

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER 2024, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

Community Council		
Name	Position	Present
Mayasa Al-Jubori	Member	*
Mervyn Barr	Member	*
Malcolm Collie	Member	✓
Heather Cook	Member	✓
Alistair Mckelvie (Rotary)	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	✓ (via zoom
Cllr Ron McKail	Ward 13 Councillor	*
Cllr Craig Miller	Ward 13 Councillor	*
Cllr Fatima Joji	Ward 13 Councillor	*

Member of Public- Hazel Mustard

Guest Speaker- Greg Welsh

1	<p><u>Welcome and opening remarks</u></p> <p>Vice Chair Becky Ferguson chaired the meeting, Permission was granted to record the meeting</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Apologies received from Maya, Mervyn, Willie and Cllrs McKail, Miller & Joji</p>
3	<p><u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 8th August 2024</u></p> <p>Correction for Heather wrongly included in Apologies. Minutes were approved. Proposed by Heather, seconded by Gordon</p>
4	<p><u>Greg Welsh- Sport Activities in Westhill</u></p> <p>Greg introduced himself- He is here representing Westhill & District Community Sport & Leisure Hub. This is a community-led volunteer charity with 8 Trustees. Greg is employed by Aberdeenshire Council, funded by Sport Scotland. His job is to support the Sport Hubs in the Shire and the groups within them. There is 38 member groups in the Westhill Sports Hub. The Hub has previously organised the Westhill 10k and is hoping to run this again. Current projects include a Community Cycling facility behind Ashdale Hall. The Hub got funding for a container and 20 new bikes to be able to run free community rides. Also setting up 'Bike Buses' to encourage children to cycle to school. Trialling this at Elrick. 'Kits For All'- this is a project to provide sports clothing & equipment. The donations point is Westhill Pool.</p>

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	<p>The clothing is distributed via a referrals process and it is available to be used for community events. The Hub has funding from the Alcohol & Drug Partnership to run diversionary activities for young people and is hoping to start running sessions at Westdyke Leisure Centre soon. Hub has ring-fenced funding to run community events to showcase what sports & activities are available. Also funding for Walking sports, e.g. Walking Football & Walking Netball. Aiming to create a publicly accessible database of activities available in Westhill. The Hub has grant schemes for sports clubs, for up to £750. An example is Dunecht Cricket Club got a grant to run indoor cricket sessions for asylum seekers. There is also a bursary schemes up to £1000 to support individuals. Greg also highlighted the work done by Liam Troup, Active Schools co-ordinator. He runs free extra-curricular activities in the schools. The Hub is looking for more people to help progress their projects</p> <p>David will contact the Hub secretary Ross Smith to request that WECC gets the Sports Hub meeting minutes.</p> <p>Charlie pointed out that volunteers in clubs often need to have qualifications, like in First Aid and these have to be refreshed. The Hub is facilitating this.</p> <p>We will put the Sports Hub as a standing item at WECC meetings Becky thanked Greg for giving us a good overview of what the Sports Hub does.</p>
5	<p><u>Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Larg/Broadstraik Park (Malcolm) – Wild flower meadow-mix seeds & yellow rattle seeds will be planted late September. Submitted application for hazel trees to Apache, not heard back from them yet. 50 trees would be supplied. Keen to put in application to the Just Transition Participatory fund for an outdoor gym at Westdyke, but deadline is 23rd September and Malcolm doesn't have time to prepare it, so looking for help with this 2. Litter Picking- Circulated report from Gordon in italics:- <i>Meeting with AC Officials</i> <i>Meeting arranged by Darren Green and Lesley Forrest [Environmental Health Officer] at short notice for 21 August, essentially to discuss dual issues of feeding seagulls and poor husbandry of waste by town centre retailers. Norman Wright and I attended. We toured the loading/unloading areas and all offenders were visited by LF & NW after our meeting. See also Lesley's Bulletin article p60 – "Living with urban gulls".</i> <i>Lesley is planning to attend our October meeting to talk about the gulls issues.</i> <p><i>Additional Bins</i> <i>NW acknowledged that the 4 bins promised for Westhill in June had disappeared from store. Developer Obligation funds are now being used to fund more bins. Promised for Denman Park [opposite Costa], B979 car park at west end of Carnie Woods, bottom of Westhill Heights at edge of Golf Course, and between Academy and rear of M&S.</i> <i>We learned that the Waste Department looks after street bins, whereas LS are responsible for emptying bins in green spaces.</i> <i>We agreed to approach Aldi to position a waste bin in their car park and to approach the town centre management company [LCP] to add a textile recycling bin in their car park.</i></p> <p><i>Volume of Litter and Frequency of Collections</i></p>

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- I urged NW to support the expansion of the Council app that could potentially allow members of the public to report when bins are full
- reporting “hot spots”

Enquiry from Westhill Academy

No progress – summer holidays

Other Enquiries

Westdyke 2017's – their litter pick took place on 17th August as part of a sponsored walk around the town centre and some of the Orbital Trail with parents and coaches. Apparently they raised £1,200!

Scheduled Picks

Two well attended picks in August with the next one scheduled for this coming Saturday, 14th

Ken Stewart assisted PBS Offshore to run a litter-pick recently

3. **Swimming Pool**- The broken chairs have been fixed

4. **Business Association** (Elaine).

The Enterprising Aberdeenshire event was held in Holiday Inn on 28th August.

A few more people are interested in the Business Association. Hope to meet up with Ellon BA to find out how it is run

5. **TotalEnergies**-

Carnie Woods boardwalk removal- see item 11 Green Spaces update.

Bikes at Hampton hotel- Gordon is trying to arrange meeting with Mears to discuss how Total can help with bike maintenance

Willie can update us at next meeting re Total helping with our website

6. **WECC Social Media** –.

Kate is now able to share things on our website to Facebook again.

7. **AFC Community Trust**- no update

8. **Carnie Pitches Flooding**- Gordon & Charlie met up with Barry McGillivray of AC who is responsible for sports facilities. His clerk of works will do a report on what best to do to tidy up the entrance to the pitches so they don't get water-logged. The Denman Park contractor has some surplus material which could be used.

9. **Westdyke Leisure Centre**.

Charlie advised that the Centre has got some lottery funding to improve the Hall heating. Funding may also come from the AC Energy Fund.

There was some discussion on how the Centre is being managed and what support they need.

Gordon is meeting with Ian Mitchell tomorrow to look at putting in a path from the car park to the football pitches

10. **Kirkton of Skene Cemetery**- Iris advised that the grass cutting is scheduled to be done every fortnight. Landscape Services are aware of the issues with strimming round the cremation lairs. They are looking at putting in chuckies if funding can be found for it.

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6	<p>Police Report (see Appendix)</p> <p>August was a quiet month. No major issues.</p> <p>Sergeant Forbes has confirmed that the statistics should be accurate, based on what is reported to them</p>
7	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>Review of secretary correspondence log for last month. (Circulated)</p> <p>The new community council following the recent elections is the existing 14 members, plus Audrey Findlay, Darren Green and Arthur McArthur. Re the Inaugural Meeting on 26th September, it was agreed it should be a physical meeting, not Zoom, so David will advise Alison Cumming and book the room.</p> <p>Willie has drafted a good note about the lack of responses from council officers but this was not put on agenda at the CC Forum last week. We will aim to cover it at the December Forum</p>
8	<p><u>Rotary Update/Exchange- Alistair Mckelvie</u></p> <p>Been difficult to progress things at the Hampton Hotel due to Mears staffing issues there. So things like cycling proficiency testing has been delayed</p> <p>Have submitted a grant application to Sports Hub for bike repairs. A bike shop at Skene has offered to look at them, possibly after repairs that TotalEnergies have offered to help with.</p> <p>Have got a pool table, but no room at hotel for it, so looking for a venue for it.</p> <p>Will be doing a talk in Library to the service users about the Rotary Club.</p> <p>Petanque court opening at 1pm on Saturday</p> <p>Alistair is away to Australia for 6 weeks soon, so Roy will cover October meeting.</p>
9	<p>Asylum Seeker Hotel</p> <p>This has mostly been covered in other items on agenda.</p> <p>Iris made a point about Mears not providing the support expected of them. They are relying too much on the voluntary work being done by the churches etc.</p>
10	<p><u>Ward 13 Councillors updates</u></p> <p>Cllr Iris Walker</p> <p>Iris is glad that we have a full CC again, following the recent elections.</p> <p>The Health & Social Care Partnership are running a series of road shows, looking for local views. It is at Trinity church on 9th October, 3pm to 7pm.</p> <p>The elderly residents are being offered RSV jabs but have to go to Inverurie to get them as there is no funding for this to be done in Westhill.</p> <p>Re the large Wickes sign, the Road Safety team have looked at it, but no concerns.</p> <p>Gordon raised the issue about the Stagecoach 5 & 6 buses now showing 'Berryhill' as their destination. Cllr Miller has contacted the Council Transport team and Stagecoach have agreed to change the destination back to Westhill.</p>
11	<p><u>Westhill Green Spaces Update</u></p> <p><i>Circulated report from Gordon Prentice in italics, with updates in normal type:-</i></p> <p><i>Orbital Trail Development/Maintenance [clockwise from Gateway Sculpture]</i></p> <p><i>Gateway Sculpture – n/a</i></p>

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Hidden Garden – “Community Rest Area” sign still on shopping list

Silvertrees Drive to Peregrine Road – weeds and overhanging vegetation cut back to improve sight lines. Agreed future maintenance will be carried out by Total Energies contractor.

Carnie Woods – Peregrine Rd entrance cut back to improve sight lines for visitors. No date yet for wash-up meeting with ACC project team

Mason Lodge – attended inaugural meeting of E&SCC Paths Group to promote routes of mutual interest, particularly upgrade of path between Mason Lodge and Pitcairn Lodge

Broadshade/Berryhill Circle – The sign acknowledging funding support to be installed on WGC field gate. Strimming was done here and along the path linking to Dawson Drive.

Westhill Golf Club – No change: path repairs still required, using quarry dust. Have discussed location for dust store with Manager. [Est £130].

Westhill Drive – have asked LS to cut back vegetation and bushes overhanging pavements in four different spots; two are responsibility of local residents, so LS will need to involve Roads.

Link north to Craigmar – email sent to Marshalls asking for meeting to discuss ideas to complete the off-road path from north edge of town to Craigmar turn-off.

Meadowlands Farm track & lane – n/a

Links to Brimmond –

Mains of Kinmundy Hill – strimmed round the cairn. Bench still to be repaired. Also strimmed the path leading down to Hillside Road.

Links east from Hillside Road – LS requested to cut back pavement vegetation from Hillside Road junction to Lawsondale turn-off.

Lawsondale – further strimming done

All sectors - n/a

Other Green Spaces

Denman Park – PBIP Project – Although progress was frustratingly slow over the summer months, the bonded material contractor [Abacus] started on site Tuesday, 3rd and expects to lay 150-200m per day, weather allowing. Interim snag meeting held with contractor to ensure all elements of the site are tidied up to a high spec finish. Benches and picnic tables also due this week.

We need to plan an official opening asap post completion.

Denman Park Flooding Issue – there have been serious flooding issues since the installation of the new “downstream defender” filter unit [designed to remove solid contaminants from the ponds]. Every significant rainfall since has resulted in the manhole covers being blown off by the surge of water trapped in the system, causing floodwater to reach as far as the bowling green. Hunter Construction may have resolved the issue on Tuesday, 3rd.

Maintenance of Denman planted areas – on hold now until autumn/winter. Site meeting to be held with Ian Mitchell

Carnie Woods boardwalk removal – Total Energies have expressed interest in this as a “Community Service” project, so aiming to start on September 25th, subject to a risk assessment meeting with TE and ACC’s Ranger service on 12th. The ranger is actively considering raising funds [£1,000 - £1,500] to replace the boardwalk with quarry material.

Westdyke Leisure Centre accessible path – Meeting scheduled with Ian Mitchell 13th Sept.

Carnie Crescent All Weather Pitches [AWP] – along with Charlie, met with Council’s new LLA rep for Westhill & Alford, Barry McGillivray [replacing Gillian Wood]. He agreed to have a clerk of Works investigate options for

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improving the entrance way from the car park. Have asked Avant Homes [waste ground landowner] for consent to effect improvements.

Blackhills Court – we were approached to assist construction of raised beds. As this is a Council maintained facility, any landscaping will need to be approved by LS. Planning to assign this project to ROVOP or TE, both of whom have expressed interest in “community service” projects.

Funding Update

A new hedge trimmer was gifted by Holiday Inn, but unfortunately it used an incompatible battery type. Happily, Inverurie Garden Machinery agreed to exchange, but at an upgrade cost of £230, including a new battery.

Budget allocated for 2024/25 - £2,000. Spend so far - £910. Future spend may be required for quarry material at WGC and extendable loppers.

Planting Update

Autumn planting of winter pansies likely to be in first half October

Volunteers – Still 6-8 attending weekly for a couple of hours on a Wednesday morning. Sincere thanks to all.

Paths Group met on 3rd September to discuss issues above in more detail. Heather, Rachid and Roy Mitchell [Rotary] attended.

Gordon & Mervyn

12 **Community Action Plan** (Diane Priestly)

Circulated report in italics:-

The Community Action Plan for 2024-2029 is now very close to being completed, the planning group are proofreading the document to ensure that the information that it contains is accurate. This is the first stage of the CAP, looking at all the required actions included in it we will be looking at support from all WECC members plus volunteers. Once the document has been completed members will have the opportunity to comment on its findings.

Audrey and myself went to visit the proposed community walled garden at the private Cluny Estate near Sauchen which will hopefully be developed as a community garden in partnership with the landowner and a group of local volunteers.

Planning Matters (Diane Priestly)

13 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)-approved.

APP/2024/1115 -1 Ashdale Close AB32 6LN Full Planning Permission for alterations and extension to Dwellinghouse-awaits decision.

APP/2024/1259 -Swagelok Scotland, Silvertrees Drive, Silvertrees Business Park AB326BH -Full planning permission for alterations and Extension to Building-awaits decision.

APP/2024/1311 -11 Blackhills Way Westhill Ab32 6YY-Full planning permission for Alterations and extension to Dwellinghouse-awaits decision.

APP/2024/1212 -Westhill Retail Park, Ashdale Drive AB32 6LP-Full planning permission for the installation of 2 electric Vehicle Charging hubs with associated substation and Infrastructure-awaits decision.

There is application in this week's list for Unit 5 at the shopping centre for change from café to hot food takeaway with seated area.

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HILL OF FARE

Aberdeenshire Councillors in Marr and Kincardine and Mearns have supported the planners to object to this development, Garioch will have it on their agenda for the 17th September.

PYLONS

WECC have received very few complaints about these various proposed developments however as mentioned last month SSEN have been requesting access to survey land for a third potential OHL route between Banchory and Westhill -Tealing corridor.

I have attended many of these consultations and residents have expressed their concerns at the consultation process that their concerns re these developments are not being heard.

Councillor Helen Crawford Aird and Loch Ness ward met with Andrew Bowie MP re the major electricity developments applications and community engagement, one of results from this meeting was a motion for **specific planning training for community council members on major energy infrastructure developments from planning experts.**

All residents have this week received a letter from SSEN about a Kintore to Tealing 400kV Connection Project. Consultation events about this are being held. Our nearest one is at Echt Hall on 2nd October, 2pm to 7pm

ENERGY CONSENTS UNIT

In the last month there have been 4 windfarm applications, one battery storage system and 2 overhead power lines.

LDP

There are now three more surveys to be completed by the 13th September.

Community Wealth Building

- There are 5 pillars to Community Wealth building and they include inclusive ownership, workforce, finance, land and property spending.
- Anchor organisations are a key mechanism to deliver community wealth building.
- As part of the council's place strategy, Place Plans will be developed which represent a mechanism to identify opportunities for maximising local and community socio-economic benefits.
- Community ownership can allow the generation of income that can be reinvested into the local community.

Flood risk and Water Management

- Climate change has led to the increase and frequency in the frequency and severity of flood events.
- Implications for avoiding flooding and coastal erosion by developing brown sites, water supply and the infrastructure to manage drainage and surface water.
- Identifying the site selection criteria for new development

Zero Waste

- Most waste and recycling centres are now at capacity, new sites will have to be identified to meet the national targets for Zero Waste

The latest surveys are Quality Homes and Play, Recreation and Sport.

I have e mailed everyone to let them know that Piers Baxter the Team Leader for the Development Plan and a colleague will be attending a separate meeting on Thursday the 24th October at the Holiday Inn to discuss the upcoming LDP and its linkage to the NPF4. Other Garioch CCs will be invited to attend this.

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14	<p>Financials (Gordon Prentice) Circulated report in italics:-</p> <p>Matters Arising 8 August: Westhill Bulletin printing: Autumn Issue printed by XIC. David and I met with Neil Watson [graphic designer] on 1st September. We agreed to aim to produce the Winter in-house with a change of printer. All commitments last month discharged.</p> <p>Financial Transactions – June/July Income: £1,664 – comprising £1,474 annual admin grant from Aberdeenshire Council, plus £50 from Vinespring Church, plus £140 from 1 Bulletin advertiser. Expenditure: £1,521 – comprising payment of £697 to David Ritchie plus 5 payments totalling £824.22 detailed on copy bank statement at Appendix 1 Outstanding Commitments: £367, comprising 2 months of honoraria payments to Secretary Bank Balances at Month End: £29,421 Main Account: £13,397 Bulletin Account: £16,024</p> <p>Westhill Bulletin The Summer Issue grossed £9,842 and generated a contribution of £1,950 after costs. The budgeted contribution was £1,500. The Autumn Issue was published at 100 pages, thanks to a number of new advertisers being approached and attracted.</p>
15	<p>Xmas Event Planning Kate emailed David Waterworth of LCP a few weeks ago to seek permission to run an event on Saturday 7th December but he hasn't responded yet. She will try to phone him. The band are asking us to confirm, so it will be booked provisionally Members for the sub-group will be Kate, Heather, Audrey, Rachid, Ken.</p>
16	<p>AOB & Close of Meeting Meeting closed at 9.50pm New CC Inaugural Meeting- 26th September, 7pm at Holiday Inn Date of Next Meeting- 10th October, 7pm 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 August 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.

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Crime Overview and Explanation:

CRIME TYPE	CURRENT PERIOD	PREVIOUS PERIOD
Assault	1	0
Housebreaking	0	0
Public Nuisance	1	2
Road Traffic	0 accident, 5 other	0 accident, 4 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 1 report. Two males fought one another with one sustaining a bloody nose. Recorded Police Warnings were issued to both.

Public Nuisance:

There has been 1 report.

- Group of youths making noise within street. A unit attended and the group had dispersed. It was established there had been a party and those in attendance had been waiting to be collected.

Road Traffic:

This period has seen no reported accidents.

Reports received relate to manner of driving, vehicle breakdown and an absent manhole cover. Two parked vehicles at the Shopping Centre and another at Costco were damaged in separate incidents. Enquiries are ongoing to identify the vehicles and drivers responsible.

Drugs:

There has been 1 report. An individual was found to possess a quantity of tablets. Enquiry is ongoing.

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