

Westhill & Elrick Community Council

Minutes of the Community Council Meeting held on Thursday 10th September 2009 at the Holiday Inn, Westhill

Chair: Stewart Whyte, Deputy Chair: Ian Forsyth, Secretary: Beryl Menzies, Treasurer: David Ritchie,
Minutes Secretary: Heather Robertson

Present: **Committee:** Stewart Whyte (Chair), Ian Forsyth (Deputy Chair), Beryl Menzies (Secretary), David Ritchie (Treasurer), Heather Robertson (Minutes), Christian Allard, Audrey Findlay, Ian Knapton, Bill Loudon, John Menzies, Maureen Strachan, Iris Walker

Approx. 20 residents attended

Councillors: Cllr. McKail, Cllr. Saluja

	Item	Action/ Attention
1	<u>Chairman's Opening Remarks</u> Stewart Whyte welcomed all those present to the meeting, and talked about how much he admires Westhill as a community, and how proud he was to be Chairman of the Community Council.	
2	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Heather Wood, Beryl Burbidge, PC Amanda Whyte, Julian Maude (Tesco), Cllr. Cullen, Cllr. Allan, Becky Menzies, Angela Allan (Aberdeenshire Council).	
3	<u>Approval Of Minutes Of Previous Meeting</u> Item 11b: Should be amended to read that the Westhill CAB is only in the process of becoming a limited company, rather than has achieved this already.	
4	<u>Election of Office Bearers (chaired by Cllr. McKail)</u> Chairman: Ian Forsyth Proposed; Christian Allard Seconded; Iris Walker Vice Chair: Audrey Findlay Proposed; Ian Forsyth Seconded; Beryl Menzies Secretary: Beryl Menzies Proposed; Maureen Strachan Seconded; Bill Loudon Treasurer: David Ritchie Proposed; Maureen Strachan Seconded; Audrey Findlay	
5	<u>Matters Arising</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Audit of Aberdeen Open Spaces – two representatives from Aberdeenshire Council will be attending the next meeting. (b) Hanging Baskets. A report under sub-committees will be written. (c) Suggestion regarding police – this will be carried forward until the next meeting. (d) David Ritchie will put a note into the noticeboard regarding access to its key. <p>The action regarding toilets will be carried forward, but also raised with Ian Fowell. It was suggested that perhaps charging for use of the toilets, but ones that were better maintained would be better. Westhill is on the RADAR list for disabled access toilets. It was suggested that Ian Fowell should be taken past the public toilets on his walk-around of Westhill which he has offered.</p>	<p>Bill Loudon</p> <p>Ian Forsyth</p> <p>David Ritchie</p> <p>Cllr. McKail</p>
6	<u>Police Report</u> Everyone present was asked to give their views on the proposal of a part-time police clinic in the area, when non-emergency police matters could be raised, and there would be an officer present. It was generally agreed that police time would be better spent on patrol, when people would still be able to stop them and speak to them. The Community Council agreed that this was unnecessary. Ian Forsyth or Beryl Menzies will write to the Police to communicate these views.	<p>Ian Forsyth or Beryl Menzies</p>

	<p><u>Crime trends and figures for Westhill for the period 02-08-2009 to 06-09-2009</u></p> <p>During this period the following offences were reported.</p> <p>Four thefts, 1 detected assault, 1 detected careless driving and 10 reports of vandalisms, these included damage to signage and Jimmy Chungs and damage to motor cars. All enquiries are ongoing.</p> <p>We also had a report of a skip being set on fire intentionally at the Academy, however due to lack of CCTV we are unable to progress the investigation.</p> <p>There was a shoplifting incident at Aldi Stores. One male has been charged.</p> <p>More general news regarding Grampian Police:-</p> <p>Grampian Police, Tayside Police and Northern Constabulary are teaming up with Crimestoppers Scotland and the UK Border Agency to step up their battle against drug dealers.</p> <p>The initiative, which has been running in the Grampian area for a number of years now, allows concerned members of the public to contact the charity Crimestoppers completely anonymously to provide details of drug dealers and drugs users in their area, as well as other crime they may wish to report.</p> <p>There are also leaflets that can be completed anonymously and posted back to the Police.</p> <p>All the information provided is carefully researched and allows the police to focus not only on individuals and their associates, but also the other areas of crime they may be involved in.</p> <p>I would like the Community Councils opinion on if they think siting the mobile office on a regular basis in places like Skene or Sauchen would be of any value. The office would be manned by one of the Westhill Officers for a few hours, maybe once or twice a month, to try and encourage members of the public to pass on any information that they feel would be useful to the Police or just to pop in for a chat. Or does the Council feel that the Police Office is sufficient for this, and that the officers time would be better spent dealing with ongoing enquiries and having a general presence patrolling in the Police car or on foot around all areas of Westhill and the outlying villages.</p> <p>Amanda White 0778 Westhill Community Officer</p>	
7	<p><u>Planning Issues</u></p> <p>Director of developments Harry McNab came to the meeting to speak on behalf of Bancon Developments regarding their recent proposal. Changes to the Planning Act mean that community involvement is much more important. The plans were left with the Community Council.</p> <p>The first stage of the bid is to build 25 houses on an area of greenbelt farmland which is already owned by Bancon. This plan is not fixed – it is open to feedback from the community. Developments on the greenbelt land may be allowed as this is being re-evaluated. However, growth in Westhill is still limited because of the traffic issues, especially on such a small road. 25% will be affordable housing (possibly rented); the rest will be a mixture of 1 to 4 bedroomed houses. The final plan will be for 140 houses, at a density of 8 houses per acre.</p> <p>Along with this plan, to make the development viable on such a small road, there is an application to widen the road, provide a remote footpath and cycleway, and extend the speed limit.</p>	

Questions from the floor

The ownership of the remainder of the land was questioned. There has been much confusion, as the Community Council have been told that BP will retain ownership of the land, and will not remove their tenant. However, Bancon were under the impression that they had BP's permission to develop their land into parkland and football fields.

It was also raised that the road could not cope with a higher volume of traffic. Bancon replied that with the proper finance and design this could be overcome, as they have suggested in their plans.

If the Planning Application is not passed, what will happen to the land? The land will be kept by Bancon and the plans would be resubmitted in the future.

If the plans go ahead, the 30mph limit would be extended to include the farm, or possibly the bridge.

It was suggested that the Health and Safety rules regarding the development were not met, that too many people would be gathering at the new pitches. However, Bancon replied that they had had Health and Safety surveys carried out on the area, which showed that the plans did not break any of the rules. These results are not yet published.

The position and orientation of the pitches were questioned, and Bancon replied that this would be open to suggestions from the community. It was also suggested that perhaps there could be open space in place of the suggested pitches, as there are already pitches in the area.

It was mentioned that flooding is a major problem in the fields here, and that raising the level of the pitches would cause the nearby gardens to flood. Bancon said that proper drainage would be installed, and that the ground conditions are currently being tested.

It was asked if the application goes into the city, but it does not, there is 20 yards of open space between the development and the boundary.

Bancon commented that they were discussing the whole bid, as opposed to the initial development. This was so that they could be open with the community, so that we knew what the complete plan was.

The land owned by Bancon is east from the house that is up for sale. It was commented that all this depends on Mr Rennie giving up his tenancy. Mr Rennie was present at the meeting, and insisted that this would not happen. However, Bancon are allowed to put in proposals, regardless of whether they own the land.

The proposed pond is open, and designed to attract wildlife. It was commented that this could be a health and safety issue.

The affordable housing will not be flats, but may be rented or part ownership, or Council accommodation, or owned by a housing association.

It was asked why the initial bid was so small in relation to the full proposal. This was to reduce confusion over the relationship to the pipeline. The continuing fear of Westhill merging with the city was reinforced, but there will be a gap of 20m of landscaping before the town boundary.

There is a new car park in the plan for the pitches, because currently there is not enough parking, and emergency vehicle access is often blocked. Concern was expressed that this was insufficient, as current parking is totally inadequate when there are visiting teams.

	<p><u>Post Meeting Minute</u></p> <p>This excerpt of a letter to Audrey Findlay from Mr Tastard, a local resident, should clarify the situation.</p> <p>"It would appear that at a recent Community Council/AGM meeting representatives from Bancon gave a presentation with regard to the above.</p> <p>It would also appear that there was a lack of clarity or even accuracy over the extent of lands and property which Bancon has control over and this manifested itself in questions from the floor over the status of land and property owned by myself and my wife, immediately to the east of the application site.</p> <p>In the pursuit of accuracy, and in order to allay fears of neighbours and to avail the Community Council of the facts, I take this opportunity to confirm, without qualification, that my wife and I own the house at Mill of Brodiach and the 4 acres of land directly associated with it and have no intention of selling. Furthermore, the records show that we both formally objected to the planning application.</p> <p>I would request that any notes or minutes of the meeting accurately reflect this position."</p> <p>The proposed timescale for the development was between 2010 and 2023</p> <p>A summary of the community's comments will be sent to Bancon.</p> <p>At a recent meeting of the Garioch Area committee, Cllr. Cullen said that the Community Council was too quick to object, and that they misrepresent the community. It was said that Cllr. Cullen had offered a private meeting with Community Council representatives and that this was declined, but no such correspondence took place. The Community Council will request such a meeting.</p>	<p>Ian Forsyth</p>
<p>8</p>	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p><u>Correspondence received</u></p> <p>R-01: E-mail – Mr. Harry McNab, Bancon Developments: Planning Application at Brodiach, Westhill</p> <p>R-02: E-mail – Ms. Irina Birnie, Aberdeenshire Council: Open Space Consultation</p> <p>R-03: E-mail - Ms. Jill Sowden, Aberdeenshire Council: Green Butterfly Award Application Form</p> <p>R-04: E-mail - Ms. Jill Sowden, Aberdeenshire Council: Aberdeen City and Shire Winter Festival Programme</p> <p>R-05: E-mail - Ms. Karen Macvey, Aberdeenshire Council: Garioch Area Committee meeting 25/08/09 – Agenda and Minutes of Meeting 21/07/09</p> <p>R-06: E-mail - Cllr. M Kitts-Hayes, Aberdeenshire Council: Westhill & Elrick Community Council</p> <p>R-07: E-mail – Cllr. McKail, Aberdeenshire Council: Garioch and North Marr Community safety Group/Grampian Joint Fire and Rescue Board draft proposals for emergency response standards</p> <p>R-08: Letter & Report – Ms. Kate Bond, Aberdeenshire Council: Public Performance Report for Aberdeenshire Council</p> <p>R-09: E-mail – Ms. Kathleen Moir, Aberdeenshire Council: CDG Meeting – 01/09/09; Agenda and associated papers</p> <p>R10: E-mail – Mr. Steve Shaw, National Co-ordinator, Local Works - promoting the Sustainable Communities Act part of Unlock Democracy: More Powers to Parish and Town Councils: Including Local Councils in the Sustainable Communities Act - Your Help Needed</p> <p>R-11: E-mail – Ms. Linda Papiransky, Aberdeenshire Council: Garioch Area Community Council Forum Meeting – Change to date</p> <p>R-12: Booklet – Transportation & Infrastructure, Aberdeenshire Council: The Network; Issue 57 Autumn Edition - September 2009</p> <p>R-13: E-mail – Ms. Jill Sowden, Aberdeenshire Council: Garioch Local Community Planning Group – Minutes of Meeting 22/06/09</p> <p>R-14 E-mail – Ms. Jill Sowden, Aberdeenshire Council: Community Planning E-Bulletin</p>	

	<p>R-15: E-mail – Mr. John Michie, Aberdeenshire Council: Road closure notification – G266 – Blackburn to Westhill – 07/09/09</p> <p>R-16: E-mail – Ms. Jill Sowden, Aberdeenshire Council: Under 18's Facility -West Church, Inverurie</p> <p>R-17: E-mail – Cllr. McKail, Aberdeenshire Council: Complete Driver –Garioch and North Marr Community Safety Group</p> <p>R-18: E-mail – Cllr. McKail, Aberdeenshire Council: Issue 24 RoSPA Safety Connections</p> <p>R-19: E-mail – Ms. Fiona MacKenzie, Aberdeenshire Council: Multi Equality Scheme Questionnaire</p> <p>R-20: E-mail – Mr. Ben Freeman, Bancon Developments: Planning Application at Brodiach, Westhill</p> <p>R-21: E-mail – Ms. Karen Macvey, Aberdeenshire Council: Bedding Plants - 2010</p> <p><u>Correspondence sent</u></p> <p>S-01: E-mail - Ms. Irina Birnie, Aberdeenshire Council: Audit of Aberdeenshire's Open Spaces (BM)</p> <p>S-02: E-mail - Mr. Harry McNab, Bancon Developments: Planning Application at Brodiach, Westhill (SW)</p>	
9	<p><u>Sub-Committee Reports</u></p> <p><u>Christmas Lights:</u> Nothing to report.</p> <p><u>Litter:</u> A rota for litter picks from September to December has been completed. The first litter pick starts on 19th September. It is hoped that the geographic spread of the litter picks can be widened to include other litter "hot spots".</p> <p><u>MiR:</u> <u>Community Café</u> A feasibility study will be carried out shortly to ascertain the best site, either new or converted, for this Project. Visits to other Community and Youth Cafes have been arranged.</p> <p><u>Adventure Playgrounds/Outdoor Spaces</u> Various Youth Groups have surveyed all the areas in Westhill and reported on their use, condition, and what is needed. When all the information is available we will meet with Members of Aberdeenshire Council to discuss what can be done to improve these areas.</p> <p><u>Mountain Bike Trail</u> There are two good trails - Countesswells and Kirkhill Forest.</p> <p><u>Housing</u> A survey form is being prepared which will be distributed in the area so that people can give their views of the kind of housing which is needed in Westhill.</p> <p><u>Public Art:</u> No report submitted.</p> <p><u>Hanging Baskets:</u> Been in touch with the company who do the hanging baskets, and all the sundry bits and pieces to go with them. New price list indicates the price for cup and saucer style 2 sizes the first was £24 50 each plus the hanging brackets and the chains; for the 24 we would need for Old Skene Road, would work out at £948.00, add VAT would bring it up to £1,090.20. The second quote was a bit dearer - all inclusive £2,001.00.</p> <p>As the summer draws to an end we had a reasonable number of gardens to judge, as you could imagine we were quite happy with the outcome and so were the winners and runner ups.</p>	

	<p>I went across to see the sponsors of the prizes; again they were pleased at the mention they received in the Bulletin.</p> <p>Have received the list for next year's plants from the Council. Have sent away our order, taking into account the doubling up of our containers (all being well). It will take me the best part of a day to get them over to Gordon at Fox Lane who has volunteered to pack the whole lot again, and keep them until they have settled in.</p> <p>On this note I would like to ask the Councillors if they know of somewhere we could keep them, and possibly the Christmas lights also, in the off season. This would save Heather a bit of space in her hanger, and keep things together if we are going to add to each group.</p> <p>I must thank Heather for looking after the containers last year for us, and taking on the job this year again. Thanks to David, Maureen, Stewart and John for the good work they put in getting the containers down on Saturday, again Gordon at Fox Lane is going to get rid of the old plants for us, so I will get them washed out and shipped up to Heather.</p>	
10	<p><u>Treasurer's Report</u></p> <p>See attached report.</p>	
11	<p><u>Bulletin / Website</u></p> <p><u>Bulletin</u> Printer delivered Autumn issue on planned date of Friday 28th August and nearly all the boxes had been collected by the Sunday. Size is 100 pages, split 60 pages of adverts and 40 pages of articles & notices. We do not want Bulletin to get bigger than 100 pages so will have to start turning down new adverts from non-local businesses. Deadline for winter issue is 6th November</p> <p><u>Website</u> The webmail forwarders on the site will be adjusted. John Menzies will contact Ian Fowell to notify him of the changes.</p>	John Menzies
12	<p><u>AOCB</u></p> <p>(a) Information is needed about the lollipop person outside Elrick School. They were promised a lollipop person for the two months preceding the summer. An advert has gone out, and someone will be in the post for late September/October. The original appointment took another position. Elrick School is still not in the threshold for a permanent position.</p> <p>(b) Ian Fowell will be taking part in a walk-around of Westhill, with some of the Community Councillors and Councillors.</p> <p>(c) Suggested places to go will be emailed to Ian Fowell, including the public toilets and the Brodiach area suggested for the Bancon development. Maureen Strachan will also go as the representative from the Making it Real sub-committee.</p> <p>(d) A photograph of the new panel will be sent to the local press, who were unable to attend the meeting.</p> <p>(e) The Holiday Inn was thanked for their generosity in allowing the meeting to take place in their hotel. Beryl Menzies will email the Manager to communicate our thanks.</p>	Beryl Menzies
13	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>The next meeting will be held on the 8th October 2009, commencing at 7pm in the Westhill Academy staffroom.</p>	

Heather Robertson
Minutes Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR W&ECC MEETING 10/9/09						
	GENERAL FUNDS	ADVERTISING PRE-PAID FOR Autumn & Winter 2009	XMAS LIGHTS & TREE	MAKING IT REAL	LITTER CAMPAIGN	TOTAL
FUNDS IN BANK AT 13/08/09	8093.44	6160.00	3021.17	200.00	2093.10	19567.71
Receipts in period 14/08/09 to 10/9/09						
Bulletin advertisers- summer issue	50.00					50.00
Transfer of Autumn 09 pre-paid adverts to General Funds	3080.00	-3080.00				
Payments in period 14/0/09 to 10/9/09						
Halcon- Bulletin Autumn issue printing	-5536.00					-5536.00
Fee to Minutes Secretary for August	-40.00					-40.00
D. Ritchie & B. Burbidge- Autumn Bulletin fees & expenses	-284.16					-284.16
Bulletin advert refund (Brownlandscapes)	-50.00					-50.00
PerfectShine Window Cleaning- watering hanging baskets	-120.00					-120.00
Skene Parish Church- meeting room hire	-60.00					-60.00
Aberdeenshire Council- laminated Westhill map	-8.00					-8.00
FUNDS IN BANK AT 10/09/09	5125.28	3080.00	3021.17	200.00	2093.10	13519.55
(Includes £8,369 in Halifax Guaranteed Reserve, on 2.5% interest to 13/4/10)						