgement

Moray Local Plan Submission Acknowledgement (Uncirc)

Cycle Parking Enquiry Circ 27/2

Public Toilet Closures Circ 28/2

Housing Survey Circ 8/3/13

Free IT Courses Moray College Circ 11/3

IoD Seminar circ 13/3

Sports Facilities Circ 14/3

Diversify Your Funding Circ 14/3

Fundraising Seminar Circ 15/3

Royal Scots CE Circ 15/3

Dallas Project Circ 15/3

Walking festival circ 19/3

9. AOCB

ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL FESTIVAL

Mary Dow reported that the High School was going to have a music festival on 20th June 2013 from 6pm to 10pm

NEW ELGIN & ASHGROVE PUBLIC HALL

Steven Christie requested that anyone interested in participating in the management of the hall should attend the AGM.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 16th APRIL 2013 AT NEON

11. CLOSE

There being no further business to discuss the Chair thanked all those present for attending and closed the meeting at 9:20pm