

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 13 AUGUST 2020 (VIA ZOOM)

Community Council		
Name	Position	Present
Mervyn Barr	Interim Chair	✓
Hilary Benson	Member	✓
Malcolm Collie	Member	✓
Heather Cook	Member	✓
Donald Davidson	Member	✓
Mandy Duggan	Member	✓
Chika Edeh	Member	✓
Becky Ferguson	Member	x
Daniel Hay	Member	x
Kate Lumsden	Member	✓
Alan McCue	Member	✓
William Munro	Interim Vice-Chair	✓
Gordon Prentice	Interim Treasurer	✓
Diane Priestley	Member	✓
David Ritchie	Interim Secretary	✓
Ken Stewart	Member	✓
Raymond Swaffield	Member	✓
CLlr David Aitchison	Ward 13 Councillor	x
CLlr Iris Walker	Ward 13 Councillor	✓
CLlr Ron McKail	Ward 13 Councillor	✓
CLlr Alistair McKelvie	Ward 13 Councillor	x

	<u>Item</u>
1	<p><u>Welcome and opening remarks</u></p> <p>Chair Mervyn Barr opened the meeting, thanking everyone for attending. Permission was granted to record proceedings Mervyn expressed condolences on behalf of WECC to family of Westhill resident Donald Dinnie who was the train conductor who tragically lost his life in the derailment near Stonehaven on 12th August.</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Apologies received from Daniel Hay. No Declarations of Interest</p>
3	<p><u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 9th July 2020</u></p> <p>The minutes were approved, with one correction- re item 11 Community Support Fund Applications. Donald Davidson was of opinion that there wasn't unanimous approval for the donations. No actual vote was taken. It was agreed that the word 'unanimously' should be removed after 'approved' Proposed: Heather Cook Seconded: Gordon Prentice</p>
4	<p><u>Matters Arising & Actions Update</u></p> <p>Matters Arising Cala Soutarhill Proposal – letter sent to Cala to confirm neutrality</p>

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	<p>Actions Update</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bulletin Manager Role – planned to be done late August 2. Set-up of Micro-soft One-Drive – <i>in progress</i>. Aiming to use Microsoft Teams, need to prove to Microsoft that WECC are a non-profit-making group. 3. Appointment of Independent Verifier - Alistair Mckelvie had suggested a candidate, Gordon to make first contact and recommendation. <i>In progress</i>. Donald also advised he has a neighbour who is a chartered bookkeeper and would be happy to do it free. 4. Re-drafted Constitution- David to send to Alison Cumming in August 5. AVA Community Spirit Award- Men Shed, Community Church & Darren Cocker nominated. <i>Completed</i>. David advised the nominees are listed in the AVA August Newsletter, so will circulate it & put on website 6. Help for Older People- Garioch Community Planning project being run by Banffshire Rural Partnership that involves doing shopping for older people and organising afternoon teas for them. Mervyn to circulate details provided by Willie, to see if anyone has any ideas on how WECC could be involved. Agenda Item 15 7. Aberdeenshire’s Early Learning and Childcare funding arrangements. David will post it on website – <i>completed</i>. 8. Bedding Plants- completed. 130 plants in the shopping centre garden area 9. Pollution event in the Denman Park Ponds. Ken to contact authorities. Agenda item 7 10. Risk Assessments. Xmas lights and hanging baskets RA retrieved. Litter-picking RA in place. Review/redraft of these and others. <i>In progress</i>. 11. Planting scheme – Agenda item 14 12. Comms Group survey via John Reid – Agenda item 8 13. LDP comments to Shire Council by 31 July - <i>Completed</i>. 14. Phoenix Fund – invitation letter distribution. Agenda Item 12 15. Daniel Honorarium arrangements – <i>Completed</i>
5	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment - Ward 13 Forum- 20th August This was circulated. Mervyn and some of the Ward Councillors may participate. Iris confirmed that the Westhill & District Coronavirus Community Support group have been invited to it so Darren Cocker may participate. Online survey for it at https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8XT65QX. Closes 30th August</p> <p>Nestrans - Regional Transport Strategy 2040 Consultation. This was circulated on 11th August. Individuals may wish to respond. It is open for 10 weeks. David will put it on website.</p>
6	<p><u>Police Report</u></p> <p>Police Report received covers three months May to July, though we had a May report before. Hilary pointed out the ‘<i>increase in concern for person calls, a lot of which related to members of the public feeling isolated during lock down without access to their normal support networks.</i>’ We hope Police are directing these calls to the Grampian Coronavirus Support Hub. Details of the Hub will be re-posted on WECC website and David will ask our Police contacts if there is anything WECC could do to</p>

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	<p>help these isolated residents. Ron, as Chair of the Garioch Community Safety Group, will raise the subject with that group.</p> <p>We will also repost details of the Domestic Abuse assistance that is available.</p>
7	<p><u>Environmental Group Update</u></p> <p>Report from Raymond has been circulated. Key points are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organised monthly Litter Picks will resume on 15th August. - Rotary Club have purchased their own set of equipment and are doing their own Litter Picks. - Ken is arranging to get litter posters printed on vinyl, Rotary have offered to help pay for this. - Re the Denman ponds contamination, this has probably been caused by extra cleaning being done in the shopping centre shops prior to their reopening and they are putting the water into the rain-water drains. - The Milestone at the A944/B9119 junction has been cleaned up
8	<p><u>Communications Group Update</u></p> <p>No report received & Daniel not present. David advised that the sub-group had a meeting on 16th July to complete a survey supplied by John Reid of Media Gorilla to give him an idea of what we would be looking to achieve from a new site. John has sent us a Proposal which will be discussed next week. David circulated on 11th August details from Area Office of a pilot project being run by the 'Scottish Tech Army' that could lead to website & social media support to community councils.</p>
9	<p><u>“Westhill Walks“ Project</u></p> <p>A report from Gordon has been circulated (see appendix to minutes)</p> <p>The Remit per the report was approved. The proposed project name “Walk & Cycle Westhill” was also approved.</p> <p>Gordon advised the funding application to AC Strategic Budget Fund was in the range of £12k to £16k. Our application will be assessed by Garioch Area Committee on 25th August. If full funding not available in this financial year the project could be done over 2 years.</p>
10	<p><u>Planning Matters</u></p> <p>Significant Applications from Weekly List- nothing in past month</p> <p>There has been an application by a resident in Meadowlands to trim some trees that border their garden. There is a Tree Preservation Order on them so permission is required to trim them. Willie pointed out that there is no legal restriction on height that trees are allowed to grow to, even if the tree height is blocking light to a house.</p> <p>Raymond asked if there is any enforcement where hedges are overgrowing walkways and causing a hazard. Ron confirmed that Council can order the resident to trim their hedge, and if they don't, the Council can arrange to get the work done and pass cost on to the resident.</p> <p>Diane advised that the application for 7 houses and convenience store at Strawberry Field Rd has not yet been approved.</p> <p>Local Development Plans</p> <p>Diane confirmed that the WECC response to the proposed LDP was submitted before the deadline. The Examination of the LDP by Scottish Ministers is expected to start in January 2021 and to take between 6 to 9 months to complete. Mervyn voiced thanks to the Planning Group for their diligent work.</p>

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	<p>The planning subgroup is now looking at the Aberdeen City LDP. The draft WECC response will be circulated soon. It has to be submitted by 31st August.</p>												
<p>11</p>	<p><u>Financials/Payment authorisation requests</u> Financial Transactions in July Income: £2,762 for summer Bulletin advertisements. Expenditure: £9,500: comprising £2,790 of donations agreed at July meeting plus £6,710 to Bulletin printer. Outstanding Commitments: Honoraria for two months [secretary (£267) and minutes (£100)] + uncashed cheque £300. Bank Balances at Month End: £28,504.46 Available Funds: Nil, after adjusting for the following specific funds:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">- Outstanding Commitments:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£667.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">- Bulletin prepayments [Autumn & Winter issues]:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£10,252.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">- General Reserve</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£9,780.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">- Litter Campaign Fund:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£595.47</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">- Covid-19 Fund:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£4,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">- Community Support Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£3,210.00</td> </tr> </table> <p>Note: although General Reserve has fallen below our notional target of £10,000, this will be rectified when final £660 received from Bulletin late payers.</p> <p>David advised that this week he has sent 11 Christmas Lights back to the supplier in Fife to get refurbished. They have advised cost will be £1267. Most years only around 5 lights need some refurbishment. A more thorough review was done in January this year before the lights were put back into storage. To purchase new lights would cost more than getting the existing lights refurbished. David was requested to prepare a business case so will submit that to the office-bearers soon.</p>	- Outstanding Commitments:	£667.00	- Bulletin prepayments [Autumn & Winter issues]:	£10,252.00	- General Reserve	£9,780.00	- Litter Campaign Fund:	£595.47	- Covid-19 Fund:	£4,000.00	- Community Support Fund	£3,210.00
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<p>12</p>	<p><u>Phoenix Fund Project</u> Circulated report from Mervyn: <i>David and Mervyn hand-delivered letters and covered: 1 letter to Arnhall, then letters to the whole town centre Inc. Holiday Inn, Shepherds' Rest, BP Garage at Elrick and the Broadstraik. Approximately 30+ businesses in total. We asked to speak to Managers or Deputy Managers and were successful in about 75% of visits. Where the Manager or Deputy were available we passed over a copy of the letter and engaged them in conversation to explain what the PF was about and how they could help themselves - with some help from us (WECC). If no manager was available we spoke to the person in charge and gave them the letter to pass on. Some Managers that we did speak to e.g. Shepherds Rest and Home Bargains said the offer of help would need to be referred to their regional or head office. We asked for responses by 3rd Aug – to give managers time to consult with higher authorities if necessary.</i> <i>Since the last meeting Mervyn has tried to contact Ben Horsburgh of MAPP by email and telephone, on a number of occasions, leaving a message on each occasion - but disappointingly with no reply as yet. To date we have only had one positive reply from the Broadstraik Inn, no other responses have been received.</i></p> <p>Cllr Iris Walker advised that Ben Horsburgh had been on leave for 2 weeks. She spoke to him today. He is still keen on the project. Iris suggested we wait a few weeks till after the Aberdeen lockdown. Can</p>												

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	<p>meet with Ben around end of August. If we can get the email addresses for the shops we can try to generate interest again by email.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p><u>Garioch Area Initiatives Fund</u> Circulated report from Mervyn: <i>This fund will provide (successful applications) for Projects that align with Shire Council Objectives, 50% matched funding up to a maximum of £5k i.e. half of a £10k project.</i> <i>At July meeting I mentioned a possible Project to be the “completion” of the Gateway Sculpture and asked for any other ideas. So far no suggestions have been made so as contingency I’d now like to propose that we make a bid for funds to (in priority):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide a hard border around the beds/grass interface for half of the circumference of the sculpture mound.</i> • <i>Resurface the existing path with a dark-grey resin-bonded surface (weed proof and highly durable) and install ground-level borders.</i> • <i>Extend the existing path (to the specification above) some 30 metres to the East to join up with the North-South pedestrian path.</i> <p><i>The closing date for Applications to the Area Manager (Ann Overton) is 31st August and I’ve taken the liberty of asking Bert McIntosh to provide a provisional estimate to support an Application.</i> <i>Others may know of smaller-scale construction companies that may be able to provide a comparative estimate?</i> <i>Proposal</i> – <i>WECC approve of this project which may be staged, based on available funding and sanction expenditure of £5K for matched funding to execute an initial £10K project (which may cover the cost of the whole project depending on estimates received)</i></p> <p>This proposal was approved. Mervyn will ask for a quote from Nicol of Skene and a smaller company NE Hard Landscaping he has recently become aware of.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p><u>Hanging Basket/Planting scheme - Policy 2021?</u> Circulated report from Mervyn: <i>WECC need to decide a policy on Hanging Baskets and/or Alternatives</i> <i>Situation: Historically Bill Loudon then John Imrie looked after the hanging baskets, filling, hanging, organising watering, removal, emptying and maintaining and storing. He is happy to hand over the job and provide advice to new volunteer (s) if needed. At our first meeting in March a call was made for volunteers to take over from John but on the evening none were forthcoming.</i> <i>The lock-down resulted in lack of availability of plants, so at the time any form of planting was a non-issue</i> <i>The Council provided 130 plants at short notice in July and these (by agreement with MAPP) were planted in the town centre and some planters in Denman Park. Several complimentary remarks have been made to me, saying in effect they’ve added a bit of colour.</i> <i>Historically, despite best efforts and a lot of hard work, many of the baskets, particularly those in exposed locations on Westhill Drive, failed to thrive. Occasionally (anecdotally) this drew criticism of and allegations of amateurism from WECC.</i> <i>Issue - we need to establish a policy on whether or not we continue with these efforts; and if so decide how they can be made sustainable e.g. by focussing on different plants with different planting/maintenance needs or choosing different planting locations - and crucially, establishing a core group of volunteers to look after the scheme.</i></p>

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	<p><i>Proposal – we form a small group of people with an interest in flower displays, to consider options and make recommendations on a sustainable (low-effort/low maintenance) way forward.</i></p> <p>David advised that John Imrie has recently handed over his hard-copy and electronic files to David. Ron advised it is unlikely that we will get the plants from Council free of charge in future. Hilary suggested we try to get some sponsorship for buying plants.</p> <p>Mervyn requested members to put their names forward for a project team. Ken is keen.</p>
<p>15</p>	<p><u>Help for Older People (afternoon teas etc.) – update on current situation</u></p> <p>Background per circulated report from Mervyn: Key note summary - based on full notes supplied by Willie from meeting about helping older and often lonely people – 9th July <i>Members of a group in Banff were concerned, through experience in organising shopping and delivering afternoon teas, that when they call to take shopping to a client, the calls get longer as people seem to be lonely, wanting to chat and a bit out of touch with up to date advice. Significant numbers of their clientele do not have the Internet. As a result now their policy is, when their volunteers go round and deliver shopping or teas they have an informal but structured socially distanced chat.</i></p> <p><i>It was thought that this type of initiative would be good in Westhill and that starting small and growing out of existing, but coordinated activity was the way forward. Currently the Westhill churches and the Senior Citizens Club all do this sort of work (e.g. Heather was recently part of the delivery of afternoon tea to 46 residents, one of the churches has 120 people regularly at a lunch club under normal circumstances). It was also thought that Rotary might be interested in a role within such an initiative.</i></p> <p><i>Various actions were agreed and assigned though none specifically to WECC but David continued to participate in the Skype call on the 16th July. In the meantime Willie suggested there was a possible role for WECC to act in a coordination role.</i></p> <p><i>Also some members may be able to volunteer or know friends who might volunteer to help one of the groups; or through networks may be able to suggest people who might benefit.</i></p> <p>David advised that he attended a few meetings in July, but WECC are not directly involved, though Heather helps to run the Senior Citizens Group. Funding of £2000 was obtained from the AC Resilience Fund and 250 afternoon teas were delivered on 10th August to elderly residents in Westhill. The delivery was done by volunteers from the two churches, Senior Citizens Group and Rotary. The recipients were members of these organisations or who had attended the Rotary Christmas party. A de-brief meeting is planned for 31st August. A second delivery may be planned if it is possible to get details of elderly residents who didn't get the first delivery.</p> <p>If anyone wishes to help with the second phase they should contact Heather. Also contact Heather if you know of anyone who would appreciate getting an afternoon tea delivered and a chat with the volunteer.</p>
<p>16</p>	<p><u>Ward 13 Councillors Updates</u></p> <p>No Councillor reports were received prior to the meeting</p> <p>Cllr Iris Walker advised that the A2B dial-a-bus operated by Falcon Coach Hire continued to operate during lockdown but stopped last week. A Council minibus service may be introduced, but this is dependent on the outcome of a 'clean sheet review' by end of October of all council-supported</p>

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	<p>passenger transport in Aberdeenshire. Residents in places like Echt & Dunecht are particularly affected by the loss of this service. Iris is trying to get the service re-instated.</p> <p>Cllr Ron McKail advised that the usage of the service during lockdown from 23rd March to 31st July was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -two regular passengers from Dunecht and two from Echt - in Westhill there was 37 trips by 17 users to Skene Health Centre, 13 trips to Pharmacy by 1 user and 600 trips to Tesco, Aldi or Shopping Centre. Mervyn commented that given the restrictions of the lockdown this survey could hardly be representative of demand in more normal circumstances. <p>It was suggested that WECC could express their concerns into the review. A draft will be prepared and circulated.</p> <p>Iris advised she has received a few queries about the community minibus, who it is for etc. David advised it is only for organised groups like sports teams and walking groups, not for general public. It is advertised in Bulletin. David will provide more info for next meeting.</p> <p>Iris has a meeting with the Carnie Woods fledgling group and city Ranger next week, Ken will be invited to attend.</p> <p>Steve Gray (AC Environment Planner) is assisting the Arnhall Moss group to get re-constituted and a further meeting will be arranged shortly.</p> <p>Ron commented that he was now aware from list in Bulletin that there is now 17 Public Access Defibrillators in Westhill area.</p>
17	Date of Next Meeting- 10 th September, 7pm via Zoom

APPENDIX (re item 9 on agenda)

Walk & Cycle Westhill- Sub-group Update – for 13th August

1. Remit of the Group, Walk & Cycle Westhill – for full WECC approval

- a. Promote walking, running and cycling routes in and around Westhill
- b. Lead the creation of Westhill Orbital Path and related signage
- c. Champion preservation and restoration of Rights of Way
- d. Become the acknowledged key stakeholder in above
- e. Develop short-term and long-term strategies and implement them
- f. Successfully apply to relevant funding streams
- g. Implement projects to budget
- h. To be accountable and report to the full WECC

2. What we've done

- a. Held 2 meetings – one in Denman Park the other on Zoom
- b. Identified all printed and online maps produced by AC, established that they are all in need of revision, and sourced responsible person in AC.
- c. Carried out physical check of routes and compared with published material [HB & KL]
- d. Carried out survey of possible signage for Westhill Orbital Path

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- e. Sought quotations from local suppliers to carry out signage manufacture and installation [RM]
- f. Submitted an application to AC [before the deadline] for fully funded support to install orbital path signage. A decision is expected on or following a meeting on 25th August.

3. What next

- a. Identify and consult with other stakeholders to understand and incorporate their needs [local authority, other landowners, schools, walking groups, youth groups, Jog Scotland, local historians, etc.]
- b. Contact AC Transport Strategy team to agree changes to physical maps and online links. [including reference to “Westhill Orbital Path” and other outdoor pursuits such as Tennis, Bowling and green spaces where children can play.
- c. Subject to council support, agree specification and positioning of signage with AC Landscape Services team.
- d. Seek quotations from other local manufacturers and installers [in addition to Men’s Shed and Rood Signs Ltd]
- e. Record and share popular routes for others to see and explore [using apps such as Strava and Viewranger], with the ultimate aim of promoting these on existing channels such as WECC’s website, Facebook pages and Westhill Bulletin [copyright allowing].
- f. Establish a team of volunteers to reclaim and restore the path round the east and south perimeter of Lawsondale playing fields [landowner dependent].
- g. Survey the existing network of cycle lanes and related signage in the town. Propose additional lanes and signage to increase confidence and safety of cyclists, especially in industrial / business parks.

A Gordon Prentice

On behalf of Walk & Cycle Westhill 10 August 20

Team members are Gordon, Mervyn, Heather, Hilary, Kate, Willie, Ron, Daniel