

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

www.ballaterandcrathiecommunitycouncil.com

Minutes of a Meeting and AGM held 14th June 2021 via Zoom at 7pm

Present: James Anderson - Chair (WJ) Jo Croll (JC) - Vice Chair Richard Frimston (RF) - Secretary William Braid (WB) Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer John Bannerman (JB) Lewis Macdonald (LMD) Tom Flynn (TF) Tony Cox (TC) Nadine Stuart (NS) Ellie Kinghorn (EK)	Apologies Gareth Johnson Lisa McMahon	Also present: Cllr Paul Gibb (CPG) Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB) Cllr Peter Argyle (CPA) John Burrows (JB-BRD) Ken Gibson - Paths (KG)
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1 Welcome from Cllr Paul Gibb, interim Chairman until election of office-bearers of new BCCC.

2 There were 11 vacancies, and all applicants were duly elected without requirement for any election to be held. Emma Stewart had stood down and **CPG** thanked her for her contribution.

3 JC proposed **WJ** as chair, seconded by **PD**.

WJ proposed **JC** as vice-chair, seconded by **WB**.

EK proposed **PD** as treasurer, seconded by **JC**.

PD proposed **RF** as secretary, seconded by **JC**.

4 Welcome from the Chair

Although meetings had been by Zoom over the last year, the BCCC continued to drive forward community projects. Hopefully, face-to-face meetings would return in the not too distant future.

JB expressed disappointment that there had not been sufficient candidates for the BCCC to generate an election. An election gave legitimacy to the elected members of the council. **CPG** pointed out that volunteers were in short supply and that he could not recollect any community council elections in his four years as a councillor. **JB** suggested there was work for the BCCC to do in the future to encourage community involvement in the election of the BCCC. **JC** pointed out that the Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils was currently out for review. It was agreed to hold a meeting via Zoom on 21st June to suggest alternative means of electing community council members for the purposes of the review.

6 Emergency Services Report Reports of anti-social behaviour, road traffic infringements and fire-raising. **JB** reported that he would be meeting with Sergeant Keith Greig to discuss possible strategies (eg Sandbag deployment plan) in the event of future flooding emergencies.

7 Matters arising from previous meeting and Action Tracker update.

May minutes passed. And minutes of November 2020 AGM also passed.

CGB reported that there was no update on Whatsapp Group with CNPA to manage the closure of Linn of Dee and Glen Muick hotspots. However, Glyn Jones of Balmoral now informed **CGB** of Glen Muick road closures and she posted on to Facebook. **WJ** requested this information to be passed on to the BCCC so that they could update their information pages.

CGB reported on a meeting with Martin Hall regarding speed and road safety issues at Tullich, Bridge of Gairn, Crathie and Balnault, where there was a recent accident. They will also review the speed limit at Turner Hall.

CGB had been impressed with her visit to the Old School building site.

All ward councillors had a role to play in the reinstatement of the Sunday Braemar-Ballater bus service, but it is vital that the Council, CNPA, CBP must all promote its use.

WB will follow up with Francis Duguid regarding the plaque for the Victoria Hall.

CPG had met with Martin Hall regarding a crossing on Bridge Street and would receive drawings in due course which he would share with the CC.

With regard to the Glen Muick road closures, Glyn Jones, Balmoral Ranger, had been in touch with Police Scotland to clarify what the estate can do to enforce road closure signage. **WJ** said that the signs really had to be manned to ensure adherence. **CGB** suggested that car insurance could be invalidated by ignoring road closure signs. **RF** asked about the new electronic sign and its possible siting at the Bridge in Ballater to indicate the Glen Muick road was closed, thereby reducing traffic chaos at the entrance to Glen Muick. **CGB** had seen suggestions on social media for parking at the foot of Glen Muick, with a shuttle bus service laid on.

CGB had been assured by the Old School contractor that the new drains were fit for purpose but that possible the old drains on Abergeldie Road required attention. The problem allegedly lies with Scottish Water and **CGB** has been in touch with Gavin Steel to query this.

Signage was in place indicating the off-road path on the South Deeside Road when on the 7 Bridges Walk, but walkers still used the road. **KG** suggested a further sign at the Ballater Bridge to encourage walkers to use the off-road path. **JB-BRD** suggested funding might be available from BRD. **CPA** pointed out that Marr Area offered small grants (with match funding) that might be worth applying for. **WJ** repeated his request for trees to be trimmed on the south Deeside Road as a matter of urgency.

JB had placed Greta on Tullich Straight, with the support of local households, but following unfortunate remarks on social media, Greta had now been placed outside the school. He felt she was more acceptable when re-enforcing existing speed limits, rather than as an attempt to influence speed on open roads. **CGB** reported that in Braemar, they were undertaking an experiment to measure speed of vehicles while the models were in situ, when they were removed for a period and then when they were re-introduced. Greta had cost the BCCC £24.98.

WB suggested that another area of road safety concern was the exit from the former Cambus O'May Hotel.

CGB had reported issues of paintwork on the Old Royal Station to Janelle Clark.

8 Reports

BRD

JB-BRD said that BRD were currently setting up a memorandum of understanding with Aberdeenshire Council regarding the Green. This will outline what BRD will undertake in terms of maintenance of the Green, flowerbeds, and paths, especially in terms of health & safety. It will also cover what may have to be done when the Green reverts to the Council. Planning permission had been granted to BRD and contracts would be issued for work on the fountain and foot-paths through third-party contractors with their own health & safety compliance in place. BRD had also appointed an HSE organisation to ensure compliancy within BRD.

The footpath from the Picnic Place at Sluievannachie to 13th tee on golf course would be re-instated, as well as considering access to the picnic place.

Following a question from **PD**, **JB-BRD** indicated that the Monaltrie Park Toilets would open soon.

BCE

The caravan site continues to be busy. Compliancy with covid rules and health & safety had also been under consideration.

Aberdeenshire Council

CGB had no objections to any changes to Cambus O'May bridge to make it more accessible to cyclists, wheel-chair users or those using buggies.

PD had received queries as to how the Old School housing would be allocated. **JC** had posted information on the Ballater Community page.

A local lettings plan has been agreed with Aberdeenshire Council so local people will be given priority. These Homes is Grampian Housing Association's new digital lettings service. These Homes applicants will be given extra priority if they are living or working in the Ballater area. Aberdeenshire Council will also be nominating applicants from its waiting list who have selected Ballater as their first area of choice. Some new build properties have design features intended to benefit households with mobility/disability needs and they will also be given priority. If someone was previously registered with Homehunt they should have already been invited to re-register with These Homes.

Applicants should ensure they are now registered with These Homes. Homehunt is no longer the lettings site. Applicants formerly registered with Homehunt will need to use their registration number they have, to register with TheseHomes. The Community Council has no say in how these properties are allocated.

PD will e-mail **CGB** with concerns regarding work done on properties within the conservation area, garden maintenance in housing association properties and traffic problems at building sites on the A93 on way to Crathie.

PD had received complaints about forest debris from winter storms on Craigendarroch Hill posing a risk to pedestrians and traffic on the A93 between the Hilton and Darroch Learg Hotel. **RF** will speak to Angus McNicol and Ian Hill regarding this matter.

CNPA

CNPA have launched a new website to consult on the new Partnership Plan - this document will be signed off by ministers and sets out what CNPA and its partners consider to be priorities and how they will be achieved. **CGB** urged the community and the council to have their say on <https://cairnngormsviews.commonplace.is>.

FIG

RF reported that TF, JB plus expert assistance from Paddy Wright would be the core membership of FIG, but welcomed any other members wishing to join.

JB had been in discussion with BFG and others in the community regarding the way forward for a community response to the issues of flooding. Having two bodies was creating confusion rather than creating debate. He had sadly not been able to bridge the gap between FIG and BFG in terms of sharing the work to be done. **JB** suggested that the good work of BFG should be recognised, but that BCCC should withdraw its support of BFG and consult primarily through FIG.

TC informed the BCCC that he, in conjunction with Douglas Johnston, had decided to wind up BFG. He felt that option 3A had been rejected by the village, so had sought another route, and had done a lot of work at no cost to the community. **WJ** thanked him for his work.

BCCC and FIG are both of the opinion that a report is urgently required on any changes to the river following the flood of February 2021. Further research is required on how to minimise future low-level flooding events. Also important to discuss with the community such self-help plans as sandbag deployment and personal liability for own property.

RF suggested that FIG would create a draft proposal about flooding for the CC to read prior to the July meeting and then vote on.

TF also asked BCCC to read the Draft Report No 2 on the Social and Economic Damage to Ballater following the 2015 flood and to make any comments prior to this document being released to the community for further consultation.

CAP

Nothing to report.

Halls

Work on basement and kitchen for Victoria Hall would take a further 4 to 6 weeks.

Enhancement Group and Improvement Group

Nothing to report.

Paths

KG reported that there had been several glitches with finger posts, as highlighted by **JC** regarding the 7 Bridges Sign at Willowbank, which sent walkers up the Lary road. Map panels have arrived to be installed at the lay-by on A93 at Pass of Ballater and in the Station Square. Several benches on various walks have been sanded down. A contractor has put in a report on the cinder path at Monaltrie regarding proposed work and costing. **KG** also reported on the setting up of the Mar Paths Forum to bring together various community paths groups to progress ideas and potentially acquire equipment to share and the possibility of sharing training costs for volunteers to use equipment. **KG** was thanked for all of his excellent work.

9 Planning Matters Nothing to report.

10 Correspondence

WJ had received a copy of the Local Development Plan and would pass it on.

11 Finance Annual report was approved. **RF** proposed and **WJ** seconded.

12 AOCB

EK asked about setting up a community self-build association. She was happy to look at this as it seemed to require to be updated. **JC** suggested contacting the housing group of **CAP**.

PD suggested that **BCCC** could contribute to cost of paint for repairs to the fence above Ted Emslie's shop on the Railway Bridge.

PD asked who was responsible for the flower beds adjacent to the church.

JC asked about the upkeep of flower beds on Station Square. Following a request from **JC**, **CGB** has requested replacement bins for those damaged in Station Square during the winter.

The meeting concluded at 21.05hours. The next meeting is scheduled for 12th July, 19.00 to 21.00 hours, possibly by Zoom.