

| Community Council | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Name | Position | Present |
| Mayasa Al-Jubori | Member | ✓ (via zoom) |
| Mervyn Barr | Member | ✓ |
| Malcolm Collie | Member | ✓ |
| Heather Cook | Member | ✓ |
| David Dent | Associate Member | × |
| Becky Ferguson | Vice-Chair | ✓ |
| Audrey Findlay | Associate Member | ✓ |
| Charlie Flint | 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: Cllr Glen Reynolds (via zoom), Alison Cumming (Aberdeenshire Council)

1 Welcome and opening remarks

Willie Munro chaired this meeting. Welcome to Alison Cumming from the Garioch Area office on her annual visit Permission was given for meeting to be recorded.

2 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies received from Cllr Miller

3 Aproval of Minutes of Meeting 8th February 2024

Minutes were approved. Proposed by Heather, seconded by Rachid

4 <u>Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere)</u>

- 1. Larg/Broadstraik Park (Malcolm) Malcolm & Iris met with Ian Mitchell of Landscape Services to develop a plan for spending the Nescan grant monies. One of the entrances to the park from Westdyke has only a partial path, Landscape Services hope to extend it this year.
- 2. Litter Picking-

Circulated report from Gordon in italics:-

Vinespring Church Quandary



The church has donated £50 per month towards WECC's litter picking effort since August 2021; that's £1,600 of ring-fenced funds to end of March 2024. In that time, due to the stock levels that Raymond had built up, we have spent only £500, nearly £400 of which was for the purchase and installation of the new storage container in Denman Park. Stock levels are still high despite issuing/"lending" a fair amount of kit to volunteers so that they can carry out picks independently. In other words, income is far outstripping expenditure, to the extent that we will have an accumulated surplus for this activity of nearly £1,200 by the end of our year in March.

Gordon will draft an email to Chika at Vinespring to check if the funds can be used for other environmental projects.

Bulletin article feedback

One new volunteer has come forward using the new email address: weeclitterpickers@gmail.com Prior to issuing a set of kit, I issued our standard H&S briefing for newcomers. Update- A second volunteer came forward from the Bulletin article.

Winter picks – trial feedback

We completed our 4th pick of the winter trial [once a month, December - March] on Saturday, 9th. So far, it has been successful, averaging 9 volunteers, despite our February pick being postponed by a week due to winter weather.

Use of commercial waste bins

Over the winter months, when many volunteers like to venture out on their own, the waste tends to be wetter and heavier, and difficult to carry home. Taking litter home has always been a concern for me, so I approached Ashdale Hall, Town Centre Management, McDonalds, Greggs and Starbucks to use their commercial waste bins, and delighted to say that they all agreed.

Request for more bins and an app to identify and report full bins

Following a meeting in Denman Park with Landscape Services, I made an enquiry to the Council's Community Waste Officer for Garioch, as we will need at least one more bin for Denman, plus I've asked for more at Carnie Woods [west end], the "hidden garden" and another between the back of Ashdale Hall and the Academy. And only this week, Alan McCue asked for an additional dog waste bin near the WGC part of the Orbital Trail to deal with the noticeably increasing amounts of dog waste bags being left in the club's General Waste bin.

I took the opportunity to ask what the process is for ordering more bins, and made the suggestion that the council develops an app that allows residents to report when bins are full, in the same way that we can report when grit bins are empty.

To date, I've had an acknowledgement and promise of a response in due course.

Alison Cumming will check with Norman Wright in Waste Services re process for getting new bins and if AC will fund them.

- 3. Swimming Pool- David emailed Avril Nicol and Gillian Wood recently to request financial accounts for the Pool, no response yet.
 - Fatima attended the Venue User Engagement meeting on 21st February. Pool usage has increased in last few months and there is additional public hours in the timetable. The primary schools are providing swimming lessons, but Academy isn't. Only 1 working boiler just now but it is coping, a new one is on order. Possibly additional life guards from April. Another meeting to look at setting up a Friends group has been arranged for 29th April.
- 4. Business Association (Elaine). Around 5 people have indicated an interest. Had meeting with Stonehaven Business Association but they indicated that what WECC did was similar to what they did.



- 5. TotalEnergies- Need to follow up re the Twinning suggestion. Mervyn will contact Rhonda Miller to check if they wish to progress any of the other initiatives suggested a few months ago.
- 6. WECC Social Media the 4 suggestions for artwork on the sail have been circulated. Agreed that number 4 was best, with the QR code linking to facebook, not website as that may change. Gordon will progress production and procurement of sail flag,

Gordon will draft a Facebook post centred on upcoming work in Denman.

Need to set up a communications sub-group to discuss the points raised at the extra meeting in January. David, Willie, Becky & Kate agreed to be in sub-group. James Christie has offered to provide advice re the website. He is a retired IT lecturer and was in the Residents Association many years ago.

- 7. Winter Roads Maintenance- David will respond to the Roads dept. reply re our concerns on the hillier streets during periods of snow.
- 8. AFC Community Trust- Willie has been put in touch with AFCCT Chief Executive Liz Bowie and will arrange a meeting soon. Rachid offered to attend. Donald Davidson will be asked if he would like to participate in this.
- 9. Shopping Centre- New owners Willie has contacted the new managing agents LC Properties but no response yet. Post meeting update- mistake in email so resent. Iris has had a meeting yesterday with David Waterworth. He is keen to work with the community. He is aware of our event in April. A new company will run the car-park. LCP will look at putting in new fascia boards.

Willie will draft a list of the topics we wish to discuss with David Waterworth and circulate it for agreement, then contact him again.

5 Police Report

The Police Reports for January & February were both received early in March. (February report included in minutes as appendix)

The anti-social incidents in his street at Carnie that Charlie Flint reported are included in the January report.

6 Correspondence

Review of secretary correspondence log for last 5 weeks. (Circulated)

Alison Cumming mentioned the new CC single election date process. It will take place in autumn this year. We will still have an AGM in June but have the option of not appointing office bearers until the inaugural meeting after the elections a few months later. There will be wide spread media promotion of the elections. David pointed out that the election will need to be promoted in the summer Bulletin as nominations will close on 9th September, only around 1 week after autumn issue comes out.

Re the invitation from Westdyke Leisure Centre for us to visit them, a few members would like to do that so David will request a few possible date options

David advised that the Roads dept. speaker at the CC Forum on 6th March had given statistics re pavement parking warnings issued since the ban came into force in December. 19 warnings have been issued to Westhill residents. Fines will start to be issued soon.



Becky reported she had attended a Primary School provision focus group meeting, It was mostly attended by parents of Skene primary who don't wish the school to be closed

7 Asylum Seeker Hotel

Currently 158 hotel residents, 20 more due to arrive tomorrow.

Gordon will remind James Cherry of volunteering opportunities

Heather raised a concern about the 3 service users that were relocated to Glasgow in 3 separate taxis instead of 1. James Cherry of Mears had said that Home Office prefer to use taxis for Mears transportation service to ensure people get from A to B. Also that separate taxis are used as the SUs are not part of 'same family unit'. David will try to get clarification on this at next fortnightly call.

Willie mentioned the YAHYAS charity that helps to support the younger asylum seekers. David will circulate the presentation about them

9 Rotary Update/Exchange - David Dent

David Dent not present & no written report submitted

10 Ward 13 Councillors updates

Cllr Iris Walker

Re the Council ceasing to run Out-of-School Clubs, the good news is that more than enough places are being offered by alternative providers.

Cllr Fatima Joji

Fatima re-iterated what Iris said about the Out-of-School Clubs. Detail was provided at a meeting she & Ron had with Children's Services. She has publicised details of financial support available for child care.

Fatima has been contacted by Lasan, the Indian restaurant opposite Aldi. They have had youths causing disturbances, like going in in groups and asking to use the toilets. Fatima advised them to notify Police.

Cllr Ron Mckail

submitted report in italics:-

Council Budget

Big ticket item this month. Savings made of £67million. Media picked up on service cuts to school crossing attendants and to the Speech and Language service. Also, the cuts will affect a range of environmental service which will include (I suspect) potholes/grass cutting.

Gordon queried if residents can claim against AC for damage to cars caused by potholes. Ron advised that when a pothole is reported a Council Inspector will decide if it needs fixing soon or can wait. Willie clarified that the Council insurers will pay a claim for damage if the pothole is assessed as one that should have been repaired.



Willie queried if the results of the consultation with residents pre the budget being set were taken into consideration when setting the budget. Ron confirmed the survey helped to guide the decisions made.

Iris will supply a summary of where the Council budget cuts are coming from.

Asylum Seekers

Notification received that there will be 20 new arrivals being routed to the Hampton by Hilton Hotel, due tomorrow. Take numbers to 178 approx.

Pavement Parking

Receiving reports of illegal parking and have reported these to the Parking Team who'll issue warning notices.

Cyber Security

Also found it interesting to be advised of how vulnerable we are if we link into a free web link and how scammers in `your vicinity can also link into your system. Thus you`re compromised and the scammer can access your device. (Think Aberdeen Airport. Connecting to their free system. Guy in the corner working on his laptop. Is he connecting to your system)?

Breakfast and After School Clubs

Funding for this service will be provided in Westhill by independent agencies. Briefing councillors have received suggest sufficient places will now be available.

Proportionate Response to Crime

As mentioned previously in an earlier report the pilot regarding low level crime in the Grampian Division is being rolled out nationwide. All crimes should continue to be reported. Unlikely to be investigated unless they are assessed for threat /harm/risk/vulnerability.

The majority of emails in my mailbox this month have related to Hill of Fare and the SSEN Pylons.

11 Westhill Paths Update

Circulated report from Gordon Prentice in italics, with updates in normal type:-

Storm Damage Update

Carnie – the City Council's project team used remaining funds to engage a contractor to construct a soak-away to divert water off the path between the Carnie Crescent car park and the woods. Might be too tempting for someone to leave as is.

One massive fallen tree that sits across a slow draining flooded section has still to be attended to.

Broadshade and Golf Club – two meetings were held with professionals with land drainage experience, and a subsequent meeting was held with the Golf Club Manager. All agree with the plan to improve the drainage network at the golf course, and both professionals agree that the flooding issue at Berryhill Circle is down to absence of drainage ditch maintenance. I'm awaiting further feedback from one of the professionals before recommending a course of action to colleagues. Gordon has written to the factor requesting a site meeting

Active Projects



Carnie Woods – as recent photos showed, contractors installed benches and picnic tables w/c 4th March. Only two information panels remain to be installed on to awaiting stone cairns. Unfortunately, the visitor counter installed on 5th February was vandalised some time between Sunday 3rd and Wednesday, 6th March. A replacement is on order. The Paths for All chairperson and CEO will be visiting Carnie on 27th March at 10am, if anyone would like to join us.

Boardwalk removal: will commence when conditions are warmer and the ground drier.

Denman Park – PBIP Project - the Council's contractor completed the tree and shrub clearing work w/c 4th March. The main construction work is planned for early spring after the threat of frosts has passed. Both tri-shaws have been delivered and now stored in one of the large containers behind Ashdale Hall. The project leader, Graham Ogston has recruited 18 volunteer pilots who are currently being trained.

Pollution Filtration Project – although not WECC's responsibility, I'm advised that the Council's contractor, Hunter Construction is due on site this month. (now more likely to be April)

Maintenance of Denman planted areas – volunteer support: a small group of volunteers, including Mervyn, Rachid and myself met with Darren Brierley of Landscape Services on 28th February to finally agree a modus operandi following a change of heart from the Council over power tools training. In summary, we agreed that volunteers would prune back the planted areas in the spring, starting from the north-east corner bordering Westhill Drive and Old Skene Road, then working westwards. The waste will be left in piles which will be collected and/or chipped by the LS team the following day.

As you know, we started work on Wednesday, 6^{th} March, and we agreed that we will continue to meet and work there every Wednesday for the foreseeable future.

Ongoing Trail Maintenance / Upgrades

- **Broadshade Avenue to WGC:** sections that have been washed away by the winter storms will need to be patched from our reserve pile of material. The sign acknowledging funding support has still to be installed by our contractor.
- **Golf club**: repairs to eroded paths plan agreed with WGC Manager resources available wef 11th March. New handrail to be installed soon also.
- Lawsondale: surface reinforcement required on some sections plan to be developed
- Farm track on the north edge of Meadowlands: no plan as yet for budgeted work on drainage and potholes
- All sectors: more directional arrows to be stuck to street furniture

Re the lane from Mains of Kinmundy to Hillside Rd, a resident's fence has blown over and is partially blocking the lane. It appears that the lane has not been adopted, which makes it more difficult to get the resident to sort the fence. If the lane landowner can be confirmed they could contact the resident.

Funding Update

£50 spent on repairs to handrail, leaving £33 of the £281 carried forward from 2022/23 unspent

Gordon was thanked for all his ongoing Paths project work



11 Community Action Plan (Diane Priestly)

Circulated report in italics:-

The planning group are now progressing with the arrangements for our Drop by Event on the 19th and 20th April which has been highlighted in the Westhill Bulletin. We are trying to contact the new owners of the shopping centre to ensure that our previous consent to hold the event there can go ahead and if not we are looking at other alternatives. There is a meeting organised for the volunteers helping at the event on Tuesday 16th April 10am at the Community Church.

We have had a very positive response from RGU for potential placement opportunities from the sports team to undertake a feasibility study into the sports facilities within Westhill and Elrick.

RGU have got Health & Safety queries. Alison Cumming will ask Susan Adams from Councils Projects team to contact Diane about this.

Planning Matters (Diane Priestly)

12 Circulated report in italics:-

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

APP/2024/0209 land adjacent to 13 Mains View AB32 6NZ full planning permission to change of use of land from open space to Domestic, Erection of boundary fence, decking and sheds (retrospective)

The wooded land behind the Scout Hut has recently been sold. Does anyone have any information regarding this? Becky has been keeping an eye on this and thinks it hasn't been sold yet.

HILL OF FARE

The ECU has now extended the time for objections for this planning application until the 31st May.

Two windfarms applications have recently been refused by the ECU.

A controversial plan for the 17 turbine Lethen Windfarm northwest of Grantown included infrastructure of site and access and tracks ,underground cabling energy storage facility, temporary construction compounds ,potential excavations and a permanent meteorological mast has been refused on the following grounds- Scottish Ministers admitted that there were environmental issues which would result in significant visual and landscape impacts as well as impacts on Special Landscape qualities of the Cairngorms National Park. The planning authority was the Highland Council

The proposed Narachan Windfarm has now also been refused, the planning authority was Argyll and Bute Council. This development was for 11 turbines at 180 metres in height including associated infrastructure and a 4 MW of battery storage.

PYLONS

12 community councils plus Deeside against Pylons, Save our Mearns & Angus Pylon Action Group that will be affected by the pylon line are putting together a questionnaire to ascertain the community's opinions on these installations. Mearns Community Council have now put the questionnaire on line and you will find it under **Proposed New SSEN 400kV Overhead Line and Hurlie Substation Questionnaire**.

Two of us attended the drop-in session at Drumoak Primary school which was well attended.

There are two further consultations events are planned to discuss the Kintore to Tealing 400kvb OHL project at Echt Village Hall, Wednesday 13th March 14-00-19.00 and Drumoak bowling club Wednesday 20th March 1400-1900

DEMOCRACY MATTERS



The consultation on Democracy Matters has now been completed and I would thank you to all those people who contributed to this document. It will be interesting to read the result of the analysis of this consultation.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

For those that are interested there is survey on the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency strategy which can be found on https://engage.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp-evidence-report-heat-and-coolong the survey is open until 5th April

There is also a survey on Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land Questionnaire which closes on the 5th April, this survey can also be found on Engage Aberdeenshire.

The Community Council were asked to be part of a stakeholder group to work on a green belt review, they will be required to start at the end of March until June 2024. Willie has agreed to undertake this piece of work.

We have been invited to join the Scottish Forum of Community Councils. There is no fee and should help to strengthen the role of a CC. It was agreed we should join it

13 | Financials (Gordon Prentice) Circulated report in italics:-

Financial Transactions - February

Income: £13,630 – comprising £990 grant from NESCAN for upgrading Larg Park, plus regular monthly receipt of £50 from Vinespring Church, plus £12,590 from 37 Bulletin advertisers prepaying for the year.

Expenditure: £182 – comprising 5 payments detailed on copy bank statement

Outstanding Commitments: £367 - comprising 2 months of Q1 honoraria payments to Secretary

Bank Balances at Month End: £35,178

Main Account: £15,630 [see Appendix 1] Bulletin Account: £19,548

Westhill Bulletin

The 2023 surplus of £7,187.58 was transferred into the Main Account at the beginning of the month. Further analysis is required to understand the underlying reason for the revenue shortfall: fewer advertisers or less space, or a combination of both. Four invoices remain unpaid totalling £441, but only £180 of that is believed to be recoverable.

David has secured £23,940 of annual income plus another £3,516 for the Spring Issue which is a great effort, but suggests income may be trending downwards in the short term. Hence the need for further analysis.

On the cost front, the printer has quoted a print-only cost of £1.06 per issue at current volumes leaving £1,447 per issue for collation and artwork. Now that we have this information, we are thinking of putting the printing costs out to tender and doing more of the collation and artwork in-house, using the increased contribution for community projects. Also plan to see what other print firms would charge for printing.

Cashflow Budget 2024/25 -

Note that "Available Funds" is shown as a negative number, but the actual cash balance is very positive throughout. The calculation of "Available Funds" is after accounting for all our recently approved spending plans and prepaid Bulletin income, plus allowing for a healthy General Reserve of £10,000 on top of these.



14 Green Westhill (Mervyn Barr)

Circulated report in italics:-

- 1. Expecting some 40 stone crop Flowers to arrive in the next couple of weeks. Plan was to put these in at the Shopping Centre where the trough is on the Skene road. But with the change of ownership at the Shopping Centre, we have to wait to see how we can proceed with their permission. (they may have insurance and security concerns). If that's not forthcoming propose to put them in on lower Westhill Drive near the bus shelter at Denman Park Side.
- 2. I have now taken possession of eight replacement conifers for the Planters at the green wall. Again, we need to clarify the position with the new owners before we can proceed.
- 3. Our green spaces officer Tijana has ordered up 100 replacement mulch matts (and securing pegs) for the Denman Park saplings. Again, these will be expected sometime soon.
- 4. Growing concerns (excuse the pun) about the quality of the approx 2000 bulbs supplied and planted around the HI Roundabout. Not many are coming through. They arrived late and planting was further delayed due to wet, then frosty weather. On receipt many of the bulbs were soft and easily squashed between fingers. This was reported at the time. We can only wait to see the final result.

15 AOB & Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 9.55pm

Date of Next Meeting- 11th April, 7pm at Holiday Inn, with Zoom option.

APPENDIX



GARIOCH COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE

Community Council: Westhill and Elrick

Reporting Period: 1 to 29 February 2024

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 | PREVIOUS |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | PERIOD | PERIOD |
| Assault | 6 | 1 |
| Housebreaking | 0 | 0 |
| Public Nuisance | 1 | 9 |
| Road Traffic | 6 collision, 15 | 3 collision, 8 |
| | other | other |
| Drugs | 1 | 2 |

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

- Taxi driver punched in the face by male. Positive lines of enquiry being followed.
- Children assaulted by mother's partner. Enquiries are ongoing.

Housebreaking:

There have been no reports.

Public Nuisance:

There has been 1 report which is a significant decrease from last month.

- Householder heard a bang at his door and saw youths walking up the street. Passing attention requested.

Road Traffic:

This period has seen 6 reported accidents. Two involved single vehicles, three two vehicles and one a vehicle whose handbrake failed causing it to strike a house. No injuries were sustained. One driver was arrested for failing a roadside breath test.



A male has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal for driving with a provisional licence and no insurance. Another male has been reported for causing and permitting these offences.

Reports received relate to possible document offences, manner of driving, pavement parking, broken down vehicles, fuel on the road and animals.

Drugs:

There has been 1 report regarding smell of Cannabis in a car park. A unit was not allocated.

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