



Westhill & Elrick
Community Council

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

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

Members of Public: Ross Smith (Swimming Pool manager) Alison Cumming (Area Office), Crawford Logan (Rotary)

1	<p>Welcome and opening remarks</p> <p>Becky is chairing the meeting as Mervyn is on holiday. Permission was given for meeting to be recorded.</p> <p>Alison Cumming from Area Office is making her annual visit to us. She brought us a pair of microphones to use.</p>
2	<p>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Apologies received from Mervyn Barr, Donald Davidson, Ken Stewart, Tim Yeomans, David Dent, Cllr Walker & Cllr Joji. Cllr Miller had intended to attend by Zoom but David had omitted the Councillors from the email with the zoom link.</p>
3	<p>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 9th February 2023</p> <p>Minutes were approved, with no changes. Proposed Audrey, seconded Kate</p>
4	<p>Shopping Centre Update- Centre Manager Ben Horsburgh –</p> <p>Ben not present.</p> <p>Gordon will contact Ben to thank him for putting up the 2 extra large Westhill maps.</p>
5	<p>Matters Arising/ Actions Update</p> <p>1. File Share Options (Malcolm) – Everybody should now be able to access the files in the WECC One-</p>

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	<p>Drive. David will add the Councillors. David will continue to send out the pre-reads etc. by email for a few months as well as putting them in the One-Drive,</p> <p>2. Larg/Broadstraik Park (Malcolm) – Malcolm has had meeting with a biodiversity officer from NESCAN (North East Climate Action Network) who has suggested things that can be done in park to improve biodiversity. Still to meet up with Ian Mitchell. Becky reported that one of the pieces of playpark equipment was found damaged when she went there recently. Doesn't appear to be an option to report this on Council website, so she reported it to Cllr Walker and the item was removed from park quickly.</p> <p>3. Academy Outreach- There was discussion regarding how to engage with the schools for this project but also in relation to the CAP. Alison explained that our local councillors will be meeting with the Directorate of Education in around 5 weeks' time, followed by the local Head Teachers attending Area Committee in June. Therefore, we should write to our four local councillors, copying in Ann Overton, to express our hope of engaging with the young people in both of these projects. Elaine will speak to Mervyn about this. Ross Smith suggested that another option for engaging with Academy pupils could be via Liam Troup, Active Schools co-ordinator for the Westhill schools cluster. He is based at the Academy</p> <p>4. Litter Picking- We are trying to find out who owns the tennis and bowling club premises with a view to placing a box there to store picking equipment. The idea being that people can help themselves to the equipment, complete the pick, either singly or in a group and then return the equipment on completion. Full details will have to be worked out. Mervyn discussed it with Ken and Gordon and we think it's perfectly feasible with a light touch control. The volunteers have not yet been updated yet. In the meantime, Dave Dent is carrying on with Rotary picks.</p> <p>5. Lights Storage Unit- Ben has asked to discuss this further so he can be satisfied that we have the optimum solution. We have had to let go of the grant application for it as it won't be purchased before end of March.</p> <p>6. Wi-Fi at hotel- Connection and speed was better until around 8pm, which was when a big football match started. Still an option to buy a mobile router</p>
6	<p><u>Police Report</u> The Police report for February has been circulated. Nothing in it of major concern. Inspector Gareth Hannan will be attending April meeting. Topics to discuss can include speeding and difficulty getting through to Police on 101. Further topics to be notified to David.</p>
7	<p><u>Correspondence</u> Review of correspondence log for last 4 weeks. (circulated) Re the new Burnland street names, there was general agreement that naming them after the Duguid family who owned the farm was a good idea. Any other ideas, please advise before next meeting.</p> <p>Inspiring Aberdeenshire Awards- David will submit a nomination for Mervyn. Suggested that Gordon be nominated for his Orbital Trail project, but Gordon would prefer it be done next year after the improvements are completed.</p>

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8	<p><i>Ward 13 Councillors updates</i></p> <p><i>Cllr McKail - Circulated report in italics:-</i></p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council Budget.</p> <p><i>The big ticket item which will be known by the time of the WECC meeting is the approval of the Revenue and Capital Budget. It's a requirement to balance the budget and in this current year £67m of savings /cuts had to be made to achieve this.</i></p> <p>Burnland Park Housing Application</p> <p><i>Erection of 50 units was granted: Clarity as to why the hedging was being removed;(siting of drainage); Grass verge on the B979 is included in the factoring service; concern about vehicular speeds on the entrance road to the development which is in the 60mph speed zone currently (hopefully Roads Officers will process the moving of the 30mph sign which will include the site entrance).</i></p> <p>New recycling 3 week service being phased in during the next few months. Information as to start date to be confirmed.</p> <p><i>What is changing?</i></p> <p><i>A new waste collection strategy is being introduced to support and encourage households across Aberdeenshire to maximise kerbside recycling. Household bins will soon be emptied on a 3-weekly collection cycle. The contents will be collected every 3 weeks. •</i></p> <p><i>blue-lidded bin (240l) will then be for paper, card, and cardboard only.</i></p> <p><i>black-lidded bin (240l) will continue to be for all non-recyclable waste.</i></p> <p><i>orange-lidded bin (180l) for tins, cans, foil, aerosols, food and drinks cartons, and plastic bottles, pots, tubs, and trays. No changes to the food-waste and battery collection services, which will remain weekly.</i></p> <p><i>Why is this change happening?</i></p> <p><i>Scotland's Zero Waste Plan sets targets to recycle 70% of all waste by the next two years.</i></p> <p><i>More than 60% of what Aberdeenshire households collectively send to landfill can be recycled using existing services and around half of that can be recycled using kerbside collections. These improvement could save up to £765k every year.</i></p> <p>Tesco Roundabout- Council are looking at the road markings on Westhill Drive approaching Tesco roundabout. Issue is whether cars going straight ahead can be allowed to go in right-hand lane.</p> <p>Gordon added that more pedestrian crossings are required in that area given the increase in footfall with the new fast food developments. Cycle-ways also run out at this junction, so cyclists have issues crossing as well. He will contact Area Manager about this.</p>
9	<p><u>Rotary Update/Exchange-</u> Crawford Logan</p> <p>Litter-pick planned for 18th March</p> <p>Rotary Stone still not lit, but it is on Council list to be sorted</p> <p>Purple Crocuses that Rotary planted are coming up</p> <p>Rotary will assist with tree planting on 22nd & 29th March</p> <p>Planning started for Senior Citizens Christmas party</p> <p>Lazy Sunday Afternoon will be run again on Sunday 4th June in field behind Ashdale Hall.</p> <p>Round Table will not be running a Gala this year due to their low number of members.</p> <p>Willie offered to write article for summer Bulletin to see if a group can be formed to plan a Gala for 2024.</p> <p>Toilets for Denman Park- may be able to apply for funding from a national Rotary fund for community support.</p>

10 Orbital Trail + Links Project Update

Circulated report from Gordon Prentice in italics:-

Matters Arising Since Last Meeting

Funding Applications

1. Carnie Woods Path Restoration & Upgrade [1.1km]

The project team at Aberdeen City Council has selected a preferred contractor, but there is no news as yet of a first site meeting with the contractor or start date.

Access from Carnie Crescent: *An AC official raised the question of whether planning permission is required to create a new route from the car park to the new opening in the fence, so a query has been raised with the planning officer. We have still to find a funding source for this work.*

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

I am still waiting to hear back from the Area Manager about extending the offer of £5,000 from the GAIF beyond this financial year. On the assumption that the balance of funding will come from FCC Scottish Action Fund on 8th March, I met with the Golf Club Manager on site to go over some of the logistical issues that our contractor was looking to have clarified. I also wrote to James Gibb Factors [factors for Broadshade] to ask if our contractor could use the island at the bus turning circle as a temporary storage site for his materials – still to hear back. Update- the FCC Scottish Action Fund have approved the grant application. This means we now have more funding than needed so it is likely that the Baxter Foundation grant will not be taken up. The £5000 from GAIF needs to be spent by 31st March but it may only be possible to spend a portion of that by then.

3. Place Based Investment Programme [Improving Access for all to Westhill's Health-Giving Green Spaces]

Our application was duly submitted one hour before closing on Friday, 24th February. 386 members of the community responded to the survey with 143 offering their services as volunteers. In addition, we also received letters of support for the project from the following organisations: SensationAll, Westhill Walking to Health, Town Centre Manager [MJ Mapp], Westhill Scout Group, Westhill Bowling Club, Jog Scotland Westhill and, in relation to the use of volunteers to work alongside the Council's Landscape Services team, from the Garioch Area Manager.

If successful, thanks must be due to these organisations above for their support. Special mention must also go to Susan Adams and Jim Robertson of AC for their constructive positivity throughout and to fellow members of the WECC team for patiently reviewing my drafts.

On checking with the PBIP Manager on the penultimate day, we received some encouragement to include the cost of 2 trishaws on behalf of Westhill & District Community Sports Hub [WDCSH] and Cycling Without Age Scotland [CWAS], so the text and budget were hastily amended.

We are obviously hoping that this fantastic level of community support is compelling and decisive in the decision making process. However, we'll have to wait until the end of April before hearing.

A copy of the application can be found on the shared drive here: [2023 24 WECC PBIP Full Application-Final.pdf](#)

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Ongoing Maintenance / Upgrades

Here is how an **Annual Maintenance Schedule** for the Orbital Trail might look:

WOT Annual Maintenance Schedule [requiring volunteers]													
Task	Sectors	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pruning	1,3,4,5,6												
Strimming Undergrowth **	1,3,5,6b												
Weeding	2 & 4												
Clear drainage channels	6a												
Check signs/signposts	All												
Restore damaged areas	All												
Sectors:	1 Broadshades					4 Hidden Garden							
	2 Gateway Sculpture					5 Lawsondale							
	3 Golf Course					6 Meadowlands [a. farm track & b. lane]							
** requires assistance from Community Payback team													

****** Our 2022 contact in the Community Payback team has moved on to a new role in the Council. I have asked to be introduced to his successor – reply awaited.

There are currently 15 members of the Orbital Trail Volunteers WhatsApp group, many of whom have also signed up for the Greening Westhill Whats App group. We have still to merge these activities – tree planting, plus summer floral display – into the schedule.

Added to these is the prospect of engaging with the 110 volunteers who came forward to help with Carnie Woods restoration. The two jobs we have in mind are

1. Weeding the 7,000 new tree plants and
2. Removing all sections of boardwalk that don't form part of the new contract, and replacing them with membrane and quarry material.

Then, of course, there are 143 volunteers wanting to help in Denman Park / Arnhall Moss – identities unknown!

We will consider getting manual or electronic counters to monitor how many people are using the various paths.

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:-

Planning applications

Burnland APP/2022/1062 this application has now been approved and work has already begun on site.

Westhill Mens Shed APP/2023/0140 planning application for Change of Use of Land and Siting of a Storage Container

Hill of Fare Windfarm

The results of the latest questionnaire dovetails into the original questionnaire back in November that the Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council carried out and supports the findings that there are a large number of objectors to this proposed windfarm on the Dunecht Estate. The Community Councils who took part in the questionnaire were Banchory, Crathes, Midmar, Echt and Skene, Inchmarlo and Torphins. I am in contact with the Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council and they have informed me that the developer will consult with these communities prior to any planning application.

There are two groups opposing this development- the Banchory group which is working on behalf of the Banchory Community Council <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090271152569>, and the Hill of Fare information group which is a very comprehensive and informative website -hilloffare.org.

They have started to produce a regular newsletter so you may wish to register to get that.

Community Action Plan

The number of responses have increased: on the whole residents have stated that they are happy living here however there are several issues that have been already been highlighted. When the survey finishes on the 31st March all members of WECC will receive the findings as soon as they have been collated. To follow on from the survey we are intending to set up a variety of focus groups to ensure that the survey has covered the important issues within Westhill and Elrick.

We may need to reduce the amount we donate to other groups via the Community Support Fund in order to fund projects arising out of the CAP.

Becky reminded us that a survey of all the playparks in Westhill was done around the time of the Planning for Real project many years ago. David will check if he has a copy of the survey.

Webinar on Community Map Scotland-this involves a mapping software that is useful for future planning /land ownership/funding applications and Local Place Plan; this scheme has been successfully used in England since 2009 and now has funding for a trial one year period in Scotland. Membership for this initial year is free.

Aberdeenshire Development Plan Scheme 2023

Just a reminder that WECC needs to complete a consultation survey questionnaire by the 11th March, if you have any comments could you forward them to me by the 10th so that I can include them on the submitted document. The survey and all the relevant information can be found under the Development Plan Scheme 2023 on the <https://engage.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/hub-page/local-development-plan-2027>.

Sports Centre Feasibility Study- Gordon advised that his application to Developer Obligation funding for this study has been rejected. He has raised some queries with Susan Adams on the reasons for the rejection. Gordon had got support for the application from all 4 Councillors, but they appear to have agreed with the rejection. Cll Mckail advised it was mainly to do with the amount being requested and that the funds had been allocated to Lawsondale. Gordon would like to have further discussions on how the study can be progressed.

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

. Matters Arising 9 February:

- *Bulletin surplus of £12,757 for 2022 transferred into Main Account.*

Financial Transactions – February

Income: £14,747, comprising £14,697 Bulletin advertising income from 48 advertisers, plus £50 from Vinespring Church

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	<p>Expenditure: Only 4 payments made in 3 categories, as per Main A/c statement below at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Outstanding Commitments: £367, comprising honoraria payments for secretarial and minute duties due to David Ritchie for January & February. We have also committed £1255 for the Jubilee Drive signs though that was for 4 signs and only 2 have been installed.</p> <p>Bank Balances at Month End: £41,787</p> <p>Main Account: £19,606 Bulletin Account: £22,181</p> <p>Westhill Bulletin</p> <p>Prepaid income for 2023: 77 advertisers took up the offer of discounted rates for paying annually in advance for this year's 4 issues. These invoices totalled £25,385. That's 3 less invoices than last year, but £1k more income due to the increased rates. Based on the Spring Issue, when there were 10 less advertisements than last year, the expectation is that single issue income may be less than last year.</p> <p>The estimated surplus for the Spring Issue is £1,777 compared to budget of £3,100 and the Winter Issue contribution of £2,824.</p> <p>Independent Verifier: It was suggested that I approach Alan Moir of Fyfe Moir & Associates. Alan is currently considering and hopeful of being able to commit on behalf of his organisation. Alan has now confirmed his firm will do this free of charge. They may wish to include a statement about their support to WECC in their Bulletin advert.</p>
13	<p>Green Westhill (Mervyn Barr- circulated report in italics)</p> <p><i>Growing Green Spaces plants have arrived in Kemnay along with planting kit. Will be collected by me next week and plan is to plant them on Kinmundy Hill on 22nd. Greenfingers volunteers have been notified. Queens Green Canopy Trees are due to be delivered this week 8 or 9th. Again they will be planted with help from Greenfingers, later in March. Ian Mitchell has agreed the planting schemes/areas for both. Got confirmation that we have secured our order of commercial grade compost for the baskets and planters.</i></p>
14	<p>AOB & Close of Meeting</p> <p>Alison Cumming requested if David could provide a bit more detail on how we had used the iPad and training to develop our engagement and communication with the community.</p> <p>She also mentioned that at the CC Forum last week she had raised the topic of sustainability and succession planning in community councils. Most CCs have issues with getting office bearers. Need to look at what the barriers are for people joining CCs and taking on OB roles. We are requested to feed-back by the next Forum in June if we would like to participate in a Shire-wide discussion on this and what format we would prefer. This could be included in another Engagement training session later in the year.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 9.40pm</p> <p>Date of Next Meeting- 13th April 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 28 February 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	2
Housebreaking	0	3
Public Nuisance	1	0
Road Traffic	1 accident, 4 other	0 accidents, 5 other
Drugs	1	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. One relates to parties known to one another with no injury sustained. Appropriate action was taken. The other relates to a 14 year old boy being struck by a snow shovel by an as yet unidentified youth. The injury sustained was minor and enquiries are ongoing.

Housebreaking:

There have been 0 incidents reported.

Public Nuisance:

There has been 1 incident reported which relates to youths at Aldi, Westhill. No criminality was identified and an area search was carried out with negative result.

Road Traffic:

This period has seen 1 reported accident involving a singular vehicle and no injuries. Damage was caused to street furniture.

2 reports were received regarding drivers potentially driving under the influence. Neither vehicle was traced.

1 report was received regarding road rage however the informant when contacted did not wish to pursue the matter.

One individual was stopped, charged and reported to the Procurator Fiscal regarding driving without insurance.

Drugs:

There has been 1 incident reported regarding a vehicle at Westhill Shopping Centre. No further reports were received and there was a delay in reporting. The vehicle was not traced.

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

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