

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2020 (VIA ZOOM)

| Community Council | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Name | Position | Present |
| Mervyn Barr | Interim Chair | ✓ |
| Hilary Benson | Member | ✓ |
| Malcolm Collie | Member | ✓ |
| Heather Cook | Member | x |
| Donald Davidson | Member | ✓ |
| Mandy Duggan | Member | ✓ |
| Becky Ferguson | Member | ✓ |
| Daniel Hay | Member | ✓ |
| Kate Lumsden | Member | ✓ |
| Alan McCue | Member | ✓ |
| William Munro | Interim Vice-Chair | x |
| 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 |

Members of Public

Audrey Findlay

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| 1 | <p><u>Welcome and opening remarks</u></p> <p>Chair Mervyn Barr opened the meeting, thanking everyone for attending. Special welcome to member of the public Audrey Findlay. Permission was granted to record the meeting.</p> <p>Mervyn mentioned that the Strategic Needs Assessment states that Westhill has the most racially and culturally diverse community in Aberdeenshire, with approximately 30 languages spoken here. With our diverse and inclusive community in mind, please note October marks the start of Black History Month in the UK, which is a time to celebrate the extraordinary contributions that black people have made in the UK and beyond. There will be a number of celebratory events hosted at Aberdeen University throughout October.</p> |
| 2 | <p><u>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Apologies received from Willie Munro, Heather Cook, CLlr McKelvie No Declarations of Interest</p> |
| 3 | <p><u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 10th September 2020</u></p> <p>The minutes were approved with no changes Proposed: Raymond Swaffield. Seconded: Kate Lumsden</p> |

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| 4 | <p><u>Matters Arising/ Actions Update</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bulletin Manager Role – David advised that this has been drafted and shared with the other office-bearers. Some additional info will be added. 2. Set-up of Micro-soft One-Drive – <i>in progress</i> – We need to prove to Microsoft that WECC are a non-profit-making group. Malcolm advised that Microsoft have rejected our application. It would help if we could find someone in HMRC that could vouch for us, so if anyone has any contacts in HMRC please let Malcolm know. Ann Overton in Area Office may be able to help. If this can't be progressed, there is a free version that may be ok but does not have all the features we were looking for. 3. Re-drafted Constitution- David advised that the Area Office did not agree with all the changes we were seeking to make, but they are minor points. An amended draft has been sent back to Area Office for them to approve it. It will then be sent out to members and it will be on the agenda of 12th November AGM for approval. 4. Community Council Scheme Consultation- Phase 1 is review of CC boundaries & membership numbers. Response required by 16 October. David advised that on reviewing the CC boundaries we realised that the Mason Lodge area was in Echt & Skene CC area. That doesn't look very logical but when we asked Echt & Skene CC if they would allow us to ask for our boundary to be moved they were not supportive of that as their electorate is quite small. We are not now going to be putting in a response to the Consultation on CC boundaries & membership numbers. |
| 5 | <p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>Resident (via email) on public access via Zoom and clarification of Aug Minutes.</p> <p>Mervyn advised that Mr John Imrie asked why we didn't have public participation in our Zoom meetings. Mervyn explained that initially with 21 participants on one Zoom screen we were concerned about our ability to successfully use this technology in itself (individual's access to and ability to use) with an attendant concern about managing an additional unpredictable number of public participants. From the outset we were hoping that with an improving Covid picture (as it was at that time) we would soon be allowed to revert to public meetings at the Holiday Inn, and made repeated, unsuccessful enquiries for access from June onwards but in September, with a deteriorating Covid situation, we decided to trial public participation via Zoom at this (Oct) meeting.</p> <p>John Imrie had also queried a statement in the August minutes under item 14 Hanging Baskets that he had '<i>been happy to hand over the job</i>'. He went on to explain in his email that he had resigned from the role in 2019 due to the way WECC was being organised at that time, and there was no interest in the baskets' project from other members. Mervyn explained that the period he was referring to was around July 20 when John had willingly and helpfully handed over the relevant project files to David, an action the current WECC are grateful for. Our thanks to John.</p> |
| 6 | <p><u>Police Report</u></p> <p>As circulated and appended to minutes. The priorities are still geared towards coronavirus and its fluidity.</p> <p>Main points is that there has not been any House Break-ins in last 2 months, but Public Nuisance incidents have nearly doubled. Extra late shift patrols are being directed to the Crombie Acres area. Advice is given on driving on flooded roads. Serious crime is very low.</p> |

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| 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"> - Very successful September Litter Pick. Included Rotary Club and staff from McDonalds and Tesco. - The joint picks with Rotary Club are continuing, so now 3 picks per month. - A permanent Council bin dedicated to WECC and Rotary use is to be located at Tennis Courts car park. - A “Simple Precautions” document will be provided to the volunteers as it will be more user friendly than a technical Risk Assessment. This will be issued prior to the first pick in 2021 after the winter break. <p>There was discussion on what should be done if syringes and needles are found. None have been found in the many years that the litter picks have been run, but the Precautions document will state that they should never be picked up by members of the pick team. Instead the Pick leader will arrange for Aberdeenshire Council Environmental Health Department to remove them. Another option if there is deemed to be an imminent, serious hazard to public health and he/she deems it safe to do so, will be for the pick leader to put them in a strong, sealed container for controlled disposal.</p> <p>Re the Denman main pond, Ken advised that the reeds growth is extensive again. Froglife cleared out the pond 3 years ago. Steve Gray will get a quote from Froglife to do it again. The Arnhall Moss group have some monies that could be used for this.</p> |
| 8 | <p><u>Carnie Woods Walkway replacement etc.</u></p> <p>Cllr Walker reported the good news that the Aberdeen City Ranger has got funding to repair the worst parts next year. Meanwhile a resident had suggested that the boardwalks being replaced in Stonehaven could be used at Carnie. This has since been discounted by the Carnie Ranger as they will be impregnated with sea salt which will leach out and damage the ecology at Carnie.</p> |
| 9 | <p><u>Communications Group Update</u></p> <p>David has sent photos from sculpture unveiling in May 2019 to Daniel for putting on our new Instagram page. Daniel has also got photos from Skene Heritage group to put on it. Our thanks to Jim Fiddes for providing these</p> <p>The Council ‘Scottish Tech Army’ will be providing free training on online content creation.</p> <p>To help improve Communication, a set of bullet points (Key Point Summary) from the monthly WECC meetings will be circulated and put on the website soon after each meeting.</p> |
| 10 | <p><u>“Walk& Cycle Westhill” Project</u></p> <p>Circulated report from Gordon:-</p> <p><i>Project Team Meeting:</i> <i>the team has been expanded to include 4 officers from Aberdeenshire Council with responsibility for landscape services, roads, cycle lanes and maps, which should ensure that we don’t lose more time against the project plan. A team meeting is overdue to consider signpost specifications, signpost wording, supplier shortlisting, etc. Signpost specification guidance has been sourced from Scottish Natural Heritage with treated Douglas fir/pine/larch currently the preferred option.</i></p> <p><i>Route & signpost positioning:</i> <i>progress has been made on identifying landowners and obtaining consents. Of the 51 signpost locations 19 are believed to be owned/adopted by AC and a formal</i></p> |

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| | <p><i>application based on a photographic survey submitted for approval. Ownership has been identified for all other locations apart from 3; the green lane on the north edge of Meadowlands, the green lane on the south side of Westhill Road, and the copse of woods on the east side of Lawsondale playing fields. Landowner consents have been obtained for 9 of the locations, including the golf club, Broadshades, and the south side of Lawsondale. Contact has been made with all the others apart from Sunnybrae House.</i></p> <p>Community Stakeholders: last month's Bulletin article stimulated a response from 4 members of the community all of whom were supportive and offered assistance, either with voluntary labour or land ownership information. Input from Westhill Bike Club on cycle lanes has been added to our own and forwarded to AC for consideration.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>11</p> | <p><u>Planning Matters</u> (Diane Priestly)</p> <p>Significant Applications from Weekly List- nothing in past month</p> <p>The application for 6 houses and convenience store at Strawberry Field Rd was approved at the GAC meeting on 15th September.</p> <p>The WECC Planning team are still looking at the criteria for evaluating an Application, it should be ready for November.</p> <p>Diane attended yesterday a Scottish Government Consultation on changes to Pre-Application Consultation Requirements. The proposed changes are fairly minor.</p> <p>Cllr Walker advised there are proposed changes to Permitted Development Rights, mainly affecting agricultural buildings. She will pass on the details to Diane.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>12</p> | <p><u>Financials/Payment authorisation requests</u> (Gordon Prentice) - Circulated report:-</p> <p>Matters Arising 10 September meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request to RBS for access to online banking: complete - Bulletin account now visible! • CSF panel vacancy: no members have come forward, so far. <p>Financial Transactions in September</p> <p>Income: £786, comprising £782 in settlement of Autumn Bulletin advertisements plus £4 bank interest.</p> <p>Expenditure: £8,569 comprising £1,804 expenses paid to D Ritchie, £500 donation to Westhill GC agreed last month plus £6,265 to Bulletin printer XIC.</p> <p>Outstanding Commitments: £9,004 comprising £2,030 for Xmas Street Lights [after recovery of £1,750 from AC's Garioch AIF], £526 for Autumn Bulletin honorarium and distribution expenses plus payment to XIC above.</p> <p>Contribution from Bulletin – Autumn Issue: forecast outcome is £2,443 on sales of £9,234.</p> <p>Bank Balances at Month End: £27,513.26</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">- Main Account: £7,570.62</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: right;">Bulletin Account: £19,942.64</td> </tr> </table> <p>Available Funds: Nil, after adjusting for the following specific funds:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">- Outstanding Commitments:</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">£9,004</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Bulletin prepayments [Winter issue]:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£5,117</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Litter Campaign Fund:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£595</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Covid-19 Fund:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£3,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Community Support Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£3,210</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Sculpture Project</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£5,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- General Reserve</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£1,087</td> </tr> </table> | - Main Account: £7,570.62 | Bulletin Account: £19,942.64 | - Outstanding Commitments: | £9,004 | - Bulletin prepayments [Winter issue]: | £5,117 | - Litter Campaign Fund: | £595 | - Covid-19 Fund: | £3,500 | - Community Support Fund | £3,210 | - Sculpture Project | £5,000 | - General Reserve | £1,087 |
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| | <p>Note: General Reserve target reduced to £3,250 following successful applications to Garioch Area Initiative Fund for 50% funding of Sculpture and Xmas Street Lights. Remaining funds from this notional target will cover fixed asset replacements, unforeseen contingencies plus any other projects unknown at this time.</p> <p>Community Support Fund Applications: 3 applications received: from Westhill Tennis Club [court treatment & income support], Milne Hall and Schools Out [both Covid mitigation]. The sub-group seeks approval to award a total of £1,325, leaving a balance of £1,885.</p> <p>Covid-19 Fund Applications: David will propose a donation of £500 to Westhill Community Resilience Support Group. In the absence of further applications, I propose that we should repatriate the remaining balance of this fund to General Funds.</p> <p>Note on Cash flow: Although WECC has been hugely successful in being awarded £30,750 in recent weeks, expenditure must be incurred first and is only recoverable on presentation of receipts. Careful cash flow management is required over the life of these projects.</p> <p>Re the Covid-19 Fund, David explained that “the Westhill Community Resilience Support Group are planning a second delivery to elderly people who didn’t get an afternoon tea in August. Blackhills Court residents have had packs of shortbread delivered, Pitcairn Lodge nursing home will be getting trays of afternoon teas goodies and other residents will be getting an afternoon tea delivered on 29th October. The two churches agreed to fund this phase 2 up to total of £1500. I proposed that WECC could contribute a third of total cost or meet any shortfall from the £1500. No decision has been made on that yet but there is likely to be another gift delivery before Christmas which WECC could help to fund”.</p> <p>The WECC meeting agreed to fund up to £500 from the Covid fund to the Resilience group project and £1325 from the Community Support Fund to the 3 groups as detailed above.</p> |
| <p>13</p> | <p><u>Phoenix Fund Project</u></p> <p>Mervyn advised that our Phoenix Fund project proposal has been awarded the £10,000 grant. The detailed project plan will now be worked with Ben Horsburgh of MAPP. The symbol for the Christmas part of the project will be a Westie dog.</p> |
| <p>14</p> | <p><u>Hanging Baskets/Planting scheme</u></p> <p>The circulated report from Mervyn proposes that in addition to the normal hanging baskets, we could plant up verges and other green spaces. This could be a 5-10 year project , working with other groups Ian Welsh from Landscape Services is supportive of the project.</p> <p>Mervyn will arrange a consultation with the 7 members who have expressed an interest in being involved.</p> <p>Ken suggested that the wildflower area at Denman Park could be converted into a community garden. It is currently a bit of an eyesore.</p> |
| <p>15</p> | <p><u>Editorial Policy/ Concern about Bulletin Article/Advert</u></p> <p>Two members (who do not wish to be identified) expressed concern about the Autumn Bulletin article on Westdyke Community Club (WCC) working with Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust (AFCCT) and Community Food Initiative North East (CFINE) to distribute food parcels over the summer school holidays. The concern was about the article not being clear enough as to who got the food parcels and that we were effectively promoting AFCCT. Mervyn emphasised that the issue here was not the merits or otherwise of the organisations involved but whether or not the article constituted a free advert for those organisations based outwith Westhill.</p> |

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| | <p>Donald Davidson (WECC and WCC associate) who was directly involved in the food distribution gave a full account of what was distributed to whom and where by whom. Donald also reminded members that in June he had contacted us all via Whats App to say that Westdyke Community Club were looking for potential families, vulnerable or elderly people to deliver CFINE food parcels to.</p> <p>There was unanimous agreement that there was good evidence that the food parcels were widely and primarily distributed around Westhill by adults and children from WCC and the Bulletin article did not constitute a covert advert. Similarly another advert about an entirely separate commercial organisation, which contained numerous AFCCT symbols was unanimously agreed to not constitute a covert advert for them.</p> <p>During the discussions it emerged that some 7-8 separate organisations are currently involved in food distribution in Westhill and surrounding area such as Elrick, Skene and Garlogie and that not everyone or every organisation is aware of what the others do and how they fit together.</p> <p>Given that Covid looks like its going to get worse before it gets better, and the need for food distribution will likely increase; and in the interest of promoting better understanding of the organisations involved and fostering possible synergies between them, Mervyn proposed that as soon as circumstances permit, we invite AFCCT, WCC and CFINE to attend our meetings to tell us what they do to help those in need. .</p> <p>Another member raised a concern that WECC are accepting adverts from companies offering services that may pose unacceptable risks to readers’ health – namely sun beds. The quandary is that these are not illegal.</p> <p>To help in vetting any adverts or articles that may be controversial. Mervyn has proposed that a Bulletin Editorial Board be set up and asked for 2 volunteers to be on the Editorial Board along with David as Bulletin Manager). Mandy & Daniel volunteered. The initial remit will be to review the draft editorial policy that Mervyn has written and apply it to the sunbed issue. The full intent will ultimately be that whatever is published in the Bulletin or on our digital media, will be authentic (no covert adverts) and that all adverts and articles will be moral, ethical, legal and apolitical.</p> |
| 16 | <p><u>Sculpture Improvement works</u></p> <p>Mervyn confirmed that the application to the Garioch Area Initiatives Fund for up to £5000 matched funding for the sculpture works was approved in September.</p> <p>Nicol of Skene will do the paths work and NE Hard Landscaping will do the granite setts round the earth borders, all work to be completed before end of this year.</p> |
| 17 | <p><u>A2B dial-a-bus stoppage</u></p> <p>CLlr Walker advised that the A2B service for Westhill will be restarting on 3rd November. A petition had been set up by Echt & Skene CC, which was signed by many Westhill service users.</p> |
| 18 | <p><u>Nominations for vacancy/ Co-option of Mr Giancarlo Pia</u></p> <p>David advised that the vacancy had been advertised but Giancarlo Pia was the only nominee at this point. When his nomination was accepted we did not realise that his Leddach House address was just out with our CC boundary. Mr Pia has been advised that he can join Echt & Skene CC as they have vacancies.</p> <p>A vacancy still exists therefore so if you know of anyone who might be interested in improving the quality of life in Westhill please contact the WECC secretary on secretx@gmail.com</p> |

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| 19 | <p><u>Christmas Lights</u> (David Ritchie)- report as circulated:- <i>In August, 10 lights that needed some refurbishment were sent back to Blachere Illumination in Fife. That work cost £1,174. There should be little or no refurbishments required in 2021.</i></p> <p><i>There was no lights put up at the Tesco roundabout in 2019 as they are larger than the Council now allow.</i></p> <p><i>We were accepted recently for a Council grant of 50% of cost of new lights up to maximum grant of £1750, so order has been placed for 8 smaller new lights for Tesco roundabout and 4 replacements for Westhill Drive. Total cost is £3780 so net cost after grant of £1750 is £2030.</i></p> <p><i>The shopping centre will allow us to put up 3 of the old Tesco roundabout lights on the 3 tall columns in car park. Installation of the sockets and brackets on the columns should be done soon by a contractor who are due to be replacing the bulbs. There will be no cost to us for that work.</i></p> <p><i>The annual Pat Testing of the lights by a couple of guys from Men Shed was done in September and we have got permission from the Council to put the lights up. I will be arranging for them to go up in the week of 16th November. FES Ltd normally help us to erect them (no cost) so only a few helpers from our own ranks are required to help move the lights etc.</i></p> |
| 20 | <p><u>Ward 13 Councillors Updates</u> Main points from circulated reports, not covered already:</p> <p>Cllr Mckail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council is increasing funding of ‘early years’ services from 900 hrs to 1140 hrs per annum • Swimming Pool has reopened after lot of cleaning and painting • Still an issue on Carnie estate re standard of ground maintenance work carried out by the Greenbelt subcontractors for which the residents have to pay a large annual fee • Council is facing a deficit budget of up to £60 million, so savings & cuts will be required. <p>Cllr Walker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies are being developed for Allotments and Food Growing. This should tie-in well with our Planting Scheme thoughts. • Main points from the Community Impact Assessment focusing on the effects of lockdown were concerns on access to health care, but people reported enjoying spending more time with their families and being more active during lockdown. Community groups were not able to generate income, had faced challenges in sourcing supplies, and there was an increase in pressure on volunteers <p>Cllr Aitchison</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More assistance linked to the resilience and recovery fund has been announced by the Scottish Government. Officers intend to use these additional monies in an Aberdeenshire wide approach to assist marketing and support a digital approach. Hopefully along with other town centre focused funds this will target a sustainable and long term approach to help our town centres adapt to the changed situation which is likely to last for some time. |
| 21 | <p><u>Date of Next Meeting-</u> 12th November, after the AGM</p> |

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GARIOCH COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE

Community Council: Westhill and Elrick

Reporting Period: September 2020

Previous Reporting Period: August

Current Policing Priorities:

Our current priorities have been geared towards the current situation in relation to coronavirus and the fluidity of this national issue.

Anti- Social Behaviour – Intelligence gathering, working with partners and robust action to target those involved in ASB in community

DRUGS: Intelligence gathering and disruption tactics to target those dealing drugs and related violence

ROAD SAFETY: Preventative measures and enforcement action to ensure our roads are safe to use.

Crime Overview and Explanation:

| CRIME TYPE | CURRENT PERIOD Sept | PREVIOUS PERIOD Aug |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Assault | 1 | 2 |
| House Breaking | 0 | 0 |
| Public Nuisance | 19 | 11 |
| Road Traffic | 6 | 6 |
| Drugs | 0 | 1 |

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 Offences (speeding, illegal parking, obstruction etc).

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

Assault – 1 – child on child detected

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Public Nuisance – 19 - these range from youth calls to drunk adults and noisy parties. Numerous calls from Crombie Acres area and where possible late shifts are patrolling to negate issues.

Road Traffic – 6- drink driver and collisions. We are receiving more roads calls but these are the only ones where we have traced vehicles etc as we have obtained registration numbers or attended actual collisions. We do receive a number of complaints where we receive no registration numbers so tracing drivers is impossible.

Drugs – nil

Significant crime/issues within your community:

We have been fortunate in that the only assault was child on child. We have attended a number of domestic incidents which involve communications or verbal disturbances. Your public nuisance calls have indicated a large proportion of youth calls in Crombie Acres area and we are, when possible allocating local units to patrol the area.

Planned Community Policing Activity/Advice:

There is a planned speed awareness campaign and this will coincide with pre winter campaign.

As has been seen recently we have had torrential rain and this has caused various roads issues from single vehicle RTCs to roads being closed that are flooded.

I would urge the public to follow two strict safety guidelines:-

- 1) Do not drive through council road closed signs. These are red and white and therefore prohibitive and contraventions of this signage can be dealt with by way of formal action and reporting to the PF. Only those who need to access a specific property will be afforded a right to head to their home or place of work. The signs are there to protect motorists.
- 2) If you come to a flooded stretch of road do not assume that the water is shallow and drive into it. Consider finding an alternate route and contact the council or police on 101. Entering flood water is dangerous ; generally culverts lift and displace so a vehicle wheel may drop into one causing the vehicle to stop progress, dip on that side and invariably start to flood the vehicle. If persons get marooned in such water, wading out also has its dangers, also stepping into an unseen lifted culvert could cause severe injury.

Conclusion:

As can be seen the more serious crimes are very low and as such the community as a whole should be happy that it is a safe area in which to reside.

Anti-social behaviour is an issue currently and we will, when detected, report those involved with breaches of the peace and any other offences that come to light.

When it comes to youth disorder, we hope that parents and guardians at this time with COVID restrictions will question the whereabouts of offspring more robustly as out with school, if they are found in groups above those permitted, there is the option for formal action to be taken. However this is the last option. We request that our youth community consider the impact of their actions on their immediate and close family in that confirmed COVID cases in Scotland are increasing daily and we all have a responsibility to protect each other.