

**Minutes of Elgin South Area Forum
Held in New Elgin Primary School Annexe
9 June 2009**

Present:

Aileen Marshall
Louise Ellerby
Christine Clark
Murray Ross (Elgin Community Council)
Steven Christie
Elizabeth Miller
Cllr John Sharp
Cllr John Divers
Rebecca Kail

Also Present:

John Ferguson	The Moray Council (Chief Executive's)
Amy Cheer	The Moray Council (Educational Services)
Susan Leonard	The Moray Council (Educational Services)
Mike Molloy	Grampian Police
Jacqui Taylor	Fairer Scotland Fund

Apologies:

Cllr Graham Leadbitter

1 . Welcome

Rebecca Kail welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Councillor Sharp and Councillor Divers mentioned that there was a difficulty in dates clashing with Elgin North Area Forum.

2 Fairer Scotland Fund

Jacqui Taylor (Fairer Scotland Fund Manager) gave a short presentation on the Fairer Scotland Fund. She gave the background to its formation and how it has been used to date in Moray. The fund is for tackling the root causes of poverty and disadvantage. It has three objectives: improving employability, improving the life chances of the most disadvantaged, and regenerating communities through effective engagement. The team has been carrying out research into poverty indicators in Moray and is working to identify need. It is important that communities are engaged in that process and Jacqui was seeking views on the needs in Elgin South. There

was a discussion on the needs and issues of New Elgin. John Divers pointed out that under the Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation, parts of New Elgin had already been identified as being the most disadvantaged area in Moray. Jacqui was able to back that up with the work that FSF had carried out. The following issues were raised: young people's homelessness, drug use, the high percentage of flatted accommodation, and the need for co-ordinated advice on benefits and other support. Examples were given of other areas where housing staff were trained to provide benefit support. Jacqui asked the forum to consider the needs of the area. She would welcome ideas or proposals for the fund before the deadline of 20th July.

3. Minutes of The Last Meeting

These were proposed as a true record of the last meeting by Steven Christie and seconded by Aileen Marshall

4. Matters Arising

On the issue of the pharmacy, Councillor Leadbitter had passed on a message that the appeal had gone in over the pharmacy and a result was expected in late June.

5. GROUP UPDATES

Linkwood- No report available

Elgin High Litter Group- Met Friday 5th of June. It was agreed that the pupil council will write to the businesses in Edgar Road requesting bins. They plan to send out groups from alternate classes to collect litter at the start of the new term.

Community Council- Elgin Beautification Scheme. The first bed is in place and they are changing the specification. They plan to install 2 on the A941 and the A96.

Library Project- Susan Leonard will provide support for this initiative. Initially, she is helping local people to say what they might want from a library - libraries are more than books on shelves and they can provide a wide range of learning, information and reading services. There was a discussion around the possible new library project, access to the school library, staff implications and the availability of free internet access. There was some suggestion that self-service would be piloted. There was further discussion around location: could the facility be located in the New Elgin Hall or only in any council facility?

Suggestions were made on the distribution of the questionnaires including the post office and pharmacy. It was suggested that the school librarian should be kept informed of the project

Allotments- The council has taken a positive approach to the development of allotments and has agreed to appoint a lead officer. The allotment association has made initial plans for the layout of Fairy Park (*Dizzy Sick*) but the planning requirements are not yet known. Rebecca felt that a meeting was needed to discuss this with planning. The association has written to Alan Short but not yet received a reply.

Strategy group - No information

Active Travel group- This group has not met but John Divers mentioned that the plans for HALCROW were approved by the Council and adopted as a path for future action.

6. **Moray Forum News**

Rebecca reported back on the Moray Forum activity.

- Community Agreements - this would mean agencies and local communities signing a binding agreement to carry out actions .The point is to identify issues in the community and to find a mutual approach to resolving them. -
- YourMoray/Community Planning Website - Roy Anderson reported that people are visiting the site but often only once as much of the information on the forum pages is out of date. He is looking for forums to become "content providers" so that the website provides up-to-date accurate news and information on what's happening in each area.

7. **Community Support Unit**

John explained that a decision to establish a community support unit (CSU) had been taken. The aim is to increase the level of support to the community and meet the needs of groups and the community as a whole. A process will be carried out to identify what is needed and who could best provide the kind of support that communities need. The existing CLD and forum support workers would make up the core of the new unit.

8 **Financial Consultation**

Rebecca explained that the Moray Forum had taken a decision not to respond to this consultation until the situation with the Community Support Unit consultation has been made clear. Basically it will look at options for the future funding of forums and community councils.

9. Community Champions

Elgin North is hosting a joint meeting to discuss Community Champions with Inspector Doug Mackenzie. Rebecca asked for volunteers willing to attend, but will go if no one steps forward. The date has not been agreed yet.

10 Treasurer's Report

Aileen reported that there was £1931.90 in the account.

11 Correspondence

The forum has been invited to respond to a consultation on the changes to opening hours of the registrar's office. As this does not affect Elgin it was decided not to participate.

A letter was received from ASDA turning down an earlier request for a donation for a bin at the bus stops.

12 Community issues

John Divers explained that there had been some anti-social behaviour in the Robertson Drive/Birkenhill place area. Police, health and housing have been involved, and it is hoped that this problem has been "nipped in the bud."

There was a discussion about the odd layout of the path between B & Q and Pets At Home. It was decided not to pursue this, as the improved access was welcomed and any concerns might lead to the path being removed.

Debbie McGhie had raised her concern about the lack of support for the Young Dookiteers who are struggling with some issues. The school has not been helpful over storage. This will be raised with Graham Jarvis, and John will contact Karen Delaney to clarify the situation.

Murray raised the Young Citizen of the Year Award. There will be two age groups - under and over 13's. Only two young people have been nominated so far. He encouraged anyone to come forward with nominations to Elgin Community Council.

13 Date of the Next meeting

The next meeting will be at 7pm on the 21st of July 2009