

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 9TH JANUARY 2025, 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	Member	*
Audrey Findlay	Member	✓ (via zoom)
Charlie Flint	Member	✓
Darren Green	Member	✓
Kate Lumsden	Member	✓
Arthur McArthur	Chair	✓
Elaine Manley	Member	*
Rachid Meghezzi	Vice-Chair	✓
William Munro	Vice-Chair	✓
Gordon Prentice	Treasurer	✓
Diane Priestley	Member	✓
David Ritchie	Secretary	✓
Tim Yeomans	Member	✓ (via zoom)
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	✓ (via zoom)

Member of Public-

1	<u>Welcome and opening remarks</u> Chair Arthur McArthur welcomed all. Permission was granted to record the meeting
2	<u>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u> Apologies received from Mayasa, Mervyn, Elaine & Cllr Miller
3	<u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 12th December 2024</u> Small correction to show Audrey Findlay as a Member now, not an Associate Minutes were approved. Proposed by Heather, seconded by Gordon
4	<u>Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere)</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Honorarium payments re Bulletin Gordon got approval via email from members in last few weeks re honorarium payments to David Ritchie & Neil Watson for the additional work undertaken to transition the Bulletin layout work from the previous printer XIC to Neil Watson. Willie raised the point that these changes were initiated by Gordon- he recruited Neil Watson and sought out a printer who could do the printing for significantly less than XIC. Willie proposed that Gordon also got an honorarium for this initiative. This was agreed unanimously

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	<p>2. Larg/Broadstraik Park (Malcolm) – Christies are doing a quote for trees for the avenue & orchard. The hazel trees bought with the grant from Apache should arrive late January. Suggested that we should take steps to give the park an official name.</p> <p>3. Business Association (Elaine). Elaine tried to join by Zoom but problem with audio, She emailed 'No progress with the Business Association at the moment'</p> <p>4. Sports Hub (Tim) - Next meeting 4th February at Lawsondale. They will be involved with Lazy Sunday in June. Hoping to start Walking Football, Rugby, & Netball in Westhill. They have funded new swimming caps for the Swimming Club. They supported a resident touch rugby player to participate in the European Championships. Looking for volunteers to support Walking/Cycling Buses in Westhill, contact Greg Welsh</p> <p>5. Xmas Event 7th December – Communications with LCP David R. had contacted Kate earlier this week to ask her to forward the emails she had sent to David Castles of LCP, so that David could check if he ever got them. Kate had forwarded the emails to Willie by mistake. She then sent them to David R. during the meeting, so David will look at them soon. A meeting with LCP may not be necessary. We just need to ensure we can communicate with LCP when planning the 2025 event</p> <p>6. Survey re Bus Service to top part of Westhill Drive The draft survey prepared by Mervyn has so far only been seen by the office bearers. In Mervyns absence, Gordon will circulate it to all members, then put it into Survey Monkey, with a QR code Cllr Mckail advised the issue is on agenda for Garioch Area Meeting next week. Willie pointed out that residents on Old Skene Rd are also a fair distance from a bus route so when communicating with Stagecoach we should cover all issues with buses in Westhill.</p> <p>7. Hospital Transport- David David was concluding this at the December meeting when the fire alarm went off so members were not able to ask questions. The Hospital transport is an ancillary service to the community minibus operation that David runs. Cllr Walker asked about the sustainability and succession planning for that group. David advised there is 3 trustees in the charity, but David does all the admin work required. There is 5 volunteer drivers for hires that require a driver. At present there is no succession plan in place if David had to stop running the operation. Willie commented that this is a common situation in many community groups.</p>
5	<p>Police Report (see appendix) No significant crimes, assaults & road traffic calls are the main items.</p>
6	<p>Correspondence Review of secretary correspondence log for last month. (Circulated).</p> <p>David commented on the error in the letter to Andrew Bowie from H&SCP about transport to vaccination centres. It stated that the appointment letters had the tel. number for THInC (Transport to Healthcare Information Centre).</p>

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	<p>The appointment letters have not had this info for last 2 years. Cllr Mckail has pointed this out to H&SCP, no response yet.</p> <p>The Autumn Bulletin will include an article re vaccination centre options and help with transport.</p>
7	<p>Asylum Seeker Hotel (David)</p> <p>Notes from the Community meeting at end of November were issued recently and have been circulated. There was a meeting yesterday and Caroline Smith has issued the notes from it so they will be circulated. Hotel numbers are around 270. Some service users are getting their decision letters allowing them to stay in UK. Not sure if any are getting negative letters.</p> <p>The FOI request re use of taxis has been sent to Home Office, who have advised we will get a response by 4th February. Cllr Mckail advised that Ann Overton has also queried taxi use with HO.</p> <p>No more reports recently of service users being seen getting into vans in the morning. Police have been investigating this.</p>
8	<p><u>Rotary Update/Exchange- Alistair Mckelvie</u></p> <p>Primary schools quizzes start this month</p> <p>Glad to see a good uptake by the asylum seekers at the swimming pool sessions</p> <p>Gordon will check with Westdyke LC if they would consider access for asylum seekers for table tennis sessions.</p>
9	<p><u>Ward 13 Councillors updates</u></p> <p>Cllr Iris Walker -</p> <p>A review of the Scheme of Assistance is underway. This is where private homeowners or tenants can get grants for adaptations. They are proposing that only clients who are at critical or substantial risk can get grants.</p> <p>Cllr Fatima Joji</p> <p>A bit of land at Meadowlands has been sold by auction. Some concern that there may be an application for change of land use. The residents had not been made aware that it was going to be auctioned so never got an opportunity to buy it.</p> <p>Cllr Ron Mckail</p> <p>One of the proposed cutbacks is that residents who are celebrating a diamond wedding or 100th birthday will not get a bottle of whisky or flowers, only a card.</p> <p>Council Tax not yet set as waiting to hear what Scottish Gov budget will be.</p> <p>.</p>
10	<p><u>Westhill Green Spaces Update</u></p> <p>Circulated report from Gordon Prentice in italics, with updates in normal type:-</p> <p><i>Orbital Trail Development/Maintenance [clockwise from Gateway Sculpture]</i></p> <p><i>Gateway Sculpture – no activity</i></p> <p><i>Hidden Garden – “Community Rest Area” sign installed on 21st December</i></p> <p><i>Silvertrees Drive to Peregrine Road – no activity.</i></p> <p><i>Mason Lodge to Pitcairn Lodge – path at junction of A944 and Pitcairn Lodge driveway. Searching for alternative funding sources</i></p>

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Broadshade/Berryhill Circle – stakeholder meeting proposed to agree actions on flood mitigation measures – involving residents, factor, golf club Manager and WECC. Awaiting new contact details from factor. Have agreed to support the golf club's request for digger hire to dig new drainage ditch. The new factor has now made contact so the stakeholder meeting can now be arranged.

Westhill Golf Club – Once flood mitigation measures are completed, some path repairs will be required, using quarry dust. Have discussed location for dust store with Manager. [Est £130].

Westhill Drive – LS still to cut back overhanging bushes opposite bus turning point.

Link north to Craigmar – reply from Marshalls awaited

Meadowlands Farm track & lane – no activity

Links to Brimmond – no activity. Will chase AC's Outdoor Access Officer

Mains of Kinmundy Hill – no activity

Links east from Hillside Road – reply to enquiry awaited; will chase. No progress with cut back of pavement vegetation from Hillside Road junction to Lawsondale turn-off.

Lawsondale – no activity

Other Green Spaces

Denman Park – PBIP Project – There is a small retention [circa £4k] in place to ensure that all snags are addressed.

Maintenance of Denman planted areas – Productive meeting with ACLS on 31st December. No budgets for planting and limited resources, so happy for WECC's team of volunteers to carry out major winter pruning, with waste being chipped and disposed of by ACLS's team. An update is that there is some LS budget as Tajana Susic has now been in touch to advise they may be able to supply wildflower seeds for the areas made bare by the Denman Park contractors. Also last year there was a lot of new planting in Aboyne and same is being planned for Westhill this year. Locations could be Jubilee Drive & Westhill Drive

Carnie Woods boardwalk removal – **Total Energies** have pitched this to Mears as well as a possible joint venture with asylum seekers. Will require a donation of boots for any volunteers from the hotel. To be followed up with TE early in new year.

Westdyke Leisure Centre accessible path – Awaiting follow up call from Nestrans to "progress our application"

Carnie Crescent All Weather Pitches [AWP] – new contact at Avant Homes [waste ground landowner]. Awaiting reply and consent to effect improvements to path and planted areas.

Blackhills Court – Rhonda at TE has promised to pitch this to Donations Committee in January. ACLS have provided contact for AC's on-site Manager

Funding Update

£110 spent this month on new sign, spare brush-cutter blade, strimmer repair and coffees for meeting with ACLS. Budget allocated for 2024/25 - £2,000, increased by £200 donation of Amazon vouchers from TE. Spend so far - £1,148, with an additional £400 committed to Westhill Golf Club for ditch construction. The balance of £652 may be needed for quarry material at WGC, spare parts and extendable loppers. A second brush cutter has been suggested.

Planting Update

Approval given by ACLS to plant fruit trees on two sites off Wellgrove Road; one opposite Westdyke and the other on Aspen Grove – passed on to residents Nora Pirie and Malcolm Collie.

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Daffodils from ACC. The team managed one morning to plant more daffodils at the entrances to the new Denman and Arnhall paths, plus the western entrance to Carnie Woods. Many parts of the town should look much more colourful next spring, thanks to the efforts of our volunteers, Scouts [for Scout Hut and Kingshill Church], Blackhills Court, and others for planting out at various locations.

Summer Bedding Plants - Mervyn has been in contact with the nursery at Pitcaple (they have supplied compost and some additional plants in previous years) to determine if they can cover this wholesale shortfall (range and quantity of plants). The answer was yes but possibly with some near equivalent substitutions. He recommends that we proceed subject to approval of the estimated cost, which should be available for our February meeting. Likely to be in excess of £1k.

Mervyn has also advised Shelia Gray of the situation and said we may be able to supply the church as normal – subject to approval and maybe at cost. Sheila commented that while donations will be very welcome, she will not be looking for free handouts.

We also need to decide whether to support Ashdale Hall.

MEETING CONSENSUS REQUIRED.

Volunteers – Further to our meeting with ACLS, we are now able to plan the winter pruning programme in Arnhall & Denman Park, plus pull together a plan for the rest of the year. An informal planning meeting / new year get-together is planned for Monday, 6th January.

The move to a regular weekly time [Wednesday mornings, 10am-noon] this past year has proved to be popular and significantly increased activity from previous years, from 154 hours in 2023 to 496 hours in 2024.

Litter Picks

Our final pick of the 20 scheduled in 2024 went ahead on the 14th December with a lower than average turn-out owing to a combination of weather and prior commitments amongst the group.

In total, 25 volunteers contributed to a total of 203 hours recorded time on 18 of the 20 scheduled Saturdays [2 cancelled owing to inclement weather]. These hours are supplemented by around half of the group going out at times of their own choosing on a regular basis and unrecorded.

Comparative numbers for 2023 were, 16 scheduled picks, 1 cancellation, 25 volunteers collectively contributing 162 hours.

The current plan for 2025 is to schedule 21 picks [2 per month except January, February and December] with the first taking place on Saturday, 11th January. 11th January now cancelled due to weather. May try 18th January

Additional Bins in Westhill

I escalated the issue of the 4 promised bins to all three Waste Services leaders [with Norman Wright copied], and received a reply from Rachel Alban, Waste Support Leader Cleansing and Collections, with an apology and to say that she would look into the situation after the festive break and let me know what she is able to do, with a timescale included.

Aldi will be followed up after the festive break about restoring a waste bin to their car park. Request to add “clothing/textile bin in LCP/M’s car park” to meeting agenda.

Gordon & Mervyn

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11	<p>COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN (Diane Priestly)</p> <p>Circulated report in italics:-</p> <p><i>The planning group are now working on an open spaces audit of Westhill and Elrick and we are hoping that WECC members will help us in this task.</i></p>
12	<p>Planning Matters (Diane Priestly)</p> <p>Circulated report in italics:-</p> <p>PLANNING APPLICATIONS</p> <p><i>APP/2024/1453 Unit 5 at Westhill Shopping Centre Full planning permission for change of use from café to a Hot Food takeaway with seated area Mr Yhtyyar Jorayeu -this has now been approved.</i></p> <p><i>APP/2024/1861 Unit 1 Exploration Way, Arnhall Business Park AB326GD Full planning permission for change of use of land for the siting of Catering Van-awaiting a decision.</i></p> <p><i>APP/2024/1762 Costco is planning to add a petrol station to the Westhill site, plus installation of ev charging points, landscaping and associated works.</i></p> <p><i>I have managed to get an extension for WECC so that if we want to comment on this application the deadline will be the 16th January. The location is east side if Endeavour Drive, across the road from Tesco. Some concern was expressed by members re the amount of traffic in that area at peak times.</i></p> <p>HILL OF FARE</p> <p><i>I forwarded you the information about the petition calling on the Dunecht Estate to withdraw the application for the proposed Hill of Fare Windfarm and the reasons why.</i></p> <p>PYLONS</p> <p><i>Douglas Lumsden claims that Scottish Ministers have failed to meet with concerned residents regarding the proposed Kintore to Tealing powerline, the response to this comment has been that a pre application has not yet been submitted by SSEN. A Scottish government spokesperson stated that when an application is received there will be a public consultation carried out by Ministers who will consult with Community Councils, members of the public and other public bodies. It has been pointed out that Community Councils are not statutory consultees when applications go to the Energy Consent Unit at the Scottish Government.</i></p> <p>Diane Priestley</p>
13	<p>Financials (Gordon Prentice) Circulated report in italics:-</p> <p>. Matters Arising 12 December:</p> <p>Westhill Bulletin: <i>Proposal to make ex gratia payments to DR and NW agreed and paid in December. Proposal to rebalance honoraria payments with effect from the start of 2025 also made and agreed.</i></p> <p>7 Outstanding Commitments totalling £6,372 from last month paid</p> <p>Financial Transactions – December</p> <p>Income: £5,187 – comprising £50 from Vinespring Church, plus £82 from public donations on 7th December, plus £5,012 from 37 Bulletin advertisers, plus £43 bank interest on the Bulletin Account.</p> <p>Expenditure: £6,582 – comprising £6,372 agreed last month plus 9 payments totalling £210 on approved projects detailed on copy bank statement at Appendix 1</p> <p>Outstanding Commitments: £400 committed to Westhill Golf Club for digger hire to construct a drainage ditch</p> <p>Bank Balances at Month End: £20,763</p> <p>Main Account: £8,324 [see Appendix 1] Bulletin Account: £12,439</p>

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	<p>Westhill Bulletin</p> <p><i>Provisional figures for Winter Issue [96 pages]:</i></p> <p><i>Advertising sales - £11,094 [£5,985 prepaid + 40 single issue invoices £5,109]; Costs - £5,016 [print + honorarium + exceptional file transfer & template creation costs]; provisional contribution - £6,078, compared to budget of £1,500. Thanks to David and our change of production process.</i></p> <p>Proposed Changes to WECC's Bulletin Bank Account</p> <p><i>WECC's Bulletin Bank A/c is an RBS Treasury Account which can't technically be linked to our Main A/c. So, we can't transfer funds between accounts or make payments to suppliers electronically, only by cheque. Opening a Secondary Account linked to our Main A/c would allow us to earn more interest, and simplify the payment process, without compromising the need for transparency.</i></p> <p><i>Having discussed this with David, we are seeking permission to apply to open a Secondary A/c for the purposes stated above. If granted, we will need to amend our standing orders for operation of the Bulletin A/c, similar to what we did a few years ago with the Main A/c. Permission was granted to open the Secondary A/c</i></p> <p>Budget 2025/26</p> <p><i>Request for project leaders to think about funding requirements for first draft of next year's budget, by end of January</i></p> <p>Wilie commented that we need to think about what the extra revenue from Bulletin is going to be spent on.</p>
14	<p>AOB & Close of Meeting</p> <p>David advised that the old toilet block at Shopping Centre is now leased to Specsavers to convert into offices linked to the large unit previously occupied by JK Fine Foods that Specsavers are moving to.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 9pm.</p> <p>Date of Next Meeting-13th February, 7pm at Holiday Inn, with Zoom option.</p>

APPENDIX



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**
Keeping people safe
POILEAS ALBA

GARIOCH COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM

VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE

Community Council: Westhill and Elrick

Reporting Period: 1 to 31 December 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 PERIOD	PREVIOUS PERIOD
Assault	4	5
Housebreaking	0	1
Public Nuisance	2	1
Road Traffic	1 collision, 8 other	2 collision, 9 other
Drugs	0	0

Assault – Includes all recorded instances of violence.

Housebreaking – includes all break in's to domestic and commercial premises, including attempted break in's.

Public Nuisance – All youth annoyance and calls in relation to anti-social behaviour.

Road Traffic – all calls in relation to Road Traffic Accidents and Offences (speeding, illegal parking, obstruction etc).

Drugs – all reports incidents in relation to drugs dealing and use.

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Assault:

There has been 4 reports. Enquiry is ongoing into one instance with individuals having been charged and reported to the Procurator Fiscal in respect of the others. No serious injury was sustained.

Housebreaking:

There has been no reports.

Public Nuisance:

There has been 2 reports regarding a male refusing to leave and youths climbing a fence at the shopping centre. No offences were identified.

Road Traffic:

This period has seen 1 reported accident with one vehicle failing to stop. It and its driver have not been traced.

Three parked cars have been damaged. Enquiry is ongoing to trace the other parties involved.

Reports received relate to suspected driving under the influence of drugs, manner of driving, document offences and parking.

Drugs:

There have been no reports.

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