

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH APRIL 2017 IN THE HOLIDAY INN, WESTHILL

Community Council		
Name	Position	Present
Audrey Findlay	Chairperson (Acting)	✓
(vacant)	Deputy Chairperson	X
Becky Ferguson	Secretary	✓
David Ritchie	Treasurer	✓
(vacant)	Minutes Secretary	X
Mervyn Barr	Member	X
Alan Eastell	Member	✓
David Ewen	Member	✓
Bill Loudon	Member	✓
Raymond Swaffield	Member	✓
Kate Lumsden	Member	✓
Nara Morrison	Member	X
Diane Reid	Member	X
Heather Brock	Member	✓
John Long	Member	✓
Dawn Anderson	Member	✓
Alistair McKelvie	Member	✓
Heather Coull	Member	✓
Cllr David Aitchison	Ward 13 Councillor	✓
Cllr Amanda Allan	Ward 13 Councillor	X
Cllr Ron McKail	Ward 13 Councillor	✓
Cllr Iris Walker	Ward 13 Councillor	✓

Members of Public/Invited Guests		
PC Steven Middleton	Sujan Mahajan	John Imrie
Clare Davidson	Aileen Swaffield	Graeme Leslie
John Thornton	Margaret Thornton	Heather Cook

	<u>Item</u>	Action/ Attention
1	<p><u>Chairperson's welcome and opening remarks</u> Audrey Findlay opened the meeting, welcoming all this evening. Tonight we have a guest speaker, Graeme Leslie from Stagecoach, here to answer any questions that may be raised regarding the bus services in the area.</p>	
2	<p><u>Apologies</u> Nara Morrison, Mervyn Barr, Diane Reid</p>	
3	<p><u>Review and Approval of the Draft Minutes of Meeting 9/03/16</u> Proposed: Alan Eastell Seconded: Raymond Swaffield The minutes were approved by the meeting.</p>	
4	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage planning application update – Kingshill – see item 9. • Refurbishment of steps – The repairs were to be completed by the end of March. Cllr Walker has spoken to Scott Walker who has stated that works are completed and a number of issues rectified. They are also willing to listen to any further suggestions. This is a great achievement thanks to the hard work of community councillors and elected councillors together. Special thanks again to John Imrie for the extensive report he compiled. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication with MJ Mapp/Shopping Centre issues – Marc Mills will be in Westhill on April 20th and we will be meeting with him then. 	
5	<p>Police Report</p> <p>PC Middleton presented the report, which will be circulated to members following the meeting.</p> <p>Portable speed camera will be back up and running soon.</p> <p>Questions were raised over the response time of emergency services following the accident at Westhill Shopping Centre last week. There were reports that the ambulance took over 30 minutes to reach the scene. If this is true, this is unacceptable, and we would hate to see this happen again. We will write to both Police Scotland and the Ambulance service.</p>	Secretary
6	<p>Stagecoach Bus Company</p> <p>Graeme Leslie introduced himself and his position of Operations Director at Stagecoach. The X17 is a bus service dear to his heart due to previously driving the route himself, and he is aware of the concerns that many may have. Over the last two years the service has been reduced from every 10 minutes, to every 12 minutes, and from early May will become every 15 minutes. This is solely to improve reliability, as services are not meeting the current timetabled services. The number of buses in the service are not changing. Our roads network is changing, and this has an effect on the services.</p> <p>Campaigning to Councils with regards to improving bus access is ongoing, where the aim to increase right of way for buses in order to speed up the route. A number of suggestions have been made, including a West bound bus lane between North Anderson Drive and Woodend.</p> <p>Early May also brings a revision to the X18 service, reverting it back to its original 218 route. This route is very minimally used, with only 1 or 2 passengers on services between Alford and Westhill.</p> <p>Cllr Walker expressed concern from residents in Sauchen who are disappointed with the reduction to the services, including pupils attending Alford Academy and wanting to stay for after school activities, but are then unable to get a bus home. Graeme explained that they are only running the buses that they are subsidised to do so, as they cannot take the losses.</p> <p>It was asked whether Stagecoach would see the AWPR as a good thing or a bad thing. Graeme answered that any infrastructure improvement will be beneficial, however it is unknown what the roads will look like in the future.</p> <p>Often the buses will leap frog each other if one is running late. Can these drivers make the decision to skip parts of the route knowing that another bus is following? Graeme explained that there is a messaging service available through the ticketing machine which is being encouraged, however it is still early days.</p> <p>It was also noted that there is no luggage space on the hydrogen buses.</p> <p>It was asked how much time is allowed for passengers embarking/disembarking the bus at each stop? Graeme explained that this is taken into account throughout the day, with longer given in the morning and evening peaks compared to the afternoon. The question would be how long it would take to load and unload a 60 seater coach? Graeme's guess was approximately 8-10 minutes.</p> <p>Have you ever approached the businesses to ask if they would be interested in dedicated buses for staff? It was answered that these companies will put these services to tender and the bus companies will have to compete. However, as a sign of the times, these services seem to be diminishing.</p> <p>The potential of a bus directly to the airport was mentioned. It was noted that this could be more appealing when the new Exhibition Centre is built.</p> <p>Is there a reason why many of the hydrogen buses are breaking down? Graeme explained that this was more common in the beginning, when they were actually taken out of service. Due to the fact this technology is very new, there are times when engineers have to be flown in and this takes time to repair.</p>	

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	<p>It was noted that there seems to have been an increase of coach type buses throughout services. These can cause problems for those with mobility issues. Graeme explained that there are only one or two services a day which are allocated these types. Sometimes, buses are 'juggled' if other buses are returning late to the bus station and coaches may be used to fill the gaps.</p> <p>Dawn explained she attended the bus forum last month, where a suggestion of a swing round bus up at Union Street level was raised, avoiding the need to go down to the bus station. It was noted that this may be investigated.</p> <p>It was questioned what the relationship is like between Stagecoach and First? Graeme explained that they are obviously separate businesses operating in different areas, however they do work together on many issues.</p> <p>Concern was raised over the printed bus timetables and the misleading arrows which may look like the bus does not stop in some areas. This was noted by Graeme and will be passed on.</p> <p>It was questioned why the route was called the X17 when it is not an express route? It was answered that there is a clash in Aberdeen with First Bus having a number 17. Renumbering was also questioned.</p> <p>Graeme noted all comments and concerns, and will look into these. Audrey expressed thanks to Graeme for attending this evening and answering the questions raised from everyone.</p>	
7	<p><u>Update on Gateway Art Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on funding applications – We have completed two applications for funding now. One pot of funding has to be earmarked for this financial year. We now have to compile an artist's brief to circulate in order to appoint an artist by the autumn. We have had a number of emails and letters regarding ideas, which will be collated and given to the artist. It is of course up to the artist to conduct their own consultation which will include these responses. We will arrange another meeting with Sheila Waterhouse as soon as possible to work on the artists brief. • An email was received from Susan Adams, Area Project Officer for Garioch, regarding the 20 for 20 Anchor project to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Friends of Anchor. Her question was if we could locate a suitable location in Westhill where an anchor could be situated. Suggestions were raised of Denman Park or where our Question Mark is currently. Following discussion, we concluded that Denman Park would be preferred, as there may be confusion locating it where the question mark has been, Audrey will respond to Susan and explain this. 	<p style="text-align: center;">GAP team</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Audrey</p>
8	<p><u>Update on Kingsford Stadium Proposal</u></p> <p>At this point in time, there is not much to update. At ISC, a casting vote made the decision to oppose the plans.</p> <p>It was noted that lately there has been disappointment expressed with regards to the bias of Aberdeen Journals and their view of the proposal. We have not yet received formal notice with regards to the pre-determination hearing.</p> <p>It was also noted that some individuals are only just receiving letters of acknowledgment now to their responses submitted in February. Currently, we can do little more, but must wait until we hear further news of a pre-determination hearing when we will prepare to speak again.</p>	
9	<p><u>Planning Watch</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>APP/2017/0706</u> – Full Planning Permission for Change of Use of Amenity Ground to Domestic Garden Ground – 5 Meadowlands Close – The owners of this property have recently purchased this area of land from Rubislaw Estates, and they plan to construct a patio and potentially a 	

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	<p><u>Cllr Amanda Allan</u> No update received</p> <p><u>Cllr Ron McKail</u> Pothole at Swimming Pool. Damage caused by BOC. Delay in repairs is due to Insurance Company`s investigation.</p> <p>Storm Damage to Trees Leslie Crescent Recent storms caused safety issues to the tree area requiring damaged branches to be trimmed.</p> <p>Ashdale Hall Notice Banners Erected for promoting the producers Market. Council policy prevents banners and posters being erected on council property. Suggested to Ashdale hall that they either erect a notice board (which would be expensive) or consider placing 3 posts in there garden area and use these to suspend their market banner. Cllr Walker added a suggestion which was made with regards to the possibility of a permanent fixture located somewhere in Westhill that could be rotated with banners of different local groups. Audrey also noted that a new notice board at the shopping centre is something which had been suggested previously, and will be brought up next week with Marc Mills.</p> <p>Hi Viz Beacons at both zebra crossings on Westhill Drive. These should be in place by Mid-July.</p> <p>Pedestrian Crossing Elrick Discussions are ongoing to consider a pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the new hotel in Elrick. Confirmation on whether or not there will be a crossing place will be discussed during the second stage audit between the developer and the Council.</p> <p>Braecroft Avenue. Access steps to path. Reported to Council that these steps require cleaning to ensure pedestrian safety.</p> <p>Shopping Centre. Contacted Marc Mills in regard to safety concerns of vehicles and customers Directional arrows should be painted on road surface to direct vehicles as they park their cars and exit the shopping centre. Pedestrian type barriers should be erected at Westhill Drive exit to prevent accidents by children and adults striding on to the crossing without considering on coming vehicles</p> <p>Contactless Cards for bank cards. Garioch and North Marr CSG are purchasing 200 contactless pouches for protecting bank card from being scammed by fraudsters. Pouches will be available at Westhill Library for free access.</p> <p><u>Cllr Iris Walker:</u> Royal Bank of Scotland branch closure Following the announcement by RBS to close the Westhill Branch in October, I have been in discussion with the local CEO. She has agreed to a closed meeting on Tuesday 25th April 2017 for a limited number of community representatives and RBS customers. I have been able to draw from the residents who contacted me about the closure a number of personal, charitable, business and small business account holders. There are two places available for WECC representatives. The objective of this meeting is to ensure that robust alternative banking arrangements are in place for our residents.</p> <p>Art project/A944 landscaping Following the last WECC meeting, an action for me was to get more information about what is happening with the A944 landscape plan/the £14k funding from planning gain earmarked for Westhill. I spoke to both Doug Milne, Area Manager and Graham Wall, Business Development Manager, Landscape Services. There seemed to be confusion between the two areas of responsibility. I have asked that</p>	
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	<p>both Doug and Graham meet with the CC to bottom out both the art project funding and the A944 landscape funding and implementation of the latter. Graham Wall has offered up dates in w/c 17th April and we await Doug's response. Doug is to contact WECC with a confirmed date.</p> <p>FES Limited FES Ltd, a Westhill-based company is working in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council to provide maintenance on council properties. As part of their service level agreement, they have a dedicated employee managing local community projects. This is Craig Sutherland and he is keen to meet with WECC (in May if the Agenda allows) to explain more about his role and how he can work with community groups. Over the last few months, along with the Sports Hub, I have met with Craig with a view to progressing a Community Asset Transfer of the All Weather Pitch at Carnie. This would mean that the pitch surface would be replaced and properly maintained, with proceeds of hire charges being ploughed back in to the facility. Craig also runs a football coaching organisation which Westhill youngsters attend and it would be their intention that other community groups would be able to use the facility.</p> <p>Bridges Nursery Following the closure of the Lawsonsdale facility of Bridges, I had a number of concerned parents in touch. Although all nursery places have been accommodated at the Arnhall building, this has displaced a number of breakfast clubbers and out of school care children. A dedicated officer within the Education service is working towards alternative provision in Westhill. With the Easter break, no further information has come back from them so far. They were hopeful of securing places from another private source.</p> <p>Shopping Centre Marc Mills has been in touch and we are to meet in the last week of April to discuss various outstanding issues with regard to the shopping centre.</p> <p>Boundary Commission Following discussions about the Boundary Commission Parliamentary Review, I submitted a response to the Commission. My submission is copied below. <i>"I wish to record my strong opposition to the suggestion made by Lord McInnes of Kilwinning that the Commission examine whether an alternative solution is available by replacing Banchory with Westhill in the new Kincardine and Angus East constituency.</i> <i>The council wards are numbered to coincide with their location within the local map and their proximity to each other. It makes no sense whatsoever to group Westhill and District (Ward 13) in with wards 17, 18, and 19 in the new Kincardine and Angus East and have Banchory (ward 16) in with wards 8,9,10,11,12 and 14 in the new Gordon and Deeside constituency.</i> <i>Ward 13 has a strong historic link with Gordon and West Aberdeenshire. My Westhill and District ward is surrounded by wards 10, 12, 14, 15 and 16. To remove ward 13 would be like picking out the middle piece of a jigsaw puzzle to leave a gaping hole rather than have wards flowing through constituencies logically.</i> <i>Please resist Lord McInnes' proposal and ensure that Westhill and District remains with its rightful close family in the Gordon and Deeside constituency."</i></p>	
12	<p><u>Website Report & Communications Group</u> The most successful day in last week was March 28 when we had 210 visitors -- 207 drawn by news of a road closure. We should endeavour to be prompt in posting news about the AWPR and AFC stadium plan, although realistically the media are likely to be prioritised ahead of a community council when updates are issued. That said, we are currently on course for a record-breaking year in terms of web traffic. In 2015 we had 12,033 views, in 2016, 32,216 views, and for the first quarter of 2017, app 11,000 -- which, if sustained, would give us 44,000 across the year. However, visitors are looking on average at only two pages -- ,so they might</p>	

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	<p>for example come to a news post directly through Facebook then go to the Home Page, and leave. I'd like to do more to keep them exploring the website. One way is to make more interactive, so I'd like to start using online polls for simple things eg how often do you eat out in Westhill? This would be a single question with a multiple choice answer, and the % vote for each answer would be shown. The thought is to refresh it every month or so, subject to approval at the monthly meeting. It would help engage with the community but WECC wouldn't be beholden to any result. There are still areas we might look to grow -- local services, for example. Queries are being answered usually within a day or two of being received (the website says we aim to get back within five days; better to under-promise). David Ritchie now has administrator rights for the website and is also to take on an author role (posting information directly to the website). – <i>David Ewen</i></p>	
13	<p><u>Treasurer's Report and Bulletin Updates</u> Treasurer's Report: All Spring Bulletin adverts have been paid for. I haven't been advised by RBS bank yet about the Westhill branch closing in October, but it shouldn't cause us any major issues. I will be able to use their mobile branch or the post office to bank cheques. John Imrie has bought the replacement tubs for Elrick which were approved a few months back. Cost was £828. He will be needing a few guys to help put the new brackets on the lampposts and is hoping to do that within next month or so. The scaffold tower will be used. – <i>David Ritchie</i> Bulletin Report: Deadline for Summer issue is Friday 28th April, for delivery around mid-May. If we are going to be running the 'Westhill in Bloom' competition again then it will require to be promoted in this issue. Summer issue will have the Gala week programme as a centre spread as normal. – <i>David Ritchie</i></p>	
14	<p><u>Sub-group Reports</u> Litter: Our March Litter Pick was completed successfully. Our next Litter Pick will take place on 15th April. All Volunteers will have reminders sent a few days prior to each event and we also normally advertise the event in the Web Site and Facebook. The verges of the A944 were again sufficiently littered to inspire some of our volunteers to carry out additional picks on that area. We have had requests from the 6th Westhill Brownies and the Scout Keir Troup to hold evening picks with them in May. We have responded positively and will make final arrangements nearer the time. - <i>Aileen & Raymond Swaffield</i> <u>Bulbs & Baskets:</u> The process will be the same as last year, with help from Rotary in filling the baskets. They are currently in storage at Grant Williamsons. Some new baskets have been purchased, as noted in the Treasurer's report. <u>Art Project:</u> The portraits are up around Westhill, and the Easter Eggs are on display at the shopping centre. The Scarecrow Trail will take place in the last week of May.</p>	
15	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to consultation on future of Scottish Planning Review – this has been submitted. • Improving Parking in Scotland Consultation – This is open until June 30th. Raymond is willing to take a look at this. Anyone else interested in looking through this consultation please let Becky know. • Friends of Anchor 20for20 anchor campaign – see item 7. • Email from FES – as noted under item 11. We will respond to the request to come and speak at our May meeting. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback to Community Councils re: the Scheme of Establishment – This was circulated, with a huge number of comments expressed. 	
16	<p><u>AOCB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This evening an email was received from Diane Reid expressing her resignation from WECC. Unfortunately due to family and other commitments, she is unable to commit the time to WECC. Audrey will write to Diane, expressing our thanks for all her contributions to WECC. Raymond now has the pull up banner, which is 2m high by 1m wide. He took the banner in to a company, who were not willing to reskin. Another company is willing to reskin for £55. We now must decide what to get printed, and must look at the design. John Long expressed concern over the condition of the pavements around Hays Way, with many crumbling. Following the reclassification, we have no high priority pavements in Westhill. We will write to Phillip McKay, expressing our concern over this area, and also to request a copy of the rolling schedule for pavement improvements. The noticeboard outside Co-Op has been refurbished. 	Secretary
	<p><u>Date of next meeting</u> Thursday 11th May 2017, 7pm, Holiday Inn, Westhill Drive.</p>	

Becky Ferguson
Secretary

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	GENERAL FUNDS	ADVERTISING PRE-PAID FOR REMAINING 2017 ISSUES	MAKING IT REAL FUND	LITTER CAMPAIGN FUND	TOTAL
FUNDS IN BANK AT 9/3/17	20643.84	15379.00	3972.62	763.21	40758.67
<u>Receipts in period 10/3/17 to 13/4/17</u>					
Bulletin advertisers-Spring issue	2271.00				2271.00
Bank interest	2.85				2.85
<u>Payments in period 10/3/17 to 13/4/17</u>					
Honorarium to website manager for 1Q 2017	-225.00				-225.00
Honorarium to secretary for 1Q 2017	-500.00				-500.00
WordPress - annual premium for WECC website	-85.00				-85.00
Amberol- new hanging baskets & brackets for Elrick	-827.84				-827.84
FUNDS IN BANK AT 13/4/17	21279.85	15379.00	3972.62	763.21	41394.68
Funds in bank include £18,361.35 in Santander Business bond at 0.75% interest					