

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 9TH FEBRUARY 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN

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

Members of Public:

1	<p><u>Welcome and opening remarks</u></p> <p>Chair Mervyn Barr welcomed everyone. Permission was given for meeting to be recorded.</p> <p>Re the issues we sometimes have with the Wi-Fi connection at hotel, we could subscribe to a mobile Wi-Fi system. Malcolm can advise on this and we will look into it further.</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Apologies received from Donald Davidson, Ken Stewart, Willie Munro, Tim Yeomans, Ben Horsburgh & Cllr Joji</p>
3	<p><u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 12th January 2023</u></p> <p>Minutes were approved, with no changes. Proposed Heather, seconded Malcolm</p>
4	<p><u>Shopping Centre Update- Centre Manager Ben Horsburgh –</u></p> <p>Ben had sent apologies for tonight due to ill-health. He can't comment on the current closure of Nisa shop & the Post Office as he is not allowed to get involved in the shop tenants operations. There is a poor notice on front door, with no details of nearest other Post Offices. Mervyn will try to make contact with Post Office to find out what is happening.</p> <p>POSTSCRIPT - it transpires that Nisa is a franchise and the franchisee resolved the situation over the following week. Reasons for power outage were confidential.</p>
5	<p><u>Matters Arising/ Actions Update</u></p> <p>1. File Share Options (Malcolm) – Malcolm sent out a guide on setting up a OneDrive account to all</p>

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	<p>members on 8th Feb. David has given access to all members (not Councillors yet). Malcolm showed what the system and file structure looked like. Gordon showed what he had uploaded re donations and other financial info.</p> <p>2. Larg/Broadstraik Park (Malcolm) – Malcolm has now got info from Registrars re ownership of parts of the park. He will arrange meeting with Ian Mitchell in Landscape Services to discuss what could be done in the park. A biodiversity officer from Nestrans will also help with this. Mervyn to send Malcolm the contact details for the Council Green Spaces officer Tajana Sosic.</p> <p>3. Academy Outreach- The marketing officer for DYWNE has done article for the Spring Bulletin. David will put it on website so Kate can then put it on Facebook</p> <p>4. Inclusion of Ward Councillors in Member list in Bulletin The 4 Councillors have approved the wording as proposed at January meeting and it has been put in Spring Bulletin.</p> <p>5. WECC Elections May 2023-The closing date for nominations is 18th May. The poster advertising this is on front cover of Spring Bulletin and article explaining the process etc. is also in it.</p> <p>6. Litter Picking- Mervyn and Ken met with Raymond recently to discuss the way it is organised. Mervyn and Gordon are checking if a storage unit for the litter pickers can be installed against the Bowling Club pavilion wall. It would be secured with a combination padlock. A Whats App group can be created for the volunteers,</p> <p>7. Local Chemists- The takeover of the two Lloyds chemists by Porters was completed in December and the service is much improved. Porters have put an advert in Bulletin and an article explaining why they have taken over Lloyds and are not now going to be building a new pharmacy at Arnhall.</p>
6	<p><u>Police Report</u></p> <p>The Police report for January has been circulated. Nothing in it of major concern. Inspector Gareth Hannan will be attending April meeting so at March meeting we should discuss the points we wish to raise with him.</p>
7	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>Review of correspondence log for last 4 weeks. (circulated) Re the Jubilee Drive signs, the Council cost quote was £1284 plus vat, but they have now confirmed they won't add vat. Approval was granted for this cost. No timescale for when they will be installed</p> <p>Ann Overton emailed Mervyn recently with details of Lottery funding available for events to celebrate the Kings Coronation in May. David Dent confirmed that Rotary are not planning a Coronation event, but they are looking to repeat the Lazy Sunday Afternoon event at Ashdale Hall field, provisionally on Sunday 25th June. Dave will welcome any ideas or suggestions on how to make the event an even greater success. There is no indication that the Round Table are organising a Westhill Gala in June.</p>
8	<p><u>Ward 13 Councillors updates</u></p> <p>Cllr Walker (circulated report as below in italics)</p> <p><i>Directional signs Tesco roundabout</i> <i>This issue is ongoing. Residents have been in touch for last couple of years (at least) asking if the roundabout could have better road markings. Complaints of lack of right-hand arrows meaning traffic use both lanes to exit on to one lane. Due to the additional fast-food venues and other development generating extra traffic, Roads Safety Team are looking at how the roundabout markings could be improved. Very recently a further resident came forward asking that the lanes be marked to show use of both lanes.</i></p>

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Raymond's night out

My apologies for 15th Feb as I will be attending Cluny, Midmar & Monymusk Community Council. I hope the evening goes well.

Toilet provision in schools

Over recent years, there has been a move by many councils in Scotland away from single-sex toilet provision in schools to unisex provision. In the current School Premises Regulations, it states there must be separate toilets for boys and girls. Accessible toilets are now a welcome, modern addition since the regulations were put in place. With more up to date legislation awaited, in our scrutiny role as local members, we asked for reports to be made available, followed by a workshop, to discuss facilities across all Garioch schools. We felt that a clear policy across Aberdeenshire was required as well as a clear consultation process. Feedback on existing provision has been mixed, with most girls and boys preferring their own single-sex spaces and others being ok with unisex provision if there is alternative single-sex provision somewhere in the school building. I am very clear that equality does not mean everyone in the same space; but a space for everyone and that any change to provision in our schools must involve parents and pupils at an early stage. Our Garioch Area Committee scrutiny process has concluded, and it will now be up to the relevant policy committees to consider our recommendations.

Garioch Area Committee last week

Planning –

*Wickes – report pulled from agenda last minute. Expect it to come back shortly
Cala at Burnland – committee requested a site visit. Determination due 21st February. Because of proximity to my home, I declared an interest and will not take part in the determination.*

Westhill Diversionary Project

Community Learning & Development staff are working alongside the Sports Hub to co-ordinate a project offering alternative positive opportunities for young people in the evening after a need was identified locally. The project focuses on providing a quiet youth space alongside sports activities.

Council Tax

Full council meets on Thursday 9th February, where 2023/24 Council Tax rates will be set.

LED Replacement Programme

The lighting service have been rolling out the LED replacement programme for some time. Across Westhill, 268 lights were completed in phase 1. Phase 2 (277 lights) has been started and it is anticipated along with phase 3 (107 lights), will be completed end of February, weather permitting. Currently there are 1144 street lights not LED in Westhill, so after the first three phases mentioned above, the remaining 492 lanterns will be changed to LED in 2023/24, budget permitting.

The faulty LED beacons at the pedestrian crossing outside Holiday Inn have been reported and we are still awaiting LED beacons to be placed at the crossing on Hay's Way (Old Skene Road end). Also on the electricians' job list is the faulty LED lamp by the Rotary Welcome stone, as reported by David Dent last month

Cllr Miller (circulated report as below in italics) -

Council Tax:

A full meeting of Aberdeenshire Council was held today (Feb 9) and the council tax increase for 2023/24 was set at 4%. This equates to an increase of £1.03 per week at band D level.

CALA Development:

The proposed CALA development at Burnland near the intersection of the B979 and A944 came before the last

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	<p><i>Area Committee meeting. No determination was made as a site visit was requested by councillors and this will take place 14 February to better understand the issues. My personal concern is around the direct access from the main roads although a number of other concerns were raised as well. After the site visit, the application will come back to Area Committee at the next meeting.</i></p> <p><u>Road conditions:</u></p> <p><i>In last month's report I mentioned the situation with potholes and the significant deterioration in roads after the wintry weather. It is noticeable that these issues are now being dealt with and a number of the more serious road defects have now been rectified, although there is still work to be done to complete some areas within Westhill, which is constantly on the radar and is being followed up on a regular basis.</i></p> <p>I am meeting with Inspector Hannan on Monday, and can raise any issues we have.</p> <p>Speeding at Dunecht has been monitored recently. Drivers who have been stopped by Police have been taken into the primary school and the children have been asking the why they were speeding.</p> <p>There will be a new road from Countesswells to the Lang Stracht roundabout, no timescale yet. This is likely to impact journey times for traffic from Westhill.</p> <p>Cllr McKail No written report. Council Sheltered Housing- the weekly charge for Heat & Light will be increasing from £26 to £46</p> <p>Cllr Joji No report.</p>
9	<p><u>Rotary Update/Exchange- David Dent</u></p> <p>At a recent Rotary Executive meeting David updated them on our achievements in last few months and passed on their congratulations to us.</p> <p>They are restarting their litter picks on 18th February.</p>
10	<p><u>Orbital Trail + Links Project Update</u></p> <p>Circulated report from Gordon Prentice in italics:- <i>Matters Arising Since Last Meeting</i></p> <p><i>Funding Applications:</i></p> <p><i>1. Carnie Woods Path Restoration & Upgrade [1.1km]</i></p> <p><i>Press, websites and social media channels have now been updated, as have the Carnie Woods volunteers [110]. An article was also written for the Spring Issue of the Bulletin. A project kick-off meeting has been requested with ACC's project team.</i></p> <p><i>A new point of access from Carnie Crescent has been agreed with Avant Homes [formerly Bett Homes], although we have still to find a funding source for the construction of the new all-abilities path between the car park at the pitches and the new opening in the fence.</i></p>

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2. **Broadshade Avenue to Golf Club Upgrade [475m]**

Still waiting to hear from the Baxter Foundation following the Trustees Board meeting on Friday 3rd. Should that be successful, then the project will be fully funded and work could commence and be completed before the end of March. However, should that be unsuccessful, then we will have to wait until the FCC Scottish Action Fund meets on 7th March.

Update- Baxter Foundation have awarded us £4000, so £3835 short. The GAIF funding needs to be spent by 31st March so could ask the contractor if they could be ready to start the work soon after getting decision on the FCC Scottish Action Fund application around 8th March. Then could ask him to bill us the first £5000 before 31st March. Gordon will check with Ann Overton if the £5k could be carried over to next fiscal year.

If get no funding from FCC Scottish Action Fund then have to decide to either cancel the project or if WECC can fund the £4k balance.

3. **Place Based Investment Programme [Working title: Improving Access for all to Westhill's Healthier Green Spaces]**

A formal application must be lodged by Friday, 24th February. Following last month's meeting, a Community Survey was created and launched on 24th January. Posters were tied around Denman Park / Arnhall Moss and left with Technip, Skene Medical Group, the Library, Community Centre, Tesco, Community Church, SensationAll, the Men's Shed, and more recently with WDCSH(Sports Hub), Evolution Fitness, the Carnie Woods volunteers and Ashdale Hall. If you haven't done so already, please take the survey and/or send it to your network: <https://weccsurveys.aidaform.com/denman-park-arnhall-moss-community-survey>. A reminder will be sent out w/c 6th February for a final push until the survey closes on the 12th. To date, we have received 320 responses, with 114 saying they would volunteer to help with tidying and regular maintenance of planted areas.

Analysis of the survey and compilation of the formal application will take place after the 12th. I'm hoping to get letters of support from CWAS, SensationAll, Westhill Health Walks and the Town Centre Manager. Project support is being provided by Susan Adams, Jim Robertson and Steve Gray of Aberdeenshire Council. A site meeting will take place on Tuesday 7th.

Town Centre Information Boards: *as Ben reported in November, installation of these was imminent, but no sign as yet.*

Ongoing Maintenance / Upgrades

Annual Maintenance Schedule: *no work done this month, still to be refined and merged with volunteer resources required for Greening Westhill.*

Weeding: *no activity – sculpture planted area needs a revisit*

Link to Hill of Keir to/from the west: *No change, although there may be changes to operation and/or ownership of the land imminently.*

Funding Update

No spend or change this month.

11 **Planning Matters** (Diane Priestly)

Circulated report in italics:-

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PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Burnland APP/2022/1062-this planning application, although recommended for approval by the planners, has been deferred so that a site visit can be arranged. Many of the residents at Burnland Park had expressed concern over the planned removal of a strip of trees between Burnland Park and the new development.

Wickes APP/2022/2010-this planning application has been withdrawn.

24 Westhill Heights APP/2023/0165-plans for an extension

Just a note of interest there is planned a new retail park at Banchory which could be affected by new eco-planning rules. The new planning framework takes specific aim at retail parks and drive thrus and will prioritise projects which are likely to tackle the climate crisis.

Hill of Fare proposed Windfarm -no update

Scottish Government's energy consents unit (ECU) ministers are responsible for approving applications to build, operate or modify onshore electricity generating stations and windfarms with capacities exceeding 50 megawatts as well as applications to install overhead power lines, large oil and gas pipelines plus associated infrastructure.

There are now concerns being expressed by rural communities about the increasing development of windfarms particularly in the Upper Deveron Valley and the impact they have on the landscape, including noise pollution and the negative impact on biodiversity.

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN SURVEY

As discussed at our last meeting the survey has now been extended to March 31st however some of the replies have already highlighted some of the areas of development that WECC has already been discussing (e.g. Denman Park, Sports Centre, shopping centre car park). Rotary are being praised for the summer flowers we plan (with help from Rotary) The schools have been contacted about the survey but no responses yet.

ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The LDP was finally adopted on 13th January 2023; the process has taken 110 days rather than the 28 days which was set out by legislation and will remain valid until 2033

On 11th January the Scottish Parliament voted to approve the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and on 13th February the Scottish ministers will adopt and publish at which point it will become part of the statutory development plan; the NPF4 has greater significance than the LDP 2023. This document is more radical than the Aberdeenshire LDP as it reinforces actions to combat the climate crisis and the Biodiversity crisis.

David will circulate the consultation on the Aberdeenshire Draft Development Plan Scheme. Survey closes on 11th March

12 Financials (Gordon Prentice) Circulated report in italics:-

Matters Arising 12 January:

- *Donation made to Granite City Brass as agreed*
- *Contact made with prospective IV referred by Elaine*

Financial Transactions – December

Income: £7,773, comprising £7,723 Bulletin advertising income, plus £50 from Vinespring Church plus £22 bank interest.

Expenditure: Only £188.75 as per Main A/c statement below at **Appendix 1.**

Outstanding Commitments: £183, comprising honoraria payments due to David Ritchie for January

Bank Balances at Month End: £27,446

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	<p><i>Main Account: £7,205 [see Appendix 1] Bulletin Account: £20,241</i></p> <p>Westhill Bulletin Winter Issue Contribution: £2,824 on income of £9,789. This is ahead of budget of £2,500. The total surplus for the 4 issues in 2022 is £12,757. This will be transferred to the main WECC bank account Revised projections for 2023: the printer has confirmed a 12% increase for 2023 which could mean £2,000 less contribution than the £11,350 planned, possibly something closer to £9,500. On the sales front, David has issued prepaid invoices worth £25,921 for this year's 4 issues. That's £1.5k more than last year, but the expectation so far is that single issue income may be less than last year. Independent Verifier: the candidate referred by Elaine was expecting payment, so the hunt continues. Community Support Fund: no applications were made this month, leaving us with a balance unspent of £735. In addition, the other news is that Echt & Skene has resolved its funding issue for the installation of the play park equipment and no longer needs the £1,000 we pledged. To sum up, we made 12 donations to 10 community groups in 2022, totalling £4,490.</p>
13	<p>Green Westhill (Mervyn Barr) Storage shed for behind Green Wall- Planning Dept. have advised that planning permission would be required. On further consideration a Shed may not be best option for storing the Christmas lights. A customised box would be better and permission would not be required for that. Ann Overton has confirmed the grant funding for a shed could be used for a box, but we need to clarify if a receipt for the materials bought would suffice for 31st March deadline or if it would require to be constructed by then.</p> <p>Plants for Kinmundy Hill- Should be delivered later this month. Mervyn has dropped off letters to the nearby residents advising them of the plans. Greenfingers group will help plant them. QG Canopy trees for Denman Park should be delivered around mid-March.</p>
14	<p>AOB & Close of Meeting Reminder about the social evening on 15th February in this room to present gift to Raymond Swaffield.</p> <p>Mervyn confirmed he would not be standing as Chair at the June AGM. There is more scope for delegation to reduce burden on the Chair role. Mervyn will be away from 1st to 9th March, so won't be here for 9th March meeting</p> <p>Meeting closed at 10pm Date of Next Meeting- 9th March at Holiday Inn, with Zoom option.</p>

APPENDIX



GARIOCH COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE

Community Council: Westhill and Elrick
Reporting Period: 1 to 31 January 2023

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 and plain-clothed patrols 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	3	5
Public Nuisance	0	3
Road Traffic	0 accidents, 5 other	1 accident, 9 other
Drugs	0	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.

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Assault:

There has been 2 incidents reported. Both relate to parties known to one another with no injury sustained. Three individuals have been charged.

Housebreaking/Theft:

There has been 3 incidents reported. 2 relate to theft by shoplifting and 1 to theft of fuel. These incidents still under investigation. There continues to be no reports of Housebreaking.

Public Nuisance:

There has been 0 incidents reported which is pleasing.

Road Traffic:

This period has seen 0 reported accidents. There has been 3 reports of vehicles failing to stop having struck parked vehicles. Enquiries are ongoing in respect of these. One individual has been charged regarding dangerous driving and being unfit having failed to stop for Police and colliding with parked cars.

Drugs:

There have been 0 incidents reported.

Significant Crime/Issues within Your Community:

There have been no significant events this reporting period.

Planned Community Policing Activity/Advice:

Our speeding operation continues.

Conclusion:

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

Emma Forbes Sgt A0645