

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH FEBRUARY 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	✓
Alan Eastell	Member	X
David Ewen	Member	X
Bill Loudon	Member	X
Raymond Swaffield	Member	✓
Kate Lumsden	Member	✓
Nara Morrison	Member	✓
Gurudeo Saluja	Member	X
Diane Reid	Member	X
Heather Brock	Member	✓
John Long	Member	✓
Dawn Anderson	Member	✓
Alistair McKelvie	Member	X
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		
Clare Davidson	Moira Archibald	Freda Imrie
Heather Cook	Ian Sutherland	Alan Barron
John Thornton	Margaret Thornton	Mike Forbes
Helen Palmer	Aileen Shinnie	Diane Priestley
PC Ben Johnston (MoD)	PC Gary Scott (MoD)	PC Steve Middleton

	<u>Item</u>	Action/ Attention
1	<p><u>Chairperson's welcome and opening remarks</u> Audrey Findlay opened the meeting welcoming everyone to the meeting this evening. As many would be aware, since our last meeting Shona Collins resigned both as Chairperson and from WECC due to a move to full-time employment. Audrey is now acting Chair once more, until someone new is appointed.</p>	
2	<p><u>Apologies</u> Gurudeo Saluja, David Ewen, Bill Loudon, Diane Reid, Alistair McKelvie, Alan Eastell</p>	
3	<p><u>Review and Approval of the Draft Minutes of Meeting 12/01/16</u> Proposed: Heather Brock Seconded: John Long The minutes were approved by the meeting.</p>	
4	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping Centre issues – We have had good news with the resurfacing of the slope alongside the steps at the shopping centre. However the paving 	

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	<p>all around the shops continue to be extremely slippery. We will keep trying to meet with Marc Mills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of steps – Eastdrive/Hillside Road – This is something which we were told was unlikely to happen. Initially the council plans were to remove the steps, however both the Community Council and Cllr Iris Walker fought for this, and now they will be refurbished. There will also be other steps around the eastern side of Westhill. Many thanks to John Imrie for the detailed pathways report he produced. • Scottish Government Planning Review consultation – Second phase of consultation with regards to the planning review. When John Imrie was Secretary he and Audrey produced a response to the first phase of this. Although John is no longer a member of WECC Audrey has asked him to be involved in producing comment for this second phase. A draft will be circulated prior to submission which is due on April 4th. 	
5	<p><u>Police Report</u> PC Steven Middleton presented the Police Report, which was circulated to members prior to the meeting. PC Gary Scott introduced himself and PC Ben Johnston as our local Ministry of Defence Police. PC Johnston explained that he had moved up to the area due to the job, and has been here since October. He added that it has been great to hear what the concerns are in the local area, especially as they often drive through and refuel in Westhill. They are located here due to the gas pipeline at Garlogie. One incident was noted in Echt where individuals were seen suspiciously trying to enter garages in the area. This was one incident where MoD Police worked together with Police Scotland, as the MoD officers were closest to the scene. The most important thing to note is that there are individuals attempting to steal cars due to unlocked doors of cars and homes. At the previous meeting it was noted there were concerns with regards to parking on both sides of the road outside the Old School and Old Schoolhouse. This has been monitored and has not been found to be an issue. It was also noted that the speed limit past the Kingswells roundabout will be reduced to 40mph from 50mph. Raymond asked about the static speed checks and the results from these. PC Middleton did not have these figures to hand. One speed monitoring device was broken recently however once this is repaired we will hopefully get it back to the area. John Long noted that he had reported an event where a coach parked across the zebra crossing outside the Holiday Inn. PC Middleton took details to follow this up.</p>	
6	<p><u>Update on Kingsford Stadium Development</u> It was noted that a number of visitors present were here due to the stadium application. Audrey updated that our current position is that we have submitted our comment to Garioch Area Committee for their meeting on February 21st. This afternoon it has been confirmed that we will be able to speak at GAC. However, the decision on this application will not be made by Aberdeenshire Council and we must submit our comments to Aberdeen City Council by February 27th. At this point in time WECC have tried to respect the mixed views within the local community, gathering information from different groups and individuals. Whilst some feel there could be potential benefits from this proposed development, there are a number of material planning concerns which WECC cannot ignore. This was represented in our response to Aberdeenshire Council for Garioch Area Committee. WECC are discretionary consultees, however are working closely with Kingswells Community Council as they are statutory consultees. They also have many concerns regarding this proposal, especially as there has also been an application for change of use to retail at Prime Four Business Park, Kingswells.</p>	

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	<p>Audrey opened the floor for anyone to make comment regarding this application at this time.</p> <p>It was noted that this is a very emotive topic, and that those against the development seem to have been more vocal than those in favour. WECC noted that they have heard from both sides of the argument, however would agree that more people against it have come forward to meetings.</p> <p>Discussion continued regarding the topics both in favour and opposed to the development. These included transport, parking, roads, the City/Shire boundary, the lack of local sporting facilities, potential community facilities in the development, the visual impact of the stadium on the landscape setting, the loss of Green belt, pedestrian access and the access of emergency service vehicles.</p> <p>The potential change of use at Prime Four to retail was also discussed, as this could have a much larger impact on the area and more specifically the A944 on a daily basis.</p> <p>It was noted that all individuals can submit comment online whatever their opinion, and all should do so. WECC are aiming to take a considered approach where we acknowledge the potential benefits, however must also note the material planning concerns such as transport, parking and roads.</p>	
7	<p><u>Planning Watch</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>APP/2017/0064</u> – Advertisement consent for erection of 2 illuminated fascia signs and 2 signs – Unit 1, Kingshill Commercial Park East - One company have applied for illuminated signage, about 7m x 1.65m. The North West signage will be near the top of the building and will face out to the A944 approx. across from Lawsondale playing fields. The North East signage will face towards Aberdeen so you will see it as you approach Westhill but it is back from the road junction on the A944. If we do not object to this one, it will set a precedent for all the units to erect illuminated signs of this size. The closing date for comment is February 14th. Audrey asked if the local councillors were aware of this application. It was questioned whether WECC should be commenting on this application. Raymond asked if we should be concerned about the size, the illumination or both. There has not been an objection from the Roads department. There has previously been plans for planting trees along the A944, to enhance the visual impact of the entrance to Westhill. We will submit comment regarding our concern of the precedent that could be set if one application goes ahead for a sign of this size, then other businesses will go ahead and do the same. • <u>APP/2017/0059</u> – Alteration and Extension to Dwellinghouse – 21 Wellgrove Crescent, Westhill – This application removes an existing garage, and replaces this with a two storey extension. We have nothing to comment on this application. 	
8	<p><u>Update on Gateway Art Feature</u></p> <p>Kate Lumsden has taken over the lead of the Gateway Art Project, and explained the current situation of the project. Kate and Audrey have been working on the funding application from Aberdeenshire Council. The site is where the question mark is currently, however as to what the project will look like is yet to be decided. The budget is unknown as of yet, however we will be lowering our expectations as to how much money we will be able to raise. We hope to have an artist committed to the project by the Gala, so we can have the artist present at the gala for consultation among other consultation events. The artists brief is currently being produced, working with Sheila Waterhouse of Aberdeenshire Council.</p>	

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9	<p>Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westhill Gala stall We have to apply for a gala stall in the spring time. This is usually the first weekend in June. It would be good to have a presence at the Gala, especially if we hope to have an artist present for the Gateway Art Project 	
10	<p><u>Ward 13 Councillors' Reports/Updates</u></p> <p><u>Cllr David Aitchison</u> <u>Prime Four</u> The position of Aberdeenshire remains in objection to this development. The Retail Impact Assessment information is coming in slowly, however it is estimated to have a large impact on Inverurie especially, but expectantly Westhill and other towns easily accessible from the AWPR.</p> <p><u>Council Tax</u> Budgets for 2017/18 were set today, with £560million planned to be spent. Council Tax is to be increased 2.5%, which for a Band D house is £28/year. This is on top of the Scottish Government rise. The rise for bands A-D was decided by Aberdeenshire Council, whereas the Scottish Government have made a decision regarding the increase to the higher bands throughout Scotland. Cllr McKail added that the budget was passed with a vote of 33 in favour to 32 against.</p> <p><u>Cllr Amanda Allan</u> No update received</p> <p><u>Cllr Ron McKail</u> <u>Westhill Road vehicles double parking.</u> Reported this complaint raised at WECC to council officers regarding vehicles double parking on Westhill Road (adjacent to Old School House). Reply from council is that the obstruction should be reported to Police Scotland (101). Council officers will then work alongside police to resolve this issue. Noted in the received response that the bus operator has not reported this location being a problem.</p> <p><u>Zebra Crossings on Westhill Drive.</u> Positive response from Officers that they are considering the possibility of fitting a hi-viz beacon to a zebra crossing on the Drive. A brighter light will improve visibility which hopefully will make for a safer crossing. Common sense would suggest if a hi-viz beacon is similar beacons on both crossings.</p> <p><u>Icy Pavements and Roads.</u> Received a number of complaints that during the recent period of frosty mornings along with the snow fall that Westhill pavements were not treated and grit bins (Westhill Grange) were empty. Passed these complaints on to the appropriate officer and awaiting a response.</p> <p><u>Denman Pavilion</u> The repairs to the pavilion are continuing a pace. The latest report received indicates that the plaster boarding, re-instating the insulation, stripping down doors and paint jobs are all at the completion stage and building will shortly be useable by members.</p> <p><u>Shopping Centre</u> Contacted MJ Mapp with two requests namely the continuing saga on which I have received several complaints namely the vehicle parking bays having directional arrows on the road surface and the concerns reported at WECC on the exit from the centre on to the zebra crossing on the Westhill Drive. Awaiting a reply.</p> <p><u>Garioch and North Marr Community Safety Project > Preventing Contactless Debit/Credit cards being scammed</u></p>	

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<p>Until recently I was unaware that contactless debit and credit cards are vulnerable to be copied even when they are in a wallet, purse or handbag. Apparently all that is required is an easy obtained `piece of kit` which can be used to scan the data on your card.</p> <p>The GNMCSG are purchasing tin foil holders (cheap to purchase in bulk) but are effective in preventing the card from being scammed whilst in the holder. Agreement has been proposed to have these in local library for free with a collecting can for a donation to offset the cost.</p> <p>There are more substantial holders possibly more suitable for keeping in a handbag which are available from Tesco and hold a number of cards although these are slightly more expensive.</p> <p><u>Cllr Iris Walker</u> <u>Council Tax</u></p> <p>Firstly, Cllr Walker noted that she was not in favour of the proposed increase in Council Tax. Although the monthly amount may seem small, it has a large impact over a whole year. With the local economic situation many people are struggling and this may be a larger issue than at previous times.</p> <p><u>Eastside Drive/Hillside Roads path network</u> Scott Walker, Principal Roads Engineer has confirmed that the additional works will be completed by end of March.</p> <p><u>Ashdale Hall flooding</u></p> <p>There have been ongoing issues with flooding near the entrance to Ashdale Hall with staff having to keep sandbags on hand to keep water from entering the building and the disabled parking bays were under water. The Farmers' Market this last weekend was affected with most stalls having to be moved indoors. There is a longstanding issue with the soakaway at the rear of the hall. The council have instructed Fairhurst Engineers to review the existing drainage system and come up with a solution with a site visit planned for this week.</p> <p><u>New crossing on Old Skene Road</u></p> <p>I have been advised this week that any new crossing for Westhill is in a queue behind Inverurie and Stonehaven. Once the designs have been finalised for these, the consultant will look at Westhill, possibly in the summer, with installation not before autumn and subject to funding being available. I have asked the Transportation Strategy Manager not to forget about us!</p> <p><u>A944 cycle path</u></p> <p>As advised previously, Aberdeen City are conducting a study on a new segregated cycle path from Westhill to city centre/ARI. If you wish to input any comments, please get in touch with me before 24th February.</p> <p><u>Defibrillators</u></p> <p>A resident (ex-nurse) has been in touch asking if a defibrillator could be installed for public use at the shopping centre. Lawsondale Trust has recently installed one for club use and the Westhill and District Sports Hub are to discuss provision of defibrillators within the town. I know this subject has come up before at WECC so I have signposted the resident to yourselves and the Sports Hub and I am happy to support any work required to map existing provision/consider new locations.</p> <p><i>This has been previously discussed - The problem with a group like WECC installing one is that the responsibility for maintenance and upkeep then falls to the group. This then means any failure of the equipment would be the responsibility of the group. However, it would be great to see local businesses taking initiative and installing these in local facilities, which could then be publicly known.</i></p>	
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	<p>It was also noted that the signage for the Farmers Market at the Ashdale Hall was taken down by Aberdeenshire Council. However, similar signage in Inverurie was allowed. Cllr McKail is communicating with the Enforcement Officer to discuss this.</p>	
11	<p><u>Website Report/Communications Group</u> We had 1,186 website visitors over the last week of January and 1,722 views -- so some people are looking at more than just the page they'd chosen to go to. The big draws were the closure of the shopping centre car park; other road closures; and the stadium updates. More than 80% of web traffic continues to come through Facebook. That's quite typical (the rest using a search engine). A resident contacted us about a Facebook page he's created showing his photographs of Westhill. A link has been added under the section about Westhill. – <i>David Ewen</i></p>	
12	<p><u>Treasurer's Report and Bulletin Updates</u> <u>Treasurer's Report:</u> All winter Bulletin advert invoices have been paid. There are now 86 advertisers who have agreed to pre-pay for their 2017 Bulletin adverts and get a 15% discount. That means I will only have to raise around 40 invoices at each issue for the advertisers who haven't prepaid. – <i>David Ritchie</i> <u>Bulletin Report:</u> Spring Bulletin delivery by printer should be on Friday 17th February. There will be leaflets for the new Foodbank run by Westhill Community Church to be delivered with the Bulletins. In February 2016 I reported there was 24 new advertisers in the Spring 2016 Bulletin. Of these 24, only 7 are still advertising. However the number of pages of adverts tends to stay fairly constant, at around 57 pages of adverts in a standard 96 page issue. This illustrates the level of churn in advertising. For most of the 10 years that I have been Bulletin editor I have had an assistant, mainly to help with enquiries re new adverts. When Fatima Mansoor stopped being my assistant in late 2015 I didn't look for a replacement as I had retired from my day-job and it was then easier for me to do everything myself. I am working again so Nara Morrison is going to assist me with new advert enquiries. - <i>David Ritchie</i> A question was asked regarding the recently launched Foodbank at Westhill Community Church, to which Becky added some explanation about why it was set up and the numbers of those using it.</p>	
13	<p><u>Sub-group Reports</u> <u>Litter:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was be no organised litter pick in January. • Our next Litter Pick will take place on 18th February. • All Volunteers have been informed of the dates for 2017 and reminders will be sent a few days prior to each event. <p><i>Aileen & Raymond Swaffield</i> <u>Bulbs & Baskets:</u> During the next few weeks, I will be checking all the existing baskets to see if they require replacement wicking material. I will then get a new quote from Amberol for the additional baskets and brackets as previously discussed, replacement wicking material. I will pass the new quote to David Ritchie for approval. Please note that I have not been able to get any information regarding the supply of new lamp post fixings for the additional brackets and baskets. – <i>John Imrie</i> There are numerous new aluminium lamp posts which ca</p>	

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	GENERAL FUNDS	ADVERTISING PRE-PAID FOR 2017 ISSUES	MAKING IT REAL FUND	LITTER CAMPAIGN FUND	TOTAL
FUNDS IN BANK AT 12/1/17	21021.97	17153.00	3972.62	763.21	42910.80
<u>Receipts in period 13/1/17 to 9/2/17</u>					
Bulletin advertisers-winter issue	770.00				770.00
Bulletin advertisers- 2017 prepayments		3352			3352.00
<u>Payments in period 13/1/17 to 9/2/17</u>					
Westhill Men's Shed- Xmas lights Pat Testing & assistance with tree	-150.00				-150.00
Sundry admin Expenses	-27.54				-27.54
Spring Bulletin honorariums	-400.00				-400.00
Meetings expenses	-117.10				-117.10
Van hire etc for christmas lights and tree	-105.99				-105.99
FUNDS IN BANK AT 9/2/17	20991.34	20505.00	3972.62	763.21	46232.17
Funds in bank include £18,361.35 in Santander Business bond at 0.75% interest					