

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

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Minutes of a Meeting held 13th January in Michael Sheridan Room at 7pm

Present: James Anderson (WJ) - Chair Fiona Presslie - Secretary (FP) William Braid (WB) Jo Croll (JC) Vice Chair Jane Angus (JA) Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer Richard Frimston (RF) Ian Latta (IL)	Apologies Lisa McMahon (LMM) Emma Stewart (ES) Francis Duguid Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB) Cllr Peter Argyle (CPA) Lewis Macdonald (LMD)	Also present: Tony Cox (TC) - BFRG Cllr Paul Gibb (CPG)
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1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

2 Emergency services

Police will monitor parking in Bridge Street

3 Minutes of December's meeting were passed with a couple of edits from CGB

Action Tracker updated.

FP will contact SSE to ensure that access to school is maintained during planned work on Monaltrie Avenue.

4 Reports

BRD Repair work on the community bus is ongoing. **PD** to confirm with BRD re. where the BCCC would like the new recycling bins to be located

BCE NTR.

Aberdeenshire Council

FP read from the report submitted by **CGB**. **CPA** and **CGB** had met with residents of Balnault to discuss speed restrictions following a recent accident. Police had conducted a speed check in October, but the residents are more concerned with the April-September time frame when there are increased numbers of motor bikes and visitors on the road, unaware of emerging farm tracks. **FP** to request a further speed check from Inspector Matt Smith during the busier season. Tullich has made a similar request.

Flashing amber signs have been installed at either end of B976 to indicate Road Closed (but still awaiting sim cards). Two variable signs are installed at Mossat and Dinnet, with a further 4 signs planned for Colnabaichin junction, after the

junction and Braemar, past the snow gates towards Glenshee and at the north end heading out the village. **CGB** has asked if Ballater will have any signs as people coming out of Ballater to head to Strathdon may not know if the road is closed if the police do not set up the manual signs, now that the B976 has the flashing lights. **WJ** pointed out that the Dinnet sign was possibly in the wrong location to be of use and **CPG** will raise this with the Roads Dept.

The 201 Sunday bus service to Braemar will probably be cut at some future date when the review is complete and the budget has been finalised, but numbers using the service remain very low. Councillors had also made suggestions to Stagecoach regarding how the company delivers the service to upper Deeside, including possibility of shuttle services from Tarland, Lumphanan & Braemar in to the main A93 corridor.

WJ along with **CGB**, John Burrows (BRD), David Cobban (BBA), Angus McNicol (Invercauld Estate) attended a meeting with Aberdeenshire Council's Head of Economic Development to discuss the possibility of a bus park next to the water treatment works east of Ballater. The council will assist BRD to complete an Expression of Interest to the Rural Infrastructure Fund. It would be unlikely that such a plan would be called in by CNPA. **WJ** also raised the possibility of a footpath linking the bus park to the village.

Around 55 people attended the Pot Luck Lunch at Crathie with provisions from Balmoral and Invercauld Estates, Tesco, Shorty's and local donors. Surplus funds of £120 were donated to the Braemar Castle Raising the Standard Appeal.

CPG spoke with Allan Whyte, Head of Property and Facilities Management, regarding the possibility of finding funding of £3,000 to keep the Crathie toilet block open from October through the winter.

CPG will speak to the Roads Dept to request the urgent installation of the sign at Deebank Road restricting large/long vehicles from using this route to the caravan park. This would have to be in place before the park re-opens on 28th February.

WJ reported concerns at the poor workmanship of the barriers installed at Bridge of Gairn bridge. **CPG** will speak with Roads Dept.

PD raised concerns about the state of the pavement on Provost Craig Road, where a local resident had suffered a bad fall. Residents had found it very difficult to report the matter to Aberdeenshire Council, with long waits on the telephone. **CPG** would look into the matter.

RF raised concerns about recent breakdowns in the provision of school buses – in particular, a lack of communication with parents. **CPG** is awaiting a response from Sean Jamieson of School Transport.

CNPA

CPG reported the publication of the report of the Grouse Moor Management Review Group whose remit was to examine the environmental impact of grouse moor management and advise on the possibility of licensing grouse shooting businesses.

Ballater Flood Defence Group

TC had met with **WJ**, **FP** and **RF** to discuss setting up a small group to look at future flood defences. **WJ** nominated **RF**, seconded by **FP**, to look at Nuisance Flooding, while **TC** would continue to concentrate on Catastrophic Flooding, but both groups liaising together. **RF** sees his remit to cover short-term solutions such as river management, eg trees in the river bed; property protection and how that might be divided between council responsibility and personal responsibility of householders; flood defences against the once every 5 or 10 year events as opposed to the once every 200 years event of Storm Frank. **FP** pointed out that it was important to continue to be aware of the feelings of villagers regarding flood defence and to work towards a consensus of feeling on issues.

TC felt that the considerable amount of work undertaken by his group in response to the report by Aberdeenshire Council to counteract a major flood event had left him with a zero sense of achievement as nothing had been taken on board by Aberdeenshire Council in their application to SEPA for funding. To that end, he had informed Aberdeenshire Council that he would in future be happy to react to requests for help from the council, but would no longer make any proactive approaches. This had resulted in an invitation to attend a meeting with Aberdeenshire Council officials to discuss alternative proposals. However, **CPG** pointed out that Aberdeenshire Council cannot change its position until or if their current application to SEPA is turned down. Aberdeenshire Council requested a report from their consultants, RPS, to respond to a major once every two hundred years event. It may well be that a different report and different solutions would have been proposed if Aberdeenshire Council had consulted the local community to verify exactly what kind of protection it required from future flooding.

CPG felt that Aberdeenshire Council needed to look at different models to respond to different levels of flooding and enter into dialogue with the

community on that basis, but would not do so while current application was with SEPA.

PD pointed out that many were still concerned that the Police, Ambulance and Fire Stations might re-locate, but **CPG** believed that no work would be done until a decision had been made by SEPA.

CAP A meeting to be held on 21st January, 2020.

Halls

WB reported that they are awaiting granite for the façade and new windows & doors. Depending on funding, there may be the possibility of employing a part-time hub manager.

Issue of anti-social behaviour was raised following an event held in the Halls. Antisocial driving in Station Sq & the flower pots had been moved to Bridge Street. **FP** to contact Sergeant Greig with concerns. **CPG** urged residents to use the Crime-stoppers number or e-mail to report such events if they wished to remain anonymous.

Enhancement Group

PD had received further funding and hoped to extend the lights on trees on the Church Green for next Christmas. Bingo nights had resulted in increased funding.

Ballater Shop Fronts Enhancement Group

Meeting to be held on 23rd January at The Carriage at 7pm as there were funds available to enhance shop façades, to including lighting, painting, flower displays etc. **FP** to request further information from David Cobban regarding future initiatives to be made available to BCCC.

Paths NTR

Other

FP had attended a meeting with the Ballater CAN (Climate Action Now) Lead - Thelma van Buren. **FP** asked if the group would make contact with other groups in the village under the CAP as some of their initiatives might overlap. The group had proposals such as a drinking water fountain, man shed, commercial growing of organic food, car-sharing, re-wilding, community gardens & allotments, green powerhouse.

5 Planning Matters

Cycle Highlands seeking to erect a new shed. **WJ** declared an interest in the project. **WJ** & **FP** had met with the new owners of the Glen Lui. To date, only a pre-application enquiry has been entered to seek a change of use from hotel to private residence. When a full planning application is entered, then it must be shown that there is no economic case for the hotel to continue.

6 Correspondence

NTR

- 7 **Finance** A donation has been received which will be used for ongoing running costs of the BCCC.

8 AOCB

TC asked about the extension of speed restriction signs to the east of Ballater on A93. **CPG** said that Police would have to make a safety assessment, but that any extension of restriction would not necessarily change the behaviour of drivers.

TC also asked about financial support to attend Aberdeenshire Council meetings as part of Ballater Flood Group and **PD** would make inquiries.

TC raised the question as to whether the community should be concerned at the reduction of hotel/bed and breakfast accommodation available.

IL had received queries regarding why the TV mast in Ballater had not been upgraded to digital as residents were unable to receive Freeview. **JC** reported that residents now required a larger aerial in order to pick up the signal from the Durriss transmitter.

PD asked if **CPG** could find out who owned the land at Craigview Road as a possible further parking area for the village.

PD also raised concerns at mobile phone black spots in the village.

WB asked if there was an update available on the work at the Old School. **FP** indicated that any update would feature in a future issue of the Eagle.

The meeting finished at 8.40pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 10th February at 7pm in the Michael Sheridan Room.