

Minutes of Elgin South Area Forum held in New Elgin Primary School Annexe on
Tuesday 23 March 2010

Present

Elizabeth Scott	Resident
Aileen Marshall	Treasurer
Linda McKenzie	Resident
Marilyn Kelly	Resident
Steven Christie	Vice-Chair
Christine Clerk	Resident
Louise Ellerby	Chairperson
Rebecca Kail	Resident/ Allotments
Lyndsay Welsh	Resident
Ray Wood	Chair of Residents Association (Linkwood)

In Attendance

Alex Macmillan	Elgin Ear/ Elgin Community Council
Linda Adam	Community Support Officer
Cllr Graham Leadbitter	Moray council
Cllr John Sharp	Moray Council
Kieron Green	Chair of Elgin North Area forum
Jodi Glowacki	Local Integration Support Officer
Amy Cheer	Community Learning & Development Worker, Moray Council

Apologies

Councillor John Divers
WPC Lynne Farquharson
PC Jamie Macmillan
Alison McLaughlan

1. Welcome

Louise Ellerby welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Linda Adam the new Community Support Officer.

2 NEON (New Elgin Open Neighbourhood)

Jodi Glowacki gave a short presentation on the work of NEON, which is based in the New Elgin Primary School Annexe. Jodi said that each area in Moray was promised a dedicated centre to reduce ant-social activities. Their remit was to work with children and young people, parents, carers or any client base which required support within the community. The aim of Neon was to deliver a one-stop-shop for all services and to form links with other service providers within the community. Neon's main purpose was in early intervention within the community to stop any further problems developing. Jodi explained that a full time receptionist had been provided at no cost, by the Moray council. An audit was in progress to asses how the building was utilised and what activities were being undertaken. This was to determine how the individual partners were interacting with each other. This would develop a picture of what was available in the building and what unmet need there might be. Jodi emphasised that due to the diversity of services on offer there need be no stigma attached to any clients who used the facilities. Jodi hopes in future the Young Persons Action Centre (YPAC) and Moray New Futures and a community surgery for the

Grampian Police would also be located within NEON. The next step in the process will be community engagement and Iain MacDonald, Local Community Network Support Officer from Forres / Speyside will take over when Jodi leaves next week..

NEON is a one year pilot until the end of December 2010. Jodi hoped that the scheme would be recognized as a success and would continue.

3.Elgin Sustainable Travel

Chris Thompson the School Travel Co-ordinator for the Moray Council gave a short presentation on the Urban Freedom event currently being staged in Moray. Schools events will be taking place during the week culminating in a two day event at the weekend. This is to encourage everyone to 'get cycling' and also to promote the health benefits of cycling and walking. He said that there would be a Consultation Bus to show the proposed plans for the new Active Travel infrastructure for next year. The Public were invited to engage with the Active Travel consultation.

4. Urban Freedom Project

Tigah and Bonnie of Get Cycling gave a short presentation on the forthcoming Launch in Moray. Get Cycling is a Community Interest Company which now promotes cycling. They visit schools, colleges, corporate events and public festivals promoting cycling. Tigah outlined the events at the weekend and handed out leaflets.

5. Minutes from last meeting

The minutes were accepted as true record

Proposed by Marlyn Kelly

Seconded Aileen Marshall

6. Matters arising

Aileen Marshall and Steven Christie wished it noted that they have now withdrawn their support for the Elgin Ear. Aileen Marshall said that she had three reasons which she wished noted.

1. On a personal level she did not want to be involved in the surgeries
2. Concerned to find out that the Elgin Ear was launching this week as it was her understanding that the venture was still in the pilot stage.
3. Concerned that the Elgin Ear project will change the way the forums work and does not feel that sufficient discussion has taken place within the forum to consider the venture or its consequences.

Steven Christie voiced his concern that the present meeting had been delayed by three weeks which has now resulted in a packed agenda. The Chair responded that the meeting had been delayed to give time for the meetings of the Community Council and the Elgin North Area Forum to take place. These meetings were to consider the new Community Engagement and operation of forums Proposal.

Group Updates

7. Allotments Group

Rebecca Kail informed the meeting that a draft Policy on allotments has now gone out for consultation. Generally the allotments Group are pleased with the Proposal but there are some points which need to be clarified. The Draft has also been sent to people who might be interested in the proposal. Loise Ellerby informed the meeting that a copy of the Draft Proposal had been sent out to all members with email.

Rebecca said that the Draft would be put to Elected Members and Council officials in a meeting tomorrow. The second Allotments Association AGM was held on Friday 19 March 2010. Three potential sites have been identified but there has been no response from the Planning Department to queries raised.. A petition is available to sign to support the allotments which can be circulated within the community. A petition was available to sign at the meeting. It was also clarified that John Ferguson, Community Planning and Development Manager, will be remaining in post as Allotments Officer

8.Elgin Ear

Alex McMillan of the Elgin community council gave a Presentation on the Elgin Ear. Alex said that he had given his talk to the Elgin North Forum who had agreed to take on the responsibility of community surgeries as part of the Forum business. He also stated that the Elgin Ear would be progressing regardless of The Elgin South Area Forum's support. He said that the Elgin Ear had been an ongoing project since November 2009. He explained that he understood that the Elgin South Area Forum could not agree to engage with the Elgin Ear until it had been discussed and approved by the form. Councillor John Sharp spoke in support of Community Surgeries. He explained that concerns raised in these surgeries can be passed on to the relevant agencies. It was not up to the individual members of the Forum to act. It was their role only to gather information. Alex Mcmillan then spoke about the reason for the Elgin Ear being set up. The idea was based on the community Champion initiative previously piloted by the Grampian Police. It was the responsibility of the Community Council to seek better engagement with the Community which it served. The Community Council had decided that a 'listening Ear' was the best way forward. Holding regular surgeries as a joint partnership with the Elgin South and Elgin North Area Forums was a way to reach a wider section of the Elgin community. As part of this new initiative other options to gather information would be explored. For example using social networks such as BeBo, Facebook, and Twitter. Also email accounts would be set up for people to send in their comments. Suggestion Boxes were to be placed in supermarkets and Community areas. The option of a monthly surgery was one avenue of communication which was being explored. The Project would be piloted for a year then re-assessed for effectiveness. Alex thought that if the present Elgin Ear was successful then it could be extended to other areas in Moray, to form a Forres Ear, Keith Ear etc. A small amount of start up funding had been secured for the Elgin Ear but ongoing costs would be met by the community council. Alex summed up his proposal "You Speak-We Listen". The Proposal was then considered. It was in general the concern of the meeting that they were not really sure whether they wanted to personally engage with the surgeries although on principle they supported the idea of the Elgin Ear. Some of the concerns of the meeting were addressed by assurances that training would be provided to committee members and that all information gathered would be confidential and protected under the Data protection Act. There would be no requirement on the Individual members to undertake Disclosure Scotland. Alex Mcmillan stated that the concept of the Elgin Ear would lead to greater community involvement within Elgin. It was the purpose of the Elgin Ear to identify problems and refer them to the appropriate agencies. Alex hoped that positive outcomes from the Elgin Ear would lead to more people coming forward with community concerns. The Elgin North Area Forum supported the venture and would be leaving the first half hour free in its meetings to run the Elgin Ear surgeries. Louise Ellerby (Chair ESAF) emphasised that the South Area Forum

had not as yet been committed to any course of action. Alex McMillan restated the desire of the Community Council to work with the Area Forums but emphasised that it was for each Area Forum to reach a democratic decision. Alex McMillan left the meeting at 8.20pm

Kieron Green (Elgin North forum Chair) informed the meeting that he felt that all the points about the involvement of the North Forum with the Elgin Ear had been covered and that he would not now need to make his presentation. More discussion over the proposal continued. The timing of meetings between the forums and the Community Council was raised and the prospect of monthly meetings of the ESAF was put forward. It was felt that the forums do not want to duplicate the work of the Community Councils and that the difference in outlook had to be addressed. Forums deal with Strategic issues and the Community Council deals with operational issues. The idea of setting aside the first half hour of the ESAF meeting to linking up with the Community council in the Elgin Ear surgeries was discussed. Aileen Marshall felt that it was best to wait for a year to observe the ENAF progresses with the Elgin Ear. Aileen felt that the ESAF should not support the Elgin Ear until trial period of a year had expired. It was her main concern that repercussions might ensue if wrong advice was given out to people who approached the surgeries for advice. Louise Ellerby (Chair ESAF) informed the meeting that the surgeries would collect information only. This information would be analysed and passed to the appropriate agency. None of the Forum would be asked to take part in the listening process, but training would be available to anyone who wished to participate as at least one person from the Forum would be required. The councillors both talked about their experience of holding surgeries with the public.

A discussion then arose on the frequency of meetings and how best to encourage more people to engage with the forums and attend the surgeries. Loise Ellerby (Chair ESAF) suggested that another meeting be held to discuss how the ESAF could move forward with its commitment to engage with the community.

9. Correspondance

Murray Ross has stepped down from the Community Council.

A letter from the SNP had been received in which they emphasised that they would be working constructively with the present administration of the Moray council as regards the upcoming Budget Cuts.

Linda Adam, the Community Support Officer, asked for a volunteer to join a steering group she is forming with a view to developing an Area Forum Handbook and Induction for new and existing forum members..

10.Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 13 April 2010 in New Elgin Primary School

Annexe

Meeting closed 9.20pm