

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 9TH SEPTEMBER 2021 AT HOLIDAY INN

Community Council		
Name	Position	Present
Mervyn Barr	Chair	✓
Malcolm Collie	Member	✓
Heather Cook	Member	✓
Donald Davidson	Member	✓ via zoom
Becky Ferguson	Member	✓
Audrey Findlay	Member	x
Ben Horsburgh	Associate Member	x
Kate Lumsden	Member	✓
Alan McCue	Member	✓
William Munro	Vice-Chair	✓ via zoom
Gordon Prentice	Treasurer	✓
Diane Priestley	Member	✓
Justin Reid	Member	x
David Ritchie	Secretary	✓
Ken Stewart	Member	✓
Raymond Swaffield	Member	✓
Tim Yeomans	Member	✓ via zoom
CLlr David Aitchison	Ward 13 Councillor	✓ via zoom
CLlr Iris Walker	Ward 13 Councillor	✓ via zoom
CLlr Ron McKail	Ward 13 Councillor	✓
CLlr Alistair McKelvie	Ward 13 Councillor	✓ via zoom

Members of Public Freda Imrie (via zoom), Mr & Mrs Bradford, Westhill in Bloom winners

1	<p>Welcome and opening remarks</p> <p>Chair Mervyn Barr opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, including the Westhill in Bloom winners. We agreed to try to improve the Zoom facility to be more inclusive of those “Zooming in”</p>
2	<p>Presentation to Westhill in Bloom winners</p> <p>David Ritchie presented the trophies, gift vouchers and certificates as follows:-</p> <p>Front garden:</p> <p>1st - Ian & Freda Dickson, Kirkton Gdns. , 2nd - Alan Crane, Arnhall Drive Highly commended – Bill & Eddie Loudon, Lawsondale Drive, Mr & Mrs Ferguson, Westwood Drive Mrs Mcrae, Westwood Drive</p> <p>Back garden:</p> <p>1st - Mr & Mrs Ferguson, Westwood Drive, 2nd – George Murray, Morven Circle Highly commended: Alan Michie, Gullymoss Gdns</p> <p>Containers:</p> <p>1st- Ian & Freda Dickson, Kirkton Gdns, 2nd- Donald Chalmers, Westwood Drive</p> <p>Communal space/street –</p> <p>1st WECC for Planters & Hanging Baskets at shopping centre corner & roundabout (trophy presented to Ken Stewart), 2nd Trinity Church</p>

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	Overall winner: Ian & Freda Dickson, Kirkton Gdns
3	<p><u>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u> Apologies received from Audrey Findlay No Declarations of Interest</p>
4	<p><u>Police Scotland- Chief Inspector Gareth Hannan</u> Mervyn had contacted Chief Inspector Gareth Hannan to express concern about the recent higher levels of juvenile criminality in Westhill, namely anti-social behaviours, shoplifting, criminal damage, and harassment of certain persons. Gareth had sent a comprehensive reply and agreed to attend this WECC meeting.</p> <p>Mervyn welcomed Gareth and invited him to address the meeting.</p> <p>Gareth outlined that in his role as the Local Policing Inspector for Garioch, he is directly responsible for all operational policing matters (or at least the initial response to all such matters) in Garioch. This includes Community related issues and the response to critical/ongoing incidents. At a recent meeting with the Westhill Men's Shed, he was described as the Policing equivalent of a GP and this is an accurate analogy. His team responds and deals with all ongoing incidents such as Assaults, Road Accidents, and Thefts and provides the initial policing response to all major incidents such as Serious Assaults, Serious Sexual Crime and Fatal Road Accidents. They also deal with all issues that affect the community such as ASB, Neighbour Disputes and speeding etc. Garioch police has 40 constables, plus 6 sergeants and they provide reports to 9 community councils.</p> <p>Gareth thinks the phrase 'Community Policing Team', should be changed to the 'Team that Polices Your Community'.</p> <p>They were aware of a small spike in youth related disorder during lockdown. This led to a multi-agency meeting which determined there had been a small increase in the volume of related calls (up by about 4-6 calls per week when compared to pre-lockdown figures) but following on from an increase in police patrols, this spike had been reduced back to 'normal' levels.</p> <p>They had increased patrols over the last two weekends. This appears to have had some effect and there have been no instances of youth disorder reported to us in the last 7 days. Officers on patrol took alcohol from a group of 10 youths two weekends ago and removed a stereo from a group of youths in Largs Park this weekend. Gareth had tasked his sergeants to ensure that these patrols continue, but they are subject to other operational demands and the requirement to attend ongoing/emergency incidents.</p> <p>Gareth receives twice weekly reports detailing all Youth Related Incidents and ASB within Garioch. These reports are made up from information provided by the Police, Fire and Rescue and Council and allow for all incidents reported to these agencies to be seen on the one document. In terms of Westhill there has been very little activity of late, and nothing reported to us in the last 7 days.</p> <p>Gareth emphasised that the public need to report ongoing incidents direct to the police at the time of occurrence, via 101 or Contactus@scotland.pnn.police.uk. Any incident where there is risk to life or property should be reported via 999. The Police station in Westhill is now manned during the day, not by Community Police officers, but they will take details and pass them on</p> <p>Re sanctions against youth offenders, there is now a focus on diversion and education for offenders under the age of 17. Anyone under the age of 17 is, once charged, referred to the Youth Justice Management Unit for a decision as how to proceed. Decisions can range from Social Work involvement, Diversionary Activities</p>

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	<p>(sign-posting them to activates of interest such as football to deter their criminal offending), referral to the Children's Panel and in the case of 16-17 year olds, for the case to be passed to the Procurator Fiscal for serious crimes or where it requires points to be added to a Drivers Licence. Such matters are entirely out with the hands of his team, once a person has been charged.</p> <p>When his team find any youths engaged in ASB, they do note their names and pass on to an Early Intervention Police Officer. He arranges for letters to be sent to parents advising them of the circumstances in which we encountered their child. This has proven to be effective, but only in circumstances where parents are prepared to take responsibility for the actions of their child, which happens far more often than not in Westhill. Should we have any specific information as to the identities of those involved then please let me know, so I can pass this on and have them dealt with accordingly.</p> <p>Re Community Beat Officers (CBO) for Garioch, PC James Stewart is the CBO and has now been joined by PC Chris Williamson. Their remit is to deal with issues that affect the communities and includes, but not limited to, ASB, Speeding and Community Engagement. If WECC wish to contact the Police we should contact our designated Sgt (Sgt Graeme Allan) in the first instance. He can then direct the Community Officers to deal with any issues as they are reported.</p> <p>Mervyn raised a point re classification of incidents in the monthly police reports. E.G. there was a sexual assault in May but the report said there was no serious crimes. Gareth explained that 'Sexual Assault' relates to a number of offences. This particular incident involved a drunk male inappropriately touching a female known to him and he has been charged. Further clarification could have been given in the report in respect of this incident and Sgt Allan provides will provide clarification on such matters in the future to alleviate any concerns.</p> <p>Cllr Walker asked if there had been any feedback from the public engagement event on Sunday at Largs Park, where around 30 residents spoke to the two CBOs James & Chris. Gareth advised the incidents at Largs Park were youth ASB causing annoyance with low levels of criminality. Police will monitor the situation.</p> <p>Mervyn thanked Gareth for giving up time in his busy schedule and for his informative and useful talk.</p> <p>(During Gareth's talk a member of the public raised a personal concern about antisocial behaviours towards them and Gareth gave advice on how to the matter could be addressed)</p>
5	<p><u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 12th August 2021</u></p> <p>The minutes were approved. Proposed: Ken Stewart Seconded: Raymond Swaffield</p>
6	<p>Matters Arising/ Actions Update</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set-up of Micro-soft One-Drive or other options – Malcolm advised he has set up a MS Teams drive and also a Google drive for sharing files. Looking for volunteers to try these out before deciding which one to use 2. Seating for Denman park—Heather advised that at the meeting on Tuesday with Landscape services at Denman Park re a number of topics, Ian Mitchell confirmed that we can put in more benches. The Council can order them on our behalf to get a discount, and the Council will install them. David advised we won't be putting more seating in shopping centre as Mapp are planning to do that themselves. This means we can buy 4 good quality benches made from recycled plastic for the park, including a picnic

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	<p>table bench. The remaining Phoenix funding is £1600. Approval was given to spend up to £2000 on the benches.</p> <p>If the process of ordering through Council goes well, we can advise residents that we can help them get a memorial bench.</p>
7	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request from James Cruickshank for WECC to maintain John Anderson’s gravestone at Skene Church John Anderson was the chap who bought the adjoining estates of Wester Kinmundy and Blackhills in 1859 and renamed the area as Westhill. James Cruickshank says his gravestone is at Skene Church and is asking if we can maintain it. It was agreed that we should not follow this up as Skene Church is not in our CC area. Also Mervyn had checked with local historian Jim Fiddes and the John Anderson buried at Skene Church is a different John Anderson, and not the one who assigned the name Westhills, who is buried at Strichen. Mervyn will advise James of this. • Vinespring Church to financially support the Westhill Litter pick group on an on-going basis. Vinespring Church (pastor is Chika Edey) wishes to donate £50 per month to the litter-picking. Mervyn has thanked Chika. Raymond advised we have sufficient sets of equipment just now but the kit bought by Rotary just 2 years ago is not in good shape. We could offer to buy Rotary some new kit. • Review of August correspondence log David advised that Willie had suggested that a general correspondence log would be useful to share with members so David created the August list which has been circulated. When the shared drive is up & running we can check if the correspondence can be copied to there.
8	<p><u>Environmental Group Update</u></p> <p>Report from Raymond has been circulated, as below in italics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Our twice monthly organised Litter Picks have continued as planned. The decision to split the start points, with Rotary Group starting at one or two points near Carnie Woods and WECC at Denman, has been a success and we will continue with this plan.</i> • <i>We have made contact with Anna Martin, of Starbucks Community Team. Starbucks are keen to help out with our Litter Picking, but are currently short staffed and will send staff to help out when able to do so. We have been invited to meet with our contact at the premises, to explain WECC and the objectives of the Environment group.</i> • <i>We have had no further contact from the Industrial estate company who tentatively suggested that they could help out in some way.</i> • <i>Tesco staff who attend our picks have said that they are keen to try to encourage better littering discipline in Academy pupils. As a recent ex-pupil of the school, one of the group felt that she may be able to influence pupils in this respect with more effect than a more elderly person lecturing to them, and she has offered to approach the school with the intention of addressing pupils. We welcomed this offer and hope that she will be granted a slot at the school.</i>

	<p>Cllr Walker raised a point about the Rotary collecting litter in Carnie area but the factors duties for that area includes collecting litter. Raymond pointed out the Aldi car park is supposed to be done by a contractor but is mainly done by our pickers. Same for Academy playing fields.</p> <p>Suggested that Raymond includes in the website/facebook notices re upcoming picks that residents advise us of areas that need cleaned up.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p><u>Orbital Trail Project Update</u> Report from Gordon has been circulated, as below in italics:</p> <p><i>Official Launch</i> <i>Autumn Issue of Westhill Bulletin featured a map and links to sources of a digital version. A Press Release was issued, but so far not published. Starbucks manager has expressed interest in taking leaflets. Information Boards in town Centre: a meeting was held with Ben Horsburgh last week and we agreed 6 possible locations to locate maps of the town that include WOT. One resident has reported that the measurement of the route around Hay's Way is incorrect. GP has committed to checking and reporting the correct measures for the next edition.</i></p> <p><i>Bulb Planting</i> <i>Recent meetings with Rotary have confirmed the offer that some will be planted at the picnic table on top of Mains of Kinmundy Hill and some at the Gateway Sculpture. Over 1,000 have been purchased for our own use to plant around all 50 or so waymarker post locations, and we aim to commence planting in October with the assistance of volunteers, and possibly primary school pupils, subject to a review by AC's Ranger. Subsea 7 have offered to help with Trail maintenance so could also help with bulb planting.</i></p> <p><i>Landowner Activity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>strip of woodland on eastern boundary of Lawsondale: awaiting confirmation from AC</i> • <i>Access to Hill of Keir: Chair visited Berryhill Farm on Tuesday and secured the farmer's agreement to erect a stile over the stone dyke once it is reinstated. Stile to be manufactured by The Men's Shed at an estimated cost of £200.</i> • <i>Ashdale Land & Property's agent has promised to keep me posted with regards to the anticipated batch disposal of a number of slivers of land in and around Westhill, some of which might have community interest. This could take several months</i> <p><i>Correspondence since last month's meeting</i> <i>We have received three further communications in the last week from residents complaining of being harassed and abused in the Sclattiebrae area – no longer part of the WOT. All were encouraged to report the incidents to the police, if they felt threatened or intimidated and in any event refer their complaint – in one case about the gate also being locked - to the Local Access Officer.</i></p> <p><i>Chair is planning to write to Area Manager to request a debrief meeting with relevant council officials to discuss lessons learned.</i></p> <p><i>Funding Update</i> <i>As per the Project report, £1,755 of the £14,000 funding is uncommitted but we have until September 2022 to deploy this on stiles, benches, bulbs and possibly a strimmer for ongoing Trail clearing.</i></p>
<p>10</p>	<p><u>Planning Matters</u> (Diane Priestly) Low number of planning applications.</p>

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	<p>Caroline Smith has still not got in touch re the Community Action Plan. At the recent Garioch CC Forum we were advised that the person who used to help with CAPs is no longer available. Cllr Walker confirmed that the Garioch Area Partnership will not now help to co-ordinate CAPs. Ann Overton is trying to get a resource to help, but Echt and Skene CC are due to be helped before us.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Financials (Gordon Prentice) Circulated report in italics:- <i>Matters Arising 12 August:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Support Fund: <i>Induction pack sent to Tim Yeomans; one sub-group vacancy remaining [2-3 hours, 3 times a year]</i> • Cashflow Forecast: <i>on hold</i> • Possible External Funding Sources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Request to “Help for Community Groups” for manpower and materials to combat flooding and drainage issues at Lawsondale – still outstanding.</i> <p>Financial Transactions – August: <i>Income: £570, comprising first £50 monthly ring-fenced donation from Vinespring Church to assist the litter-picking group, plus £520 Bulletin advertising income.</i> <i>Expenditure: £2,249.96, clearing the two commitments listed last month.</i> <i>Outstanding Commitments: £1,617, comprising £917 honorarium payments to D Ritchie [July & Aug], plus circa £500 reimbursement of expenses due to the Chair, plus £200 order for WECC signs. These costs were approved.</i> Bulletin – Summer Issue Contribution: <i>£2,693 from income of £9,127, comparing favourably to our budgeted contribution of £2,500.</i> <i>Small debt claim for £190: still chasing an explanation for this surprising ruling.</i> Bank Balances at Month End: <i>£27,737 [after cheques cleared]</i> <i>Main Account: £10,870</i> <i>Bulletin Account: £16,867</i></p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Denman Park ponds/ Green Canopy project Meeting was held on 7th Sept at Denman Park with Landscape Services and Environment Dept. This was principally to discuss maintenance options for the Ponds. Other projects were also discussed.</p> <p>Denman Park ponds - Ponds could be cleared manually or using a digger but that could damage the banks. In addition to the clearing work there is 2 other aspects:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a bridge across the bottom weir and an extended walkway on the South side, graded and surfaced (tar/dust), suitable for push/wheelchair access. Est £10K. Ian Mitchell to prepare plan. 2. In the interests of a longer term, more sustainable solution, the installation of a treatment pond to filter contaminants is the preferred option. Located above existing top pond. Est £10k. The Arnhall Moss Group will be approached to fund a technical report costing around £1800. If such funds are available, Steve Gray to oversee the Project and Tamsin Morris to be approached to develop the technical report. <p>To fund all this work an application can be made to Town Centre’s Fund. This will require a project scope and costings to be completed by December 21.</p> <p>Payment of £300 + vat to Tamsin Morris for the preliminary report was approved.</p> <p>Wildflower planting- There are some areas in Denman Park we would like to seed with wildflower seed mixes and possibly other areas that could be turned into clover lawn. To avoid duplication or seeded areas being cut,</p>

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	<p>it has been suggested that we agree with LS on what these areas could be, and get them marked on a map. MB/KS/IM to source map and make proposal to Oct meeting on areas for seeding.</p> <p>Queen’s Jubilee – Green Canopy Project (GCP) two GCP options – (1) planting a copse of hazelnut trees in Denman Park and there are various areas including a south facing slope near the Compass that will be suitable. (2) some urban trees on the verge beside the A944 between the Tesco Roundabout and beyond Starbucks, towards the traffic lights – up to the county boundary at the Brodiach Burn – possibly on both sides and middle of the dual carriageway. If agreed we can apply to the council to name this section of the road Jubilee Drive. WECC members approved both these projects. Keen to hear of any plans the Shire Council have and to determine how we can work together with LS to progress things.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p><u>Ward 13 Councillors updates</u> Cllr Mckelvie- main points from circulated report:- Elrick Primary School plan to celebrate its 40th anniversary in spring 2022 with various events. They will also do some wildflower and fruit tree planting. Elrick school roof has been replaced. Roads around the town have been resurfaced, including Kinmundy Drive and Hilltop. The car park at Loch of Skene has been closed off by Dunecht Estate for some time. This is preventing people parking there to use the paths around the loch. Council officers are looking into this. Cllr Walker advised there has been issues on Dunecht Estate with vandalism, fires, items stolen, rubbish & upheaval to residents there. Cllr Walker -An Outdoor Access policy update is being reviewed by the Garioch Area committee next week. (David to pass the link to Gordon to review it) -Road marking at Tesco roundabout to be improved -ASB at Westdyke/Largs park. Police patrols need to be continued. Ann Overton has been asked a for multi-agency action plan. - LDP- Seven reporters have been appointed to examine the LDP. Cllr Mckail - The Speed Monitoring Device purchased some years ago is still needing to be fixed. Police are not planning to sort it so suggested that the Men Shed could look at it.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>AOB Mervyn advised that Heather Cook did not get the Inspiring Aberdeenshire Award. It was a tough competition with several worthy nominees and well done to Heather for making the shortleet. Training events for new members on 29/9 and 6/10- names to David by 21/9. Potential new member name will attend October meeting</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Close of Meeting Meeting closed at 10.10pm Date of Next Meeting- 14th October, at 7pm, at Holiday Inn and via Zoom</p>

APPENDIX

**GARIOCH COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM
VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE**

Community Council: Westhill and Elrick

Reporting Period: August 2021

Previous Reporting Period: July 2021

Current Policing Priorities:

Our current priorities have changed in response to emerging crime patterns and are as follows:

1. ASB – Proactive patrols to provide community reassurance and to deter and detect instances of ASB and Vandalism.
2. DRUGS – Intel gathering and disruption tactics to target those dealing drugs and related violence.
3. ROAD SAFETY – Preventative measures and enforcement action to ensure our roads are safe to use.



Crime Overview and Explanation:

CRIME TYPE	CURRENT PERIOD	PREVIOUS PERIOD
Assault	1 crimefiles	6 Crimefile
House Breaking	0	0
Public Nuisance	12 incidents	13 incidents
Road Traffic	4 crimefile, 7 incidents	8 crimefiles 7 incidents
Drugs	0	2
Fraud	0	4

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.

Fraud (NEW) – all different types of Frauds reported

This reporting period has seen

Assaults – After the spike of assaults in July, the 1 assault was where a local 16 year old got assaulted by a youth of similar age. There were no serious injuries and enquiries are ongoing to trace the suspect.

Housebreaking – none

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Public Nuisance – Similar numbers as July with only 12 reports. All of the reports were of youths gathering in different areas of Westhill with most reported on a Friday or Saturday evenings.

Road Traffic Offences – Slight reduction from July with 1 of the crimefiles relate to driving with no insurance, 1 for drug driving, 1 for failing to provide a roadside breath test and the other one was for minor incident.

3 of the incidents related to minor non injury collisions and the rest related to minor issues.

Drugs None

Fraud None

Significant crime/issues within your community:

Nothing of note

Planned Community Policing Activity/Advice:

We will continue to patrol the Westhill community tackling youth annoyance. We try and have a dedicated unit for Westhill on a Friday and Saturday evening. Various youths have been traced as a result of these patrols and this is being supported by the residents calling in ongoing issues. We will continue to take robust action to target these individuals.

On 2 July, speed checks were done on the top and bottom of Westhill Drive with 1 driver warned regarding their speed.

Conclusion:

Overall no serious crime was committed in Westhill but it is good to see the number of Public Nuisance calls have not increased too much.