

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

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

Members of Public: Louis Backwell (Hill of Fare Windfarm Information Group)

1	<p>Welcome and opening remarks</p> <p>Willie Munro chaired this meeting. Permission was given for meeting to be recorded.</p>
2	<p>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Apologies received from Donald Davidson, Mervyn Barr, Heather Cook, Elaine Manley, Tim Yeomans, CLlr Miller</p>
3	<p>Hill of Fare Windfarm Information Group- Louis Backwell</p> <p>Louis presented a set of slides outlining the key points re Hill of Fare Windfarm. See westhill-dec23-hofwig-community-information-event-dec23-v5-1.pptx (live.com) It includes a list of the key points that could form an objection. RES submitted the planning application to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit on 27 November. The deadline for submitting responses is 2nd February</p> <p>Gordon queried if a Community Benefits group had been set up. Louis advised this hadn't been done as they consider it would weaken their case for objecting. Gordon pointed out that the developer is obligated to provide community benefits and it is a separate process from the planning application. Louis wasn't fully aware of this.</p> <p>See item 14 in minutes re WECC discussion</p>

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

4	<p><u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 9th November 2023</u></p> <p>The minutes were proposed by Rachid, seconded by Gordon</p>
5	<p><u>Shopping Centre Update</u></p> <p>No report from Ben Horsburgh.</p> <p>Diane has contacted Ben a few times to get confirmation re the planned CAP event at shopping centre in April but he hasn't responded yet.</p> <p>Willie has contacted the shopping centre selling agents Savills to request a meeting with the new owners after the sale is completed.</p>
6	<p><u>Matters Arising/ Actions Update</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Larg/Broadstraik Park (Malcolm) –Looking hopeful on getting around £1000 of funding to create the wild-flower meadow and purchase some fruit trees. Litter Picking- Gordon advised that 5 volunteers attended the experimental pick last saturday, as they used to stop in November. More volunteers are offering to pick on their own when it suits them. Permission has been granted for them to be able to deposit their bin bags in the commercial waste bins at the shopping centre, Ashdale Hall and McDonalds. Planning to do one organised pick per month for the Jan to March period, if weather ok. Swimming Pool- Gillian Wood (Venue and Asset Officer for Live Life Aberdeenshire) arranged an exploratory meeting on 12th December on forming a Friends of Westhill Swimming Pool group. Willie had been sent the details as he is on the Pool updates contact list. No one from WECC attended and no feedback yet on how the meeting went. At the November meeting Avril Nicol had advised that the pool staff were planning to do a household leaflet drop around end of November. That hasn't happened yet so David will check if it is still going ahead. Business Association- Rachid today delivered Bulletins to businesses at Arnhall and will do other business areas tomorrow. Notes are attached to the copies to point out the Business Association article in it and ask the business if they would like to get the hard copy each time or the electronic version which could then be circulated to employees. WECC sail sign purchase- Gordon advised there was varied responses from members re the draft design that was circulated. This was an indication of a lack of clarity on WECCs role in the community. It is related to the review of our social media presence which Becky is keen to get discussed. The sale sign design can be included in that review. Suggested that a separate meeting be held to discuss WECCs objectives, similar to the reviews that Mervyn held on a Saturday morning at Subsea 7 a few times when he was Chair around 2015/16. Can also look at the 'Democracy Matters' consultation. Office Bearers will look at setting this up. TotalEnergies- Re the suggested twinning with Billiere, awaiting feedback on what Billiere would be looking to get from it from Rhonda Miller and/or the person in TotalEnergies who had suggested the twinning.
7	<p><u>Asylum Seeker Hotel</u></p> <p>Minutes of the fortnightly community meetings have been circulated.</p> <p>Recently Mears were advised at short notice that another 40 service users would be arriving, so there is now 216 hotel residents and some doubling-up in rooms.</p> <p>Maya has bought large bags of sweets etc. out of her own pocket, David will take them to hotel next week when dropping off some clothing from Lions Club.</p> <p>Charlie advised that indoor cricket sessions for the SUs are being held weekly at the Academy. Some also play badminton regularly and have helped at the litter picks,</p>
8	<p><u>Police Report</u></p> <p>Report for November has been circulated- see Appendix to minutes. Nothing of any major concern.</p>

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

	<p>There is zero house break-ins reported but Becky is aware of one in early hours of 27th November in a house on Skene View that backs on to Community Church. Police came to see Becky to review the church CCTV. David will check with Sgt Forbes as to why this incident appears to be missing from the report.</p>
9	<p>Correspondence Review of secretary correspondence log for last 5 weeks. (Circulated). David advised that an item omitted from the report was an email from Glen Reynolds who is a Councillor in Banff area and lead spokesperson on Aberdeenshire Council's Communities Committee. He is also SNP candidate for the West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine constituency. He would like to engage with us <i>'on the problems, challenges and aspirations of residents in your area, and to learn more about your community action plans'</i> Cllr Walker said that he had approached all the CCs in the area with this request. Main issue is that if we allow one parliamentary candidate to speak at our meeting then we would have to offer this to the other candidates. David will contact Glen to decline his offer and advise him that we agreed that it wouldn't be appropriate to have a prospective candidate addressing WECC as we would then be obliged to invite all others. He will also advise Glen that all our meetings are open to the public and minutes available on our website</p>
10	<p>Ward 13 Councillors updates</p> <p>Cllr Miller- Not present. Circulated report in italics:</p> <p><i>Asylum Seekers: Some of you will already be aware of this, but the Westhill hotel has started on double occupancy of rooms leading to a significant increase in the number of asylum seekers housed there with the numbers, (at the time of writing), being in excess of 220. The tendency for my inbox to be dominated by this issue has now decreased as I think the community has become much more accepting and the generosity of groups in supporting the asylum seekers has been commendable and a fantastic reflection on Westhill. Since the last comm council there was a public forum with Police Scotland held in the library and this resulted in a lot of genuine concerns being raised and reassurance provided by the police. The message remains that any criminal or anti-social activity should be reported directly to the police, but the police also act as a reassurance for members of the public who may feel threatened or intimidated.</i></p> <p><i>Pavement parking: As of this week, the legislation on pavement parking came into force – this is obviously not a Westhill specific issue as it is Scotland wide. Enforcement of this will be through Aberdeenshire Council and not Police Scotland. I am not currently aware of how Aberdeenshire plan to enforce these measures locally but suspect it will be a "softly softly" approach in the early stages. More to follow as more info becomes available.</i></p> <p><i>Bus forum: Last week saw the latest bus forum between Aberdeenshire Council, Stagecoach and members of the public. This was the first time that the forum had been held for the whole of Aberdeenshire rather than area specific, and was also held entirely online rather than in person. I was not aware of people from Westhill attending, as they have at previously held forums. Initial feedback from the meeting is that the online, one Aberdeenshire approach was perhaps not as successful as the prior format and this will be reviewed by committee to determine the approach going forward. (E.g. at the Q&A session there was only time for less than 10% of questions that were posed</i></p> <p>Cllr Joji – verbal report.</p>

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

Willie has circulated the response from Home Office re an impact assessment on the effect of maximisation being implemented at the asylum hotel. The response still didn't indicate if an impact assessment had been carried out, so this has been queried again

Ongoing queries from residents re bins and pavement gritting.

Cllr Walker- Circulated report in italics:

Household Recycling Centres

On 30th November, the Infrastructure Services Committee agreed an outcome for all HRCs, after public consultation done over the summer. The full report can be read in the link below (item 11) and includes feedback data from the surveys (although not broken down specifically to show Westhill resident's responses on some of the questions).

Agenda for Infrastructure Services Committee on Thursday, 30th November, 2023, 10.15 am - Aberdeenshire Council (modern.gov.co.uk)

The outcome of the review is that Westhill and Inverurie will retain the online booking system and the number of walk-in slots will be increased. For Westhill, this is mainly to stop residents from Aberdeen city using it.

Pavement Parking Ban

Aberdeenshire Council have issued more information on how the pavement parking ban, due to come into force on Monday 11th December, will be handled. More information is in the link below.

Pavement, dropped kerb and double parking ban - Aberdeenshire Council

As councillor Miller intimated, the initial approach will be to educate. Two statements of note within the information in the link are:

Pavement/double parking can be reported to the council, but they can only take action where they see the offence.

Parking restrictions for HGVs cannot be enforced by the council and the Police remain responsible for enforcing these.

Snow Warden Scheme

There are a handful of local residents signed up to the council's Snow Warden scheme. There can be real benefits for groups who are able to help clear their own areas in bad weather with training, equipment and supplies of grit provided. The reality is that the council cannot cover all main routes, key locations, residential streets and pavements in any adverse weather event.

The scheme runs from 1st November to 31st March.

More information and sign-up details are in the link below:

Volunteer snow wardens - Aberdeenshire Council

David advised that at the Asylum hotel community meeting on 13th December it was suggested that the service users at asylum hotel could help with snow clearing, but they would need to get the right clothing and a risk-assessment

Cllr Mckail- Circulated report in italics:

Aberdeen FC Community Trust (AFCCT) AGM Impact Report.

Attended the AFCCT AGM where the following information was presented which I felt may be of interest:

Works with 17 schools in Shire and City. Have had 2324 pupils participating.

Held 1795 sessions. Provided 1049 meals.

Programme caters for children with a wide range of abilities. Skills and confidence learnt are transferable and utilised at home and in school. Programme addresses Food poverty. Mental and Physical Wellbeing.

Outcomes>>> Has improved school attendance. >>> Participation and engagement in activities in school and outwith school

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

has increased. >>Increased confidence and self-esteem. Along with AFCCT's sponsor Fugro provides funding for STEM workshops covering a sick period. Programme uses Sphero robots to cover basic coding and programming.

It was agreed that it would be useful to have a WECC member who keeps in touch with the Trust to try to make sure the Westhill and Elrick area is well placed to take advantage of the offerings. Willie to follow up with Donald.

Police Report Presented to Communities Committee > Dec 2023.

**Work closely with communities and lead agencies (Local Authority and Home Office), to reduce community based tensions around the resettlement of Asylum Seekers in the North East particularly during the period when there has been a potential for increasing numbers of people to come (currently 216 Service Users) .We work directly with the Asylum seeking communities and our input is key in terms of helping them understand our laws and good citizenship.*

**Build trust across our diverse communities continues and our attendance at events, eg Pride.*

Supported by partners, to promote Hate Crime Awareness Week.

**Have run Fraud Roadshow events and workshops to reach those vulnerable to exploitation*

**Recognised as a Division leading the way in prevention activity by Neighbourhood Watch Scotland. (e.g. Alerts).*

**Police are often the first responders to mental health, suicide or attempted suicide.*

**Working to reduce violence against women and girls.. Year to date, detection rates for this crime type within North East Division, when compared with last year to date, have increased. The Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS) continues to provide a valuable framework.*

Full report available on Council web pages >> Communities Committee December 2023

State of Roads and Pavements

Response was received from a constituent's concerns.

With regard to footway winter treatment and in particular your query over xx Rd a hierarchy of footways has been developed in order to prioritise the busy town centre areas where there is most pedestrian traffic. This risk-based approach follows the national Code of Practice.

F1 footways are main pedestrian routes in busy central areas of urban communities where shopping and business/commercial facilities are concentrated. F2 footways are busy pedestrian accesses routes, linking the central areas to areas of significant housing density, school academies and transport interchanges. These footways have the highest pedestrian footfall therefore receive the greatest priority.

We can confirm that xxxx is not one of our F1 or F2 footways and is a lower priority. As such, it will be attended to after our higher priority routes in line with the resources we have available at the current time.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to ensure that all footways on our network are always kept free of ice and snow. Our aim is to provide a winter gritting and snow clearing service which, as far as is reasonably practicable, within financial constraints and resource limitations, permits the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians on the more important parts of the network and seek to minimise delays and accidents attributable to weather conditions. It should also be noted there are no legal issues preventing members of the public clearing snow from public footways themselves. In fact, we would urge communities to get together and assist each other in clearing snow from paths and ensuring that the more vulnerable members of their local community are assisted

Should WECC Consider making a Participatory Budget Request?

Summary-Participation Requests come under part 3 of the Community Empowerment Act and give community groups the right to start a discussion with Aberdeenshire Council about how a public service could be improved. They are designed to complement existing arrangements and establish a formal dialogue with the council if necessary.

See [participatory-budget-request.docx \(live.com\)](#) for a detailed report on this from Cllr Mckail

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

	<p>There was a discussion around winter roads & pavements maintenance and that the needs of the community are not being met by the Council and could we implement a Participation Request. The Roads dept. will be contacted to request that more priority should be given to snow-clearing on the steeper streets in Westhill. Also will contact the Area Manager about a possible Participation Request</p>
11	<p><u>Rotary Update/Exchange-</u> - David Dent</p> <p>Thank you for the WECC £200 contribution towards the Senior Citizens Christmas party</p> <p>Re the bikes at asylum hotel, the users have had their proficiency test and a container is being provided by the hotel to use as a bike workshop. Also have received donations of PPE and some cleared laptops from a service company for the asylum seekers. Unfortunately some of these laptops have now gone to Glasgow with their holders who have relocated.</p> <p>Petanque court is being progressed.</p>
12	<p><u>Westhill Paths Update</u></p> <p>Circulated report from Gordon Prentice in italics:-</p> <p><i>Constitution of Sub-group</i></p> <p><i>Following last month's prompt, and at time of writing, there are no changes to the composition of the sub-group. As a reminder, the group comprises Heather, Kate, Mervyn, Ron, Willie and myself.</i></p> <p><i>Rachid has now offered to join the group. Meeting will be organised soon.</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing matters are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Carnie Woods – final stages of implementation. We have been offered visitor counters by Paths for All.</i> <i>• Ongoing Path Maintenance</i> <i>• Denman Park paths project upcoming</i> <i>• Access Issues that arise</i> <i>• Amalgamation with our own Westhill Greenfingers group</i> <p><i>Contractual Matters - Finishing Touches</i></p> <p><i>1. Carnie Woods</i></p> <p><i>Willie and I "met" with the City Council's project leaders on 22nd Nov to go over the contractor's claims for "Additional works" and to ensure that the final costs didn't exceed the combined grant awards of £129,444. Discussion centred around materials and costs for items remaining:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Purchase and installation of qty 2 metal benches on existing foundations, plus qty 2 metal picnic tables mounted on new larger foundations – quotes received</i> <i>b. Installation of qty 4 information panels – quotes received</i> <i>c. Construction of stone cairn at Carnie Crescent entrance to the woods – quote awaited</i> <p><i>My hope is that there are funds remaining sufficient to cover the construction of a soak-away to relieve the flooding on the new path at Carnie Crescent.</i></p> <p><i>A funding claim of £14,778 was made to and accepted by Aberdeenshire Council for new path works at Carnie Crescent and Peregrine Road. These funds will be passed on to ACC whose officials managed the contract.</i></p> <p><i>At time of writing, I am preparing the claim of £89,910 for lodging on the Paths for All portal. Once approved, funds will also be passed to ACC through WECC's account.</i></p>

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

2. Path linking Broadshade Avenue and Golf Course

Still chasing the contractor to install the sign acknowledging funders, plus reinstatement of the waymarker post at the top of Westhill Heights.

Active Projects

1. Denman Park – extension of path network, bridging improvements and provision of additional rest areas.

The PBIP team “met” on 21st November to discuss logistics for assessing tenders and awarding the contract. Rachid was in support. By the time of our meeting, over 30 companies had expressed an interest and downloaded the specifications and tender documentation. The closing date for tenders is Wednesday, 13th December, and we [Scott Copeland, Jim Robertson and myself] have given ourselves until the 19th to reach a decision on our preferred contractor. Once agreed, Scott, the Contract Manager will finalise contracts using the Council’s processes. Some tree clearing and pruning may take place in the dormant months prior to the main contract works starting at the end of April / beginning of May.

We heard at the meeting that no contractors had come forward with tenders for the ponds filtration and replanting scheme. I’m checking the status with Steve Gray prior to our meeting on the 14th. Update- Contract will now be split into two parts- the filtration system work is hoped to be completed by end of this financial year, then the replanting can be done in the new financial year.

2. **Denman Park planted areas – volunteer support:** *I presented proposals to the Council’s Landscape Services team on 13th November offering to improve the presentation of the planted areas in Denman Park using community volunteers. I sent a reminder out on the 4th December, but still to receive a reply.*
3. **Carnie Woods - Boardwalk removal:** *our pilot project on 6th November involving only four volunteers and 20m of boardwalk was very successful. Now that we have an understanding on the best tools and techniques to do this manually, we plan to remove the remaining 200m over the winter involving a bigger squad of volunteers. No extra helpers yet following request in Bulletin article,*
4. **Weeding around Carnie Woods saplings:** *this project is hibernating meantime.*

Ongoing Maintenance / Upgrades

- *One of the volunteers has been active up to the end of last month, mainly in Denman Park*
- *Repairs to farm track on the north edge of Meadowlands; still no response from the farmer.*

Community Paths Development

Aberdeenshire Local Action Group sent out an invitation to all Paths Groups to apply for free consultancy support to develop path networks around our community. Although the town itself is relatively well served with safe off-road paths, there are very few link paths to neighbouring communities, apart from path to KoS, so I expressed an interest on 4th December on behalf of WECC Paths Group. Consultancy support requested is:

- *Identifying and undertaking option appraisals/feasibility studies on selected routes*
- *Negotiation with landowners and drafting landowner agreements*
- *Mapping work using GIS where required (e.g. production of route maps)*

Links of interest are:

- *Extension of Core Path link to Hill of Keir to/from the west*

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

- *Establishment of Core Path route to Brimmond Hill*
- *Cross country and circular route between Westhill and Blackburn*
- *Cross country route to Peterculter and Deeside Way*

The Kirkton of Skene Community Action Plan includes a desire to develop paths, including in Dunecht Estate. WECC aims to work with E&S CC to help develop paths of mutual interest

Funding Update

£38 spent on tools and WOT stickers this month, leaving £209 of the £281 carried forward from 2022/23 unspent. The balance could be used on quarry material for Meadowlands farm track reinforcement.

Willie commended Gordon for his hard work in managing the Carnie Woods project. It is very complex, due to the number of landowners and funders.

13	<p><u>Community Action Plan (Diane)</u></p> <p>Circulated report in italics:-</p> <p><i>Thank you to everyone who contributed to the additional meeting on 15th November to look at and discuss the actions needed for the next steps to develop the CAP. The planning group have now had time to analyse this information and as a result is organising a 2 day event at the Westhill Shopping Centre on 19th and 20th April.</i></p> <p><i>We are also in the process of getting a CAP questionnaire for around 40 pupils distributed into the school on 11th December.</i></p>
14	<p><u>Hill of Fare Planning Application</u></p> <p>The deadline for submitting a response to the ECU has now been put back to 2nd February so this can be discussed more fully at the January meeting, or a separate meeting. Also we can see how the public meeting arranged for 15th December goes, although it is more likely to attract the objectors, not the supporters.</p> <p>Gordon commented that there is an obligation on the developer to provide an Access Management Plan as part of the application, but there is no sign of one in the documents submitted.</p> <p>The Planning sub-group can prepare a couple of response options before WECC 11th January meeting and agreement made then as to which one should be submitted.</p>
15	<p><u>Planning Matters</u> (Diane Priestly)</p> <p>Circulated report in italics:-</p> <p><i>Planning applications</i></p> <p><i>APP/2023/1451</i></p> <p><i>Full planning permission for external alterations, siting of skips, erection of fence and alterations to car park at Elrick House, Peregrine Road -expiry date 14 September-awaiting decision</i></p> <p><i>APP/2023/1814</i></p> <p><i>Planning permission for Installation of Storage Silo at Schlumberger oilfield Services, Enterprise Drive, Westhill Industrial Estate, closing date 26th October-approved</i></p> <p>Aberdeen Football Club are looking at feasibility of building a stadium at Cormack Park for women's football.</p> <p><i>Pylons</i></p>

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

In addition to the windfarms there are also increasing concerns about the SSN's East Coast Overhead line Project. Alex Burnett MSP believes that communities who are being affected by these infrastructure planning decisions should be at the centre of such decisions and has called on the Scottish Government to give a statutory voice to communities and for the practice of them overruling the local authorities to end. There is now a petition being launched by Stephen Kerr MSP to order a review of all the alternatives, the petition can be found on: <https://www.stephenkerr.org.uk/Pylons> Just a quick update- it now appears that Westhill is clear of the mega line corridor and it's just going to be the west of Dunecht and just east of Echt.

Echt and Skene Community Council have arranged a public meeting re the Pylons at Dunecht Hall on Thursday 18th January at 19.30. It will be attended by Andrew Bowie MP.

Development Plan 2028-2038

There is now a surge in information as Councils are beginning to produce their new LDPs-each of these will take 3-4 years to produce and will last 10 years (the previous plans only lasted for five years).

The first stage of the processes is the Data collection or the evidence gathering stage which includes

- *the physical, cultural, economic social, built heritage and environmental characteristics of the area*
- *assessing the housing needs of the area including the provision for older and disabled people*
- *the size, composition, health and distribution of the population of the population including their health population*
- *the housing, healthcare and educational needs of the population*
- *the infrastructure system for the supply of water and energy*

The evidence report is then subject to a 'Gate Check examination' A reporter appointed from the Scottish Government will then assess the evidence and if not satisfied with it can ask for additional information from the Council.

As part of the evidence report a survey has now been completed by Aberdeenshire Council on the 'Open Space and Play Space Sufficiency' and the summary sheets will be circulated during December and January .Community Councils will be contacted about their views of the sufficiency of open spaces for their use.

16

Financials (Gordon Prentice) Circulated report in italics:-

Matters Arising 9 November:

- *£200 Contribution to Rotary Xmas party paid December.*

Financial Transactions – November

Income: £231 – comprising regular monthly receipt from Vinespring Church, plus £60 from 1 Bulletin invoice, plus £121.42 from Aberdeenshire Council, being balance of £800 grant for purchase of storage boxes.

Collection at Christmas event on 2nd December took in just under £100 which Gordon rounded up to £100 before banking it. This will help cover some of our costs for the event.

Expenditure: £707 – comprising 10 project related payments from the Main A/c.

Outstanding Commitments: £567 - comprising £200 payable to Rotary [from November] plus £367 for two months of Q4 secretarial honorarium. These will be offset by £425 overdue from Paths for All plus outstanding Bulletin invoice receipts referenced below.

The normal donation of £100 to Men Shed for the Pat-testing of the Xmas street lights was approved.

Bank Balances at Month End: £21,029

Main Account: £9,281 [see Appendix 1]

Bulletin Account: £11,748

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

Westhill Bulletin

Summer Issue: one invoice for £106 remains unpaid and not now expected.

Autumn Issue: two invoices worth £155 remain unpaid of the £3,397 invoiced.

Winter Issue: Invoices worth £3,223 are due to be issued on Friday, 8th December. That's roughly £800 less than budget.

Budget 2024/25

Would group leaders / budget holders for ongoing and upcoming projects [CAP, Greening Westhill, Litter, Paths and Xmas 2024] please think about project spend for 2024/25 and include a budget in reports for January meeting for discussion as part of the agenda.

17 **Green Westhill** (Mervyn Barr) Circulated report in italics:-

Nothing much to report since last month's update. We have been struggling to get a weather window to get the bulbs planted and the latest plan is to plant them this week commencing 11th. Things are kinda conspired against us. The bulbs are out three weeks late, some of them aren't in great condition, but we'll go ahead and plant them anyway (weather permitting) and hope for the best.

Given the time pressure we have decided to focus on the Holiday Inn roundabout and the Peregrine Road entrance to the Carnie Woods path which will receive 200 snowdrops, the ideal woodland type of plant.

On 13th December, Mervyn, David & Ken planted 1000 daffodil bulbs on the verges at Holiday Inn roundabout

18 **Christmas Event 2nd December**

Circulated report from Heather in italics:-

Timings- *I liked the earlier start (2.30pm for Ben Grotto; 3pm for our Hot chocolate) but maybe should have started band from 4pm and light switch on 4.15pm?*

-HOT Chocolate. *Could have done with more hot chocolate – we had 42 litres and served about 300 cups. The supply of hot chocolate was finished by around 4pm. Maybe 50 litres???*

Timings and collection from Holiday Inn were spot on.

Food-*We had the following items- 250 Mince pies, -6 boxes of shortbread, 7 tubs of sweets, 12 tea cakes, -8 gluten free mince pies, -tub of choc crispy caramel bites*

Had over 100 mince pies left – which Diane will took to one of the care homes

Band – *great place for the Band with cover, background curtain poster, and a light above – to see their music*

Flasks – *we had;*

- 2 x 5l (WECC bought these 2023)

1 x 3l (borrowed from Senior Citizens Group- Heather Cook)

3 x 3l (borrowed from Community Church- Becky Ferguson)

5 x 2l (borrowed from Community Church , Becky Ferguson)

32 litres filled initially then refilled 2 x 5l.

Rachid is storing the WECC flasks in his garage.

This will be the last time that I will organise the WECC hot choc and goodies. Happy to pass on any info to my successor!

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

Heather was praised for her excellent leadership of the event. Kate offered to take over the role for 2024. Willie will drop a thank-you note to Heather.

David commented that publicity for the event was hampered a bit by Bulletin delivery from printer being 2 days later than planned so many residents didn't get it till day of event or the Sunday. Ben's poster was too detailed to be easily read in shop windows etc.

19 WECC Social media

Circulated report from Becky in italics:-

*In order to expand our community engagement ahead of the Community Action Plan validation event (planned for April 2024), it would be great to increase our use of social media. Facebook is a free tool that a large number of local residents use, and something that we can use to our advantage. There are a number of different things that we can be using Facebook for, primarily **promotion** of who WECC are and what we do, **engaging** local residents in discussion regarding local subjects or issues and **listening** to what local residents are already talking about.*

Currently, we post on our own website, and share the link onto a Facebook post. This results in people having to click through to find the information, which is a step too far for many people. In this digital age of instant information, people want to see things straight away, and often won't click on links on Facebook. I would propose that we rethink the way we make these Facebook posts, and post directly to Facebook. This doesn't mean not using the website, but in a different way. We are also sporadic in our use of social media, but posting regularly helps our posts to be seen by those who like the page.

I would propose that we commit to consistently posting 2/3 times a week on Facebook. Having a plan throughout the month can help to structure what we share, for example ensuring we share the agenda and details of monthly meeting around a week before the meeting, then a summary/highlight of the monthly meeting a few days afterwards. Regularly posting about issues that affect residents helps raise awareness of WECC, alongside posts about who we are and what we do. When we posted about putting up the Christmas lights using photos and text, it reached 3702 people, whereas a recent post to a link on our website about litter picks reached 333.

*However, behind the use of social media, it is helpful to have some form of protocol surrounding what we use our page to promote, and what does not fall within our remit. For example, we can agree to share posts by Aberdeenshire Council/local facilities, but not engage in political debate. We could agree to post about schools or leisure facilities, but not to promote local businesses. This is what we need to decide and agree upon. **It would be helpful to know any thoughts from members of WECC regarding use of social media, to produce a more thorough social media protocol for our January meeting.***

There is a lot of information in this document (created by The National Communications Advisory Group (Scotland) and the Improvement Service for Community Councils) that may be of interest to some:

https://www.communitycouncils.scot/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/40428/CC-Social-Media-Guide-2022.pdf

20 WECC Chair Position

WECC Chair has been vacant since the AGM in June. The two vice-chairs, Willie & Becky, are not in a position to take it on, though they are happy to continue to chair the monthly meetings. Recognised that it is the other responsibilities that takes the time, but the Chair can choose how much he/she wishes to be involved and how much to delegate.

Malcolm suggested making it a co-chair position leaving room for a new vice-chair who might be an aspirant chair. Becky and Willie to consider this.

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

Members are encouraged to consider taking on the Chair and also if there is anyone who may be interested in joining WECC as we have two vacancies.

21 **AOB & Close of Meeting**

Date of Next Meeting- 11th January at Holiday Inn, with Zoom option.

APPENDIX



GARIOCH COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE

Community Council: Westhill and Elrick
Reporting Period: 1 to 30 November 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	3
Housebreaking	0	0
Public Nuisance	5	8
Road Traffic	2 collision, 5 other	1 collision, 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.

Assault:

There has been 2 incidents reported

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2023, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

- Child smacked by parent. No injury sustained. Parent warned.
- Male struck by another. Minor injury sustained. Enquiries ongoing.

Housebreaking:

There has been 0 incidents reported.

Public Nuisance:

There has been 5 reports which is a decrease on last month.

- Group of youths throwing eggs. On Police arrival no youths traced. No damage was caused.
- Teenagers reported to have been entering and leaving the lobby area at Holiday Inn. They had left when the report was made and Police did not attend.
- Male youths throwing eggs and banging on house door before running away. It was not ongoing when the report was made and no damage was caused. Police did not attend.
- Youths running in and out of gardens shining torches. Area search carried out with no persons traced.
- Youths throwing eggs. Area search carried out with no persons traced. No damage caused.

None give any cause for significant concern however it may be beneficial to speak to local retailers and advise them to not sell eggs to children.

Road Traffic:

This period has seen 2 reported accidents.

One male has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal for Careless driving following a collision involving 2 cars and a motorcycle. Minor injury was sustained. The other involved a car and a van. No injury was sustained and both parties exchanged insurance details.

Other calls relate to obstructions, manner of driving, vehicle breakdowns and parking.

Enquiries are ongoing regarding two instances of failing to stop after a collision. One vehicle was parked at the time and the other occurred at low speed.

One male has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal for drink driving.

Speed checks were carried out on Straik Road near to Happy Barbers with one individual being issued a conditional offer of fixed penalty having been detected travelling at 49mph in a 30mph zone.

Drugs:

There has been 1 incident regarding smell of cannabis. Intelligence was submitted.

Significant Crime/Issues within Your Community:

There have been no significant events this reporting period.

Planned Community Policing Activity/Advice:

The Community Policing Team will continue to carry out speed checks in the area and will be supported by Roads Policing colleagues.

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, Sergeant, A0645