



Westhill & Elrick
Community Council

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 13TH OCTOBER 2022, AT HOLIDAY INN

Community Council		
Name	Position	Present
Mervyn Barr	Chair	✓
Malcolm Collie	Member	✓
Heather Cook	Member	✓
Donald Davidson	Member	✗
David Dent	Associate Member	✗
Becky Ferguson	Member	✓
Audrey Findlay	Member	✓
Ben Horsburgh	Associate Member	✓ via zoom
Kate Lumsden	Member	✓
Elaine Manley	Member	✓
William Munro	Vice-Chair	✗
Gordon Prentice	Treasurer	✓
Diane Priestley	Member	✓
David Ritchie	Secretary	✓
Ken Stewart	Member	✗
Raymond Swaffield	Member	✓
Tim Yeomans	Member	✓ via zoom
CLlr Iris Walker	Ward 13 Councillor	✓ via zoom
CLlr Ron McKail	Ward 13 Councillor	✗
CLlr Craig Miller	Ward 13 Councillor	✗
CLlr Fatima Joji	Ward 13 Councillor	✗

Members of Public: Rachid Meghezzi

1	<u>Welcome and opening remarks</u> Chair Mervyn Barr welcomed everyone. Permission was given for meeting to be recorded
2	<u>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u> Apologies received from Donald Davidson, William Munro, Ken Stewart, CLlr McKail, CLlr Miller, CLlr Joji.
3	<u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 13th September 2022</u> Minutes were approved, with no changes. Proposed Raymond, seconded Gordon
4	<u>Shopping Centre Update- Centre Manager Ben Horsburgh –</u> Pawz Pet Products will be opening up in old vets building within next few months. Car Park pot holes- the car park sub-base was not done properly when the extension was built, so this affects the top surfaces. Some repairs will be done on Sunday 30 th October. Parking Hours- will be extended again from 3 to 4 hours till end of the year. People using Duncanos can register their cars to avoid getting a parking charge but some customers are not doing that. Westhill/Orbital Trail maps- two more will be getting put up soon.
5	<u>Christmas Event</u> Ben – preferred date is Sat 3 rd December as that is the only date his Santa can manage. Mervyn not available that day

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	<p>Trees- Ben advised that the tree planted last year in the bed near quadrangle has died so he will plant a new one there. Also planning to plant one at the sculpture corner instead of bringing in a cut one. Both new trees will be around 10ft tall. Sculpture one will be planted a bit further back.</p> <p>It was agreed that it would be good if we could have a tree on the quadrangle like we had up until 2020. One issue with that is that we don't have the large wooden base now.</p> <p>Ben will check how much a free-standing tree with base would cost</p> <p>Lights along green wall- Last year was a single string along wall, Mervyn suggested we do a curtain of lights. Ben advised the PTAs are keen to get involved again.</p> <p>Ben to check if brass band is available.</p> <p>Need to source a better sound system than the Round Table Santa truck.</p> <p>Sub group volunteers- David, Kate, Audrey, Elaine, Becky, Heather, Dianne, Rachid</p> <p>To meet 10.30 Tuesday 25th October at Community Church.</p>
6	<p>Matters Arising/ Actions Update</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. File Share Options (Malcolm) – Raymond, Heather & Becky have tested the set up process. We just now need to finalise the file structure and user guide. 2. Larg/Broadstraik Park (Malcolm) –The James Hutton Institute are doing the prep work for the park being used as part of a study into use of green spaces in Scotland. A meeting of the residents group will be arranged for November. 3. Safety barriers on path to Kirkton of Skene- Ann Overton helped to set up the site meeting with Brian Strachan of Roads dept. It was a positive meeting and the Council will consider the suggested actions. Priority will be given to cutting back the bush at foot of Hill Keir Rd. The 60mph speed limit on that road can't be re-assessed until the Scottish Gov changes the legislation on speed limits. Gordon advised that two years he had suggested to Roads dept that the cycle lanes in Westhill should be extended as the town had grown since they were first put in. This will be looked at by the Active Travel group. 4. Academy Outreach- No progress at this point. Still looking for more people to offer to talk to pupils about their work experiences. Mervyn to contact Academy to get a role description for would be speakers and interviewers.
6	<p><u>Police Report</u></p> <p>The Police report for September has been circulated (see Appendix). Nothing in it of major concern</p>
7	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>Review of correspondence log for last 4 weeks. (circulated)</p> <p>David reminded the newer members about the induction sessions being run on 16th & 23rd November (in Inverurie & online).</p> <p>Mrs Eddy Loudon had sent letters to David & Mervyn about the best gardens event she had run with two other ladies and congratulated us on what we had done at the Living Wall. She suggested that other entrance parts of town like Meadowlands could have planters etc. Mervyn pointed out to her the need to have volunteers to manage these, which is a major constraint along with a lack of nearby water supplies</p>

8 Ward 13 Councillors updates

Cllr Walker-

Westhill Academy

We were invited to tour the Academy with senior pupils and Alison Reid, Head Teacher. This was the first time for us to be in the building since lockdown. It was a very positive visit with lots of great work going on. Mrs Reid acknowledged the litter issue at the playing fields and advised that small litter picking groups will be working with the janitor as resources allow. We heard a lot about the career advice and guidance given to senior pupils and heard about the high number of Foundation Apprenticeships undertaken at Westhill.

Westhill Rotary

All councillors were extended an invitation to join a Rotary meeting to hear about the work they do locally and internationally. Ron and I attended last Thursday and had a very pleasant evening. The Rotary are now quite active on social media and you can follow their good work on Facebook.

Sports Hub

I attended the Westhill and District Sports Hub AGM. Thankfully new Trustees came forward to join the existing ones to enable the group to move forward.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

As reported last month, we discussed a paper at Garioch Area Committee recommending approval of a one year pilot in both Stonehaven and Macduff of a hybrid model whereby online booking would remain in place on certain days of the week and on the other days open access would be available. It was envisaged that the two busiest sites, Inverurie and Westhill would remain on the booking system. Once the six area committees had their say and the report returned to the main policy committee, it was decided that the booking system would be removed from a larger number of sites for a trial period only. Westhill is to be discussed further at area level.

Pavement Parking

Pavement parking has been raised as an issue again. At the moment, pavement parking is not illegal but there is legislation on its way. I will endeavour to get an update. The advice meantime is to call 101 to report obstructive/dangerous parking.

Hill of Fare

Midmar residents have set up an information website www.Hilloffare.org with key dates for consultation, MSP contacts etc

Gordon asked Iris if Councillors are made aware of the projects that Council Officers are planning to do in their Ward. Iris responded by saying that Councillors are not advised of normal operational activities that are being carried out in accordance with Council policy. Roads dept are now giving notice of things like pothole repairs. More difficult for landscape services to give advance notice.

Cllr Miller

Cllr Miller had passed on correspondence from Landscape Services re our queries on cemetery maintenance, as below in italics-

'There are no differences in scheduled grass maintenance between cemeteries and amenity grass areas across

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	<p><i>Aberdeenshire - we aim to cut grass approximately every 10 days. This can be affected by the numbers of burials we have locally, as it is the same squads who cut all our grass and carry out burial duties i.e. identifying and excavating lairs, attending burial services, and backfilling once services are complete and mourners have left the cemetery.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore, if we have a busy period with burials, more operatives are taken off routine grass cutting duties to attend to those burials. Depending on weather conditions, this can adversely affect the cutting regime. During dry periods there might not be a noticeable impact, however if a mix of sunny and wet weather is being experienced, grass growth could be vigorous and less easy to control.</i></p> <p><i>The problem is compounded in Garioch generally with an ongoing lack of frontline operatives. We have been at approximately 60% of our required staffing level since the start of this year, despite several recruitment episodes, and are continuing to explore ways to address this.</i></p> <p>The Councillors are requested to provide written reports in advance of the meeting if they can, especially if they can't attend the meeting.</p>
10	<p><u>Rotary Update/Exchange- David Dent</u></p> <p>The Rotary are running a Race Night at the Ashvale Chipper in Aberdeen on Thursday 27th October to raise funds for the Seniors Citizens Christmas party. Details of this were circulated a few weeks ago. It would be good if WECC could fill a table.</p> <p>Crocuses- Rotary are planning to plant more crocuses round the sculpture. Gordon requested that crocuses be planted round the new cairn on Mains of Kinmundy hill.</p> <p>Greenfingers Whats App group- Dave Dent will pass details of 2 Rotary members who would like to be added to the group.</p>
11	<p><u>Environmental Group Update</u></p> <p>Report from Raymond has been circulated, as below in italics:</p> <p><i>Our twice monthly Litter Picks have been run as planned and work well in conjunction with the team from the Rotary Club. Between us, we still fill our skip bin on each event, and although it is felt that there is a slight improvement in general littering, this is still not the case at the Academy site.</i></p> <p><i>I have so far been unable to recruit someone to take over management of the Litter Picking for next year from me. The main obstacle is the level of commitment required in order to organise the Picks twice per month. I have one Lady who is interested in joining WECC and is keen to take on the Litter Picking, but because of other family commitments is unwilling to take on the full role without further reliable deputies. She is currently on Holiday in USA until November, but I hope that she will attend a WECC meeting on her return. It would be ideal to have a WECC Member in overall charge, but we clearly need to find deputies who she could depend on to take over at times. I have one other volunteer who has said he can help out occasionally but cannot commit to a regular role. One solution might be that we could have a few people acting as coordinator on a rota.</i></p> <p>Raymond will prepare a job description for the Litter Picker organiser and will circulate it to the volunteers.</p>
12	<p><u>Orbital Trail + Links Project Update</u></p> <p>Circulated report in italics</p> <p><i>Matters Arising Since Last Meeting</i></p> <p><i>Paths for All Funding</i></p> <p><i>Both Expressions of Interest submitted to "Paths for all" Ian Findlay Path Fund were submitted on the 11th September and we received invitations only a few days later to proceed with formal funding applications, with</i></p>

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every indication that we would be successful if we can source match funding of 30% for both in good time.

These two applications related to major transformative upgrades on two key sections of the Orbital Trail – circa 1km through Carnie Woods and 450m from the bus turning circle at Broadshade Avenue eastwards to join the golf course path at the back of the 7th green.

In the case of Carnie, £100,000 or thereabouts would transform rough ground and restore the Right of Way to an all-abilities standard [i.e. suitable for walkers, bikers and wheelers]. Similarly, upgrading the northern section [Broadshade to Golf Course – circa £43k] to all abilities would mean that the only remaining areas of rough ground on the WOT would be the farm track on the northern edge of Meadowlands and the section through Lawsondale Woods.

Simultaneously, an application was made to Aberdeenshire Council's "Rural Community Led Vision Challenge Fund" to comply with its closing date of 11th September, with the intention that it would match fund to the tune of £12,835 the £29,949 [70%] coming from Pfa for the Broadshade/Golf course sector. Sadly, this application was rejected on the grounds that the fund was oversubscribed and that other projects were at a more mature and certain stage of completion by 31st March 2023. We appealed to no avail and have since applied to the Gordon and Ena Baxter Foundation [for under £10k] and may also apply to the Garioch Area Initiative Fund [up to £5k].

In the last few weeks, Chair and I met with Pfa Projects Officer and Aberdeen City Council's Paths Projects Officer at Carnie to survey the site and discuss our joint application in more detail. A survey of users and uses has been designed and will be distributed soon via community facebook groups, and its findings will be used to support our application. Our understanding is that Aberdeen City Council officers will also use these findings to help build their case to secure the 30% match funding.

Gordon met today with Nicola Seal of Carnie Woods – Community FB page

Stone Cairn on Mains of Kinmundy Hill

The cairn and semi-circular seating area are close to completion. We are awaiting the installation of 800mm granite top and the stainless steel direction indicator. Gordon brought along a life-size graphic of the artwork for the stainless steel top of the cairn.

Town Centre Information Board/s

Re second Information board, still awaiting response from Sally Davis – to this & extending cycleways.

Ongoing Maintenance / Upgrades

Summer Strimming: No further strimming done or planned.

Annual Maintenance Schedule: no further work done this month, but it will be refined and merged with volunteer resources required for Greening Westhill.

Weeding: no activity – sculpture planted area needs a revisit

Link to Denman Park: No change.

Link to Hill of Keir: No change.

Correspondence since last month's meeting

- Still awaiting reply from Burns Construction regarding permanent reinstatement of the waymarker post on Silvertrees Drive on completion of the development there.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other correspondence revolved around grant applications. <p>Funding Update</p> <p><i>As per the Project report, £1,600 of WECC funds were added to the project to fund the manufacture of the stainless steel direction indicator. Council Officers were notified of the delay in submitting proof of payment for this but consented to a request for an extension to draw down the final tranche of DO funds.</i></p>
13	<p>Planning Matters (Diane Priestly)</p> <p>Report from Diane has been circulated, as below in italics:</p> <p>PLANNING APPLICATIONS</p> <p><i>Burnland -APP/2022/1062-awaiting decision</i> <i>Greggs drive thru-APP/2022/1236 -awaiting decision</i> <i>Kingswells View-APP/2022/1747 & 1748 -awaiting decision</i></p> <p>The P&J today reported that Wickes are planning to build at store at Arnhall, near Starbucks. It is on the planning portal now. Diane will ask for an extension to the planning application comments submission date.</p> <p>ABERDEENSHIRE LDP PRESENTATION</p> <p><i>I have outlined the LDP process by identifying the proposed developments under the 'Call for Sites' and summarised the examination process re these proposed developments. It is clear from reading the examination document that in future once the transport assessment along the A944 and the B9119 has been completed that Westhill is likely to see further development. Diane's slidepack is attached as an appendix to these minutes.</i></p> <p>COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN</p> <p><i>The questionnaire has now been completed. It will be going into Bulletin and on AC website (Engage Aberdeenshire).</i></p> <p>HILL OF FARE WINDFARM</p> <p><i>There are many concerns being expressed about the proposed installation of seventeen 820 ft. wind turbines on the Hill of Fare which would be the tallest onshore windfarms in the UK and nearly twice the height of the Glasgow Tower which is currently the tallest building in Scotland. I attended the consultation at Crathes Hall and spoke to a member of the Crathes, Drumoak and Durrus Community Council who are part of a group of local Community Councils concerned about this proposal. The closing date for comments to the RES is the 11th November and can be found at www.hilloffare-windfarm.co.uk</i></p> <p>RESILIENCE PLANNING</p> <p><i>On Wednesday evening I will be attending a resilience strategy workshop organised by Neil Cameron the Emergency Planning Officer who attended one of our meetings earlier this year. I will give feedback on Thursday.</i></p> <p>Diane proposed that we have a Resilience sub-group. One or two people could be contacts in case of emergencies and we need one or two designated places where residents can go to. Diane circulated the personal emergency plan leaflet produced by the Council.</p> <p>Mervyn thanked Diane for all the good work she has been doing on all the different aspects of Planning</p>
14	<p>Financials (Gordon Prentice) Circulated report in italics:-</p> <p>Matters Arising 8 September:</p>

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- £1,600 added to Orbital Trail project

Financial Transactions – September

Income: £4,267.76, comprising £2,734 Bulletin advertising income, £4.89 bank interest, £50 for scaffolding hire, £50 from Vinespring Church plus £1,428.87 from Aberdeenshire Council to cover Admin Grant and Data Protection subscription.

Expenditure: £6,939.98, comprising £6,795 paid to Bulletin printer plus £20 to Holiday Inn for last month's meeting, plus £124.98 for materials to build the cairn at the top of Mains of Kinmundy Hill. Details of the transactions on the Main A/c statement are shown below.

Outstanding Commitments: David Ritchie will be due £1,000 honoraria payments for quarter July to September plus related expenses of £35.97. These were approved.

Bank Balances at Month End: £26,586

Main Account: £12,088 [see Appendix 1]

Bulletin Account: £14,498

Bulletin – Autumn Issue Contribution: expected to be circa £3,500 on income of £10,864. This is well over budget of £2,500 and [at time of writing] dependent on the remaining 7 invoices worth £1,211 being paid. One invoice from Summer Issue for £57 [Skene Powerclean] is likely to remain unpaid.

Community Support Fund Applications to be considered

Applications totalling over £3,000 have been received from the following six organisations for the remaining funds allocated in this year's budget [1,835]:

- Monday Discussion Group – speaker stipends
- Westhill Community Church – CCTV - application withdrawn
- Skene Primary Parent Council – Outdoor tools & protective equipment
- Elrick Primary Parent Council – Outdoor learning equipment
- SensationAll – CCTV upgrade
- Westhill & District Defib Group – Defib replacement batteries = application withdrawn

Donations totalling £1100 were agreed to the 4 groups that were considered.

A separate donation of £100 to the Mens Shed was approved for the Christmas street lights Pat testing work they did recently.

15 Green Westhill (Mervyn Barr)

The summer bedding plants in the baskets and planters are planned to be removed next week.

The winter pansies will be planted in the barrel planters in early November.

Tree & bulb planting will be required in November.

David Dent is organising crocus planting for late October

Storage – Mapp are aiming to rent out the old toilets block for storage so the Christmas lights etc will need to be stored elsewhere. Considering putting a wooden shed in behind the green wall, 10ft x 10ft. This would cost around £2100 plus an installation cost. We can apply to the Area Initiatives fund for part of cost.

16 AOB & Close of Meeting

Mervyn proposed that Rachid Meghezzi be co-opted on to WECC. David will advise members of this 2 weeks before November meeting and it will be ratified then.

Meeting closed at 10.15pm

Date of Next Meeting- 10th November at Holiday Inn, with Zoom option.

APPENDIX



GARIOCH COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE

Community Council: Westhill and Elrick

Reporting Period: 1 September – 30 September 2022

Current Policing Priorities:

Our priorities are:-

1. ASB – Proactive patrols to provide community reassurance and to deter/detect instances of ASB and Vandalism.
2. PROACTIVITY – Increased use of Stop and Search to deter/detect drug and acquisitive crime.
3. ROAD SAFETY – Enhanced speed checks and other speed reduction measures.

Crime Overview and Explanation:

CRIME TYPE	CURRENT PERIOD	PREVIOUS PERIOD
Assault	2	0
Housebreaking/Theft	2	1
Public Nuisance	3	9
Road Traffic	6 accidents and 3 other	3 accidents and 6 other
Drugs	2	0

Assault – Includes all recorded instances of violence.

Housebreaking – includes all break in's to domestic and commercial premises, including attempted break in's.

Public Nuisance – All youth annoyance and calls in relation to anti-social behaviour.

Road Traffic – all calls in relation to Road Traffic Accidents and Offences (speeding, illegal parking, obstruction etc).

Drugs – all reports incidents in relation to drugs dealing and use.

Assault: There has been 2 incidents reported and 2 individuals charged. These occurred within family settings and there is no impact to the wider community.

Housebreaking/Theft: There have been 2 incidents reported of theft by shoplifting and 2 individuals have been charged.

Public Nuisance: There have been 3 incidents reported. 2 relate to youth annoyance calls and 1 relates to a dog biting an adult. 1 individual has been charged in relation to this. There is no impact to the wider community.

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Road Traffic: This period has seen 6 reported accidents. 2 resulted in minor injuries and 4 with no injury. There have been 3 other calls in relation to road traffic incidents, relating to manner of driving and speeding. 1 individual has been charged with careless driving.

Drugs: There have been 2 incidents reported resulting in two individuals being charged with possession of a controlled substance.

Significant Crime/Issues within Your Community:

There have been no significant events this reporting period.

Planned Community Policing Activity/Advice:

Operational demands allowing, it is planned to carry out increased speed checks and ensure adherence to legal parking.

Conclusion:

This is another stable report and if there are any issues that you wish brought to Police attention, please let me know.

Debbie Burnett, Sgt, A0141