



Westhill & Elrick
Community Council

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD ON THURSDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2020 (VIA ZOOM)

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

Members of Public

Audrey Findlay, Freda Imrie

1	<p><u>Welcome and opening remarks</u></p> <p>Chair Mervyn Barr opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He invited the two members of public to participate in discussions if they wished. Permission was granted to record the meeting.</p> <p>Secretary David Ritchie reminded members that this is the AGM that was due to be held in June but due to the Coronavirus pandemic the Area Office had advised all CCs in April that AGMs could be postponed to October as it was hoped that by then physical meetings could be held again. We delayed our AGM by a further month but it still has to be held via Zoom.</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies</u></p> <p>Apologies received from Willie Munro, Daniel Hay, Kate Lumsden</p>
3	<p><u>Approval of Minutes of AGM held on 12th March 2020</u></p> <p>This was the first meeting of the new WECC, following the election process in February. The minutes were taken by Alison Cumming. The minutes were approved. Proposed: Gordon Prentice. Seconded: Ken Stewart</p>



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4 **Consideration of WECC's Annual Report**

Mervyn read out the below report, prepared by himself and reviewed by the other office-bearers

Buildings and Begonias

Historically WECC has enjoyed a very good reputation as an effective representative body for the community of Westhill that currently has more than 4000 households. Its effectiveness arose mainly from strong community spirit and leadership originating back in the days of the Westhill & District Residents Association that pioneered the Westhill Bulletin, Litter-picks and hanging basket and Christmas lights displays. When statutory consultative bodies (i.e. Community Councils) were established in the 1990s it was a natural evolution to create the Community Council from the existing Residents Association, though the conversion was not implemented till 2007. So if some of you, who are getting to know WECC for the first time, are wondering why a consultative body also plants begonias, therein lies the answer.

Acting for all

Ever since its inception Westhill has undergone continual growth and change. It could currently be characterised in three main sectors; a friendly and harmonious residential community; a vibrant retail sector and a busy industrial estate; all three of which, despite the oil and gas downturn, continue to attract interest and expansion. Against that busy backdrop WECC seeks to represent these sectors in the order described, with primary emphasis on community interests along with a strong will to support retail and industrial interests, as after all these are where the jobs and prosperity exist for current and future generations.

Planning For The Common Good

The main official role for WECC is to act as a statutory consultee on planning and development matters, though since the advent of Covid-19 coupled with the economic downturn, things have been quiet on both these fronts this year. That said WECC have reviewed and commented on both the Shire and City Local Development Plans and re-established a protocol for evaluation of local planning applications, to help ensure consistency in our approach. Another significant planning development is the advent of the Westhill Strategic Needs Assessment, published in March this year by Aberdeenshire Council. As the name implies, this is a very informative document that considers the needs of various demographics and sectors within the town and is something we will be putting to good use in assessing future Planning Applications.

Donations to Good Causes

WECC continues to generate funds mainly through advertising sales in the Westhill Bulletin. This year we have used these to distribute £4615 through our Community Support Fund and our Covid Relief Fund to local good causes in the first instance - and to those who have suffered significant revenue loss through Covid.

Community Projects

Regarding funding from the Shire Council, I am delighted to report success in obtaining funds totalling £30750 for four projects; the marking-out of a 10 km Orbital Path, finishing off our Gateway Sculpture, replacement of Christmas Lights and stimulating footfall in our town centre via the Phoenix Fund.

Team Effort

Finally I'd like to thank all those who have worked hard to help in the relaunch of WECC. I believe it has been a really successful team effort and I look forward to working with both fellow Community Councillors and elected Councillors, in achieving further successes.



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	<p>There were no questions on the report.</p>
5	<p><u>Noting of the independently verified Statement of Accounts for year ended 31 March 2020</u> Mervyn pointed out that these circulated accounts are for the last financial year of the previous WECC, so intention is just to Note them. They have already been presented at the WECC May 2020 meeting, whilst they were being reviewed by the independent verifier.</p>
6	<p><u>Election of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary & Treasurer</u> Mervyn pointed out that the office-bearer appointments at the March AGM were interim appointments with intention that they be made full appointments at the June AGM, which has been postponed to now. Cllr Iris Walker took over as the meeting chairperson temporarily. She sought nominations for WECC Chair. Mervyn Barr was nominated by Raymond Swaffield, seconded by Heather Cook. There was no further nomination and Mervyn confirmed he was happy to carry on so was elected as Chair. Mervyn then sought nominations for Treasurer. Gordon Prentice was nominated by Raymond Swaffield, seconded by Ken Stewart. Gordon confirmed he was happy to carry on so was elected as Treasurer. Mervyn then sought nominations for Secretary. David Ritchie was nominated by Gordon Prentice, seconded by Diane Priestley. David confirmed he was happy to carry on so was elected as Secretary. Mervyn then sought nominations for Vice-Chair. Willie Munro was nominated by Gordon Prentice, seconded by Raymond Swaffield. Willie had confirmed he was happy to carry on so was elected as Vice-Chair. Audrey Findlay queried if there was a Minutes Secretary position. Mervyn explained that we did have a minute taker initially in the new WECC but he had to stop due to work pressure, so David Ritchie agreed to do it as part of the Secretary role. The meetings are recorded to ensure accuracy of the minutes.</p>
7	<p><u>Approval of Annual Budget for year to March 2021 (as circulated)</u> WECC hasn't had an Annual Budget before, but it is required per the AGM in Constitution. Gordon went over the circulated budget, mainly looking at the project summary part. There is a total projected deficit of £10,200, but there is ample reserves to cover that. The budget was approved by David, seconded by Hilary.</p>
8	<p><u>Approval of updated Constitution</u> The secretary David Ritchie explained that the current constitution is essentially the model one per the 2018 Scheme of Establishment. It was reviewed by a sub-group of the previous WECC in early 2019. A number of changes to improve clarity and to sort inconsistencies between the main part and standing orders appendix were prepared. This work was put on hold when WECC went into supported status in April 2019. The current office bearers reviewed the changes earlier this year and came up with a few additional changes. The Area Office has approved the majority of the changes. The proposed updated constitution has been circulated. It now requires to be approved by members. Approval was proposed by Hilary, seconded by Gordon. Unanimous approval was then obtained by a show of hands.</p>
9	<p><u>Guest Speaker – Ben Horsburgh, Shopping Centre Manager</u> Mervyn introduced Ben. Ben was appointed by Mapp as the first onsite shopping centre manager in November 2019. Mervyn commented that Ben has made a very positive contribution.</p>



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	<p>Ben outlined his background, mainly in health & safety. The Centre had a number of health & safety issues which needed to be fixed. Ben reckoned that major progress has been achieved. The Phoenix Fund project has helped to improve relations with residents. His door is always open for raising any issues. More signs have been put up, potholes fixed and measures made to stop youths climbing on to the roof. It is planned to put seating in the area where the raised bed used to be (near Storie, Cruden & Simpson) Re cash machines, one will be installed in the Co-op soon and it is hoped to put one on wall at side of Greggs. Re litter, Ben advised that there has been a large increase this year but they are trying to keep on top of it. Working with the Academy to help reduce it. There is no requirement in the shop leases for the tenants to keep their area clean. New bins with waste & recycling sections should be coming soon. More disabled car park spaces will be put in when the relining is done. It is not likely now that the canopies in the area near M&S will be removed. The Covid situation has delayed a number of improvements. Re car parking fines, Ben gets them cancelled if receipts etc can be produced to show that the driver has been shopping at the centre.</p>
10	<u>Close of Meeting.</u> Meeting closed at 8.02, and the normal monthly meeting started at 8.15pm.