



Westhill & Elrick
Community Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER 2015 IN THE HOLIDAY INN, WESTHILL

Community Council		
Name	Position	Present
(vacant)	Chairperson	X
Audrey Findlay	Deputy Chairperson	✓
John Imrie	Secretary	✓
David Ritchie	Treasurer	✓
Becky Ferguson	Minutes Secretary	✓
Mervyn Barr	Member	✓
Andy Duggan	Member	X
Alan Eastell	Member	X
David Ewen	Member	✓
Stuart Kane	Member	X
Bill Loudon	Member	X
Rosemary Murray	Member	✓
Kieran Rorie	Member	✓
Ken Seward	Member	X
Raymond Swaffield	Member	✓
Kate Lumsden	Member	✓
Cllr David Aitchison	Ward 13 Councillor	X
Cllr Amanda Allan	Ward 13 Councillor	X
Cllr Ron McKail	Ward 13 Councillor	✓
Cllr Iris Walker	Ward 13 Councillor	✓

Members of Public/Invited Guests		
Aileen Swaffield	Rachid Meghezzi	Peter Davidson
Christian Allard MSP	Angela Allan (CLD)	

	Item	Action/Attention
1	Chairperson's welcome and opening remarks Audrey Findlay opened the meeting, welcoming everyone to the last meeting of the year. 'It's been a busy one, but we're not finished yet!'	
2	Apologies Ken Seward, David Ewen, Bill Loudon, Andy Duggan, Cllr David Aitchison	
3	Review and Approval of the Draft Minutes of Meeting 12/11/2015 Proposed: David Ritchie Seconded: Raymond Swaffield The minutes were approved by the meeting.	
4	Matters Arising <u>Update on Shopping Centre</u> - There has been no further communication to or from Marc Mills of MJ Mapp as he was on leave for 3 weeks in November. An email will be sent to him after the Christmas event regarding the outstanding issues and actions required by the owners. <u>APP/2014/1065 - Landscaping on south side of A944</u> - The tree planting by Knight Property Group was delayed due to delivery of the trees being delayed until the end of November. Work to go ahead in the following weeks. <u>New Street Lights and Trees</u> - No meeting has yet been arranged by Doug Milne with roads and landscaping. <u>Closure of Footpath between Eastside Drive and Hillside Road</u> - No meeting has yet been arranged by Doug Milne with roads and landscaping. The signage put up by Aberdeenshire Council advising that the path is closed has been moved by	

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	<p>either users or by the wind, meaning the steps are fully accessible. It was proposed at the meeting that Mr Thomasson be invited to this meeting with Doug Milne, as he is directly affected by this problem. This was unanimously agreed. A response is still awaited from Cllr David Aitchison, as he is chair of Infrastructure Services Committee and may be able to assist. We will email him and ask for an update from his perspective.</p> <p><u>Art Feature at 'Gateway to Westhill'</u> - see item 14</p> <p><u>WECC Events - Christmas Event</u> - see item 13</p> <p><u>Proposed Art Feature at new hotel at Elrick</u> - see item 8</p> <p><u>WECC office bearers and member situation</u> - see item 7</p> <p><u>Review of the Scottish Planning System</u> - John and Audrey put together a list of comments that was sent to Cllr Iris Walker for submission to Aberdeenshire Council ISC and also the Garioch Area Committee. A similar list of comments was sent to the Scottish Government. GACCF has also sent a letter to the Scottish Government on this subject. Over 350 submissions were received, therefore it is estimated this will be completed in May, later than expected. Generally, many issues which we feel strongly about were raised by others also, which is encouraging and should result in all our voices being heard effectively.</p> <p><u>Greenspace Scotland</u> – No progression as of yet. Previously, we have been contacted by Bibby Offshore who was interested in being involved in a project within the community. We will write to them again and suggest this area of land, opposite Tesco as a project for them to work on.</p> <p><u>Lack of Pedestrian Barrier at Shopping Centre</u> – update in Cllr McKail's report</p> <p><u>Damaged seat on Westhill Drive</u> – It is not our responsibility to replace this seat, as it is down to the insurance of the individual and the Girl Guides who put the bench in place in the first place to organise a replacement. This may take some time but will be completed in due course.</p>	<p>John Imrie</p> <p>John Imrie</p>
5	<p><u>Police Report</u> No report was received.</p>	
6	<p><u>Time slot for resident's questions and comments</u> There were no questions of comments from residents.</p>	
7	<p><u>WECC Office Bearers & Members Situation</u> Our current situation is that as of the end of the month we will be without a Chairperson and Secretary. This is a difficult situation as we now have to look at the future progression of WECC. The number of members attending the monthly meetings has not been great, and this is disappointing. In a town of almost 12,000 people there must be individuals who care about their community! Cllr Iris Walker has been in contact with one individual in the Community who is interested in joining WECC, so Audrey will contact her about this. David Ritchie questioned who it was that looks at the weekly planning lists, with John responding that he does it currently. Previously others have been interested in helping with this. This role needs to be taken on by one of the members. A list is emailed to <i>WECCsecretx@gmail.com</i> each week. We have achieved a huge amount in the last year, and we must highlight this so the community can see the impact that WECC has had and can continue to have. However other groups do not always include us in the way they should, especially recently Aberdeenshire Council and the Scottish Government. These bodies should be coming to us to take part in their consultations, rather than us searching for these and having to do all the leg work. At the moment, we have to keep our heads above water with the team that we have. John Imrie is preparing a document to hand over to whoever may take his place. Becky Ferguson is willing to stand in as Secretary until August/September, as she may be going back to study full-time at that point.</p>	<p>Audrey Findlay</p>

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8	<p><u>Proposed Art Feature at new hotel at Elrick</u></p> <p>Audrey, David and John met with John Glover from the company developing the site. We agreed with John Glover that we do not want a conflict in pursuing the same pots of money to help fund our respective art features, and we established that there would not be a conflict as we expect the two projects to source different opportunities for funding.</p> <p>John Glover told us of another similar project led by a Community Council and therefore we thought it would be helpful to us to invite him to attend our January 2016 meeting.</p> <p>Following what he has to say, we will need to form a small sub group/steering group to make progress as the Westhill Art Feature is a big project to take on and will most likely need reps from other organisations in our community. Angela Allan has offered to assist in helping us set up a steering group.</p>	
9	<p><u>Ward 13 Councillors Reports/Updates</u></p> <p><u>Cllr Ron McKail</u></p> <p>Shopping Centre:</p> <p>Safety Concerns at Exit onto Westhill Drive</p> <p>At the November WECC meeting I was asked to follow up on the concern expressed by a resident that he witnessed a young child run off from his mother and ran towards the exit leading to the zebra crossing. If the child had ran onto the zebra crossing any approaching vehicle would have had very limited time to brake. The action I have taken is to photograph the exit. Forwarded the photographs to the Garioch Area manager along with an email. His considered response was that as this was private property the solution rested with the site owners. Accordingly I have emailed Mr Carson (Asset Manager) Orchard Street. The reply was that the site owners are not planning to take any action; however they have noted the barrier in place at Westhill Primary and could consider something similar. The response from both the site owners and Aberdeenshire Council are not great, and will be followed up by Cllr McKail, as it is the wall built by the owners which has created this problem.</p> <p>Vehicle Parking Arrangements</p> <p>In my recent Bulletin article I asked for views on the suitability of the vehicle parking arrangements at the shopping centre. Received email/letters/phone calls from Bulletin readers expressing similar views. The main concerns include the lack of directional arrows on the road surface between the car parking lanes. I'm collating these views and will forward them to the Mr Carson whom I've emailed previously on these concerns. Several people have commented that unless the traffic flow can be directed to travel in a circular direction (either west/east of the parking lanes) then there will be accidents.</p> <p>The site facility management company is aware of the difficulty in finding car parking spaces during certain periods. It is also thought that the shopping centre car park is being used as a 'park and ride' facility.</p> <p>Mr Carson's response is that "In respect of the parking we are looking to install an ANPR system to ensure that only people using the shopping centre for legitimate purposes will be parking in the scheme and I hope to get some timeline for the installation soon".</p> <p>WECC support both the idea of directional arrows and an ANPR system, and Ron McKail will communicate this back to Mr Carson at Orchard Street.</p> <p>ASD Youth Club Westhill</p> <p>Concerns expressed to ward councillors that this facility may close. I contacted the Head of Service and in his response he confirmed that this was not the case. The club will be meeting fortnightly rather monthly.</p> <p>Westhill Community Café</p> <p>Reported (by RM) that the community café was up for closure. I contacted the</p>	<p>Cllr McKail</p> <p>Cllr McKail</p>



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<p>Head of Service who confirmed that due to a change in the café’s status this had caused some confusion and that this facility was not up for closure. He confirmed his Service would temporarily remove the user charge for a six month grace period whilst discussions take place to find the best way forward.</p> <p>Winter Maintenance During the cold spell received emails regarding lack of salt in grit bins across Westhill. Contacted `Roads officers in relation to a specific case who advised that the complaint would be sorted by the Road`s Team and a check was being carried out on other grit bins in the local area. Also during the very recent cold spell received two emails with one congratulating the Council on not wasting money by not gritting the pavements in his street. Also received another email some 30 minutes later which was critical of the council service which had failed to grit her street.</p> <p>Head Teacher Appointment to Skene Primary School Along with Cllr Allan we were involved in the interviews to appoint an HT for Skene PS. We were pleased to appoint Amanda Hampton (currently DHT at Insch Primary) as the successful candidate.</p> <p>SensationALL Along with Cllr Walker accompanied Aberdeenshire’s CEO on a visit to SensationALL to Lawsondale and the Old School House. The visit was successful. CEO is now aware of the strength of feeling of the local community that the OSH must be retained and not replaced by a block of flats. SensationALL are in the latter stages of completing their business plan which when submitted to the Council should speed up the process of them moving to the OSH.</p> <p>Cllr Iris Walker Chief Executive’s visit Due to a breakdown in communication in October when new CEO, Jim Savege, visited Westhill, the planned meeting with SensationALL was re-scheduled and took place on Monday 7th December. This was an opportunity for elected members to introduce Jim to the team at SensationALL to hear about the services they provide in Westhill and their plans going forward with regard to the Old School & Schoolhouse. I attended with Cllr McKail. I also accompanied Jim Savege on a visit to the Citizens Advice Bureau where he met with the Manager and one of the Board members. Staff and volunteers updated us on the work being carried out at both the Westhill office and the growing number of outreaches and highlighted the challenges they face with demand for advice services increasing rapidly.</p> <p>Carnie All-weather pitch I have had contact with various residents who want to use Carnie All Weather pitch on a regular basis. The site is owned by Aberdeenshire Council with leisure officers based at the swimming pool having day-to-day responsibility for the site, although the site is largely unsupervised. I met with officers recently to draw up an action plan. The site is very untidy with fly-tipping and general rubbish lying in the carpark and on the pitch but this should be rectified soon. The floodlights are to be in working order within the next few weeks. We agreed that a public meeting would be held with all interested parties and the Sports Hub are keen to facilitate this, hopefully sometime in January.</p> <p>Dog fouling campaign Along with Mervyn Barr and Andy Duggan, I met with representatives of Crombie and Elrick Primaries to progress the campaign to highlight issues with dog fouling and dog exercising on school grounds. Westhill Primary is also now on board. The children will take part in a poster competition with the winning designs being used as permanent signs on the school grounds. The closing date for the competition is 22nd January 2016. The group will meet again in the middle of January. Mervyn mentioned the possibility of school playing fields being classified as ‘dog-free’ zones, which Iris responded she will research into.</p>	<p>Cllr Walker</p>
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	<p>Grit Bins During the wintry weather last week and following the adoption of some of the roads in the Broadshade estate, as well as the Winter Maintenance policy being reviewed, there were a few requests for extra grit bins. I have asked officers if the Grit Bin allocation policy can be reviewed in light of residents being expected to do more to help themselves. If bins need to be topped up this can be requested online on the Aberdeenshire Council website.</p> <p>Budget Consultation Please remember to complete the online survey and encourage others to do so.</p> <p>Other items Also noted by Iris were items of previous discussion including the Traffic Lights in Elrick - expected to be away by December 18th. The yellow lines previously requested on Prospect Road are believed to now be there, and the fence adjacent to the Mens Shed has now been replaced.</p>	
10	<p><u>Website Strategy Group Report</u> We had 461 separate visitors to the website (and 539 views) on December 2 – a spectacular spike. Kieran said traffic had been redirected from the Holiday Inn website. Should allow companies and organisations to place an advert in the website in return for steering visitors to our website. On a separate issue, I will be looking to use the website as part of our recruitment drive, with occasional stories highlighting the importance of strong membership, and possibly with a separate (permanent) box on the Home Page. There has also been a suggestion we look at putting a front page advert on the Spring edition of the Westhill Bulletin encouraging people to join. A meeting will be held in January with those involved in the Website about how to take this forward in the future. A number of e-mails have been received asking WECC for help or advice from other groups, regarding items which we cannot really help with. A description of who WECC are and what we can do could possibly be uploaded to the site. - <i>David Ewen</i></p>	
11	<p><u>Treasurer's Report & Bulletin Update</u> <u>Treasurer's Report:</u> Cheque signatories - In 2016, until a new chair and/or secretary are appointed, only Mervyn and I will be the cheque signatories. Even though Mervyn is not an office-bearer now, he is still eligible to counter-sign cheques as he has not been removed from the bank mandate. - <i>David Ritchie</i></p> <p><u>Bulletin Report:</u> Deadline date for Spring 2016 Bulletin is Friday 29th January. I have put out the annual invitation to the regular advertisers to block-book their advert for all 4 issues in 2016 and save 15% on the cost of 4 single adverts. Around 70% of the regular advertisers normally take up this offer. - <i>David Ritchie</i></p>	
12	<p><u>Sub-group Reports</u> <u>Litter Report:</u> Unfortunately, the Litter Pick arranged for 21st November had to be cancelled because a thin layer of snow and a hard frost made collecting the litter impossible and the ground was slippery, posing a hazard to collectors. Next Organised Litter Pick is not yet arranged but is likely to take place in February 2016. We will be attending the Christmas Event with the Litter Picking Kit, to clear up when it is finished. The Community Council (via David Ritchie) has been contacted by Crombie School, regarding their intention to carry out more Litter Picking. They are looking for funds to obtain their own kit but until that is available, we have agreed to continue lending them our kit, as and when they require it. - <i>Aileen & Raymond Swaffield</i> - 01224 740669 - swaffies@talktalk.net</p> <p><u>Bulbs and Baskets:</u> I met with John Glover and one of his colleagues who manage the Inverurie hanging baskets and floral displays. I have collected a lot of information from them about their methods for creating their hanging basket displays, including their own watering system. This information will be used to update our existing methods and</p>	

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	<p>procedures. - <i>John Imrie</i></p> <p>Art Project: We had a pleasing response from residents at the Christmas craft workshop. Decorations to be hung up in the shopping arcade have been made by the children in Westhill. The ladies who attend the Knit and Natter group in the library on Thursday afternoons undertook the task of stringing the decorations - seven of them for one hour - 7 man hours of community involvement. Thank you, ladies. We have been concentrating on Community Art projects. In 2016, we will turn our attention to Public Art matters, being involved in gathering opinions about the Gateway to Westhill project, as well as continuing with other community project ideas we have in mind. - <i>Rosemary Murray (WAP team leader)</i></p> <p>Christmas Lights: The street lights were all erected by 18th November, just a few days before the cold and snowy spell. One of the large Tesco roundabout lights was damaged by the strong winds on 4th December. It will be taken down this week. The Christmas tree at Shopping Centre was installed on Monday 7th December. As before the tree was donated by Dunecht estate and brought to site by them. The tree is 22 feet tall and there is 120 metres of lights on it, 50 metres more than the 2014 tree had. There are nearly 1400 led bulbs on tree. A set of barriers to go round tree base was made by Men Shed using some of their stock of donated plywood. - <i>David Ritchie</i></p>	
13	<p>Christmas Event Thanks to effort from the team leads and others, the organisation has been completed. The tree and associated work was carried out on Monday 7th led by David Ritchie. The decorations were also installed, led by Rosemary. A selection of goodies has been donated by various shops around Westhill, including Co-Op, Tesco, Costco and M&S. The hot chocolate will be provided by the Holiday Inn, with the opportunity to refill as needed. Post event drinks will be held in the Holiday Inn as last year, for all who have helped. We will meet there from 3.30pm onwards, in order to set up the PA equipment, tables, hot chocolate and goodies.</p>	
14	<p>Art Feature at the Gateway to Westhill To make this happen, we need to establish a steering group inclusive of anyone within the community who wishes to be involved in something important in their community. This will be a significant Art Feature which will be there for many years. In January we will move this forward, looking at who within WECC is willing to be involved in this, along with who to invite from the Community. Audrey recently attended a meeting in Inverurie, where she explained the background of the project to a member of the LEADER funding team, and received a favourable response. Westhill will be included in the boundary for LEADER funding, which will be beneficial to our project. Cllr Iris Walker expressed concern over the guidance of the LEADER funding not being available yet, and asked Christian Allard (MSP) to follow this up.</p>	Christian Allard
15	<p>Correspondence There is a meeting on Tuesday of next week of the Role & Function of Community Councils Working Group. This is the final meeting of this group. The meeting will be held in Inverurie Academy, 7-8.30pm. John and David R will attend this meeting. The latest draft Scheme of Establishment has been circulated, and a team of Kieran, Mervyn, David Ritchie and Audrey will review it.</p>	KR, MB, DR & AF
16	<p>AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SensationALL will be invited to the meeting in January to speak about the Old School and Schoolhouse. • Our nomination of the Westhill Wheelers for the Stewart Milne Ruby Award was not successful, however they did provide some information of a group they may wish to contact for future funding and support. • It was also noted that letters have been circulated to the parents of 	

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	<p>Academy aged children within Aberdeenshire today, highlighting interventions carried out by Police Scotland regarding knives and other weapons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mervyn Barr has offered to do Risk Assessments on all Ladder work / Working at Height, particularly regarding the Christmas tree, lights and decorations. This will ensure we have Risk Assessments in place for all these type of activities. We will then need to develop a written operational procedure for each activity. • John Imrie will circulate dates for all meetings next year to members. • Audrey Findlay thanked John for his services as secretary and member of WECC during the last 28 months. She stated that his dedication and attention to detail was 'above and beyond' the normal expectations required for these roles. John was presented with a thank-you card and gift voucher. 	<p>Mervyn Barr John Imrie</p>
17	<p><u>Date of next meeting</u> Thursday January 14th 2016, 7pm, Holiday Inn, Westhill Drive</p>	

Becky Ferguson
Minutes Secretary

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TREASURER'S REPORT FOR W&ECC MEETING 10/12/15					
	GENERAL FUNDS	ADVERTISING PRE-PAID FOR Winter issue	MAKING IT REAL FUND	LITTER CAMPAIGN FUND	TOTAL
FUNDS IN BANK AT 12/11/15	20116.02	4693.00	3972.62	781.17	29562.81
Receipts in period 13/11/15 to 10/12/15					
Transfer of winter pre-paid adverts to General Funds	4693.00	-4693.00			0.00
Bulletin advertisers-winter issue	892.00				892.00
Payments in period 13/11/15 to 10/12/15					
Sundry cash Expenses	-50.00				-50.00
XIC- Bulletin Winter issue printing	-6027.51				-6027.51
Bulletin sundries & postages	-80.48				-80.48
Winter Bulletin honorariums	-400.00				-400.00
Members mileage & other meetings expenses	-50.00				-50.00
Honorarium to website manager for Q4 2015	-225.00				-225.00
Rosemary Murray- reimburse christmas dec costs	-102.59				-102.59
Xmas tree lights & tree sundries	-159.06				-159.06
FUNDS IN BANK AT 10/12/15	18606.38	0.00	3972.62	781.17	23360.17

Funds in bank include £18,196.53 in Santander Business bond at 0.9% interest