

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

www.ballaterandcrathiecommunitycouncil.com

Minutes of a Meeting held 10th May via Zoom at 7pm

Present:	Apologies	Also present:
James Anderson - Chair (WJ)	Emma Stuart	Cllr Paul Gibb (CPG)
Jo Croll (JC) - Vice Chair	Lisa McMahon	Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB)
Richard Frimston (RF) - Secretary	Gareth Johnson	Cllr Peter Argyle (CPA)
William Braid (WB)	Ellie Kinghorn	Tom Flynn (TF)
Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer	Richard Gledson	John Burrows (BRD-JB)
John Bannerman (JB)		Ken Gibson - Paths (KG)
Lewis Macdonald (LMD)		Tony Cox (TC)
		Gordon Riddler - Halls (GR)
		Scott & Jean Peacock (SJP)

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

2 Emergency Services Report Reports of anti-social behaviour, road traffic infringements and wildlife crime with the death of a golden eagle on Invercauld Estate.

3 Matters arising from previous meeting and Action Tracker update.

April minutes passed.

CGB will contact the CNPA convenor as the Whatsapp information group had not been set up to manage local traffic concerns at tourist hotspots. Twitter announcement of road closures is not effective. **WJ** reported that Glen Muick road had been closed but not manned so signs were removed by members of the public. **JC** reported that toilets have been closed with no notification of this on websites or signage. **WJ** reported that electronic sign at Glen Muick had not been in use and the variable sign at Tullich continued to report only the Level of covid restrictions in the area. **CGB** will pass on all concerns to convenor.

KG reported that signage will be upgraded for the Seven Bridges Walk, but it is difficult to persuade walkers to use the upper route as the signage is not clear, sending walkers to the left when they know that they should be heading to the right, so tend to remain on the road rather than use off-road path.

Regarding drains being cleared, the grit/salt would only be removed once all threat of snow & frost was over - possibly June/July.

Greta would be in position outside Ballater Primary School from 11th May with further sites proposed at Eastfield, Tullich Straight, Riverside Garage, rotated on a quarterly basis. **CGB** is meeting with Martin Hall to discuss speed restrictions on Tullich Straight, Bridge of Gairn, Crathie and a potential crossing on Bridge Street to Station Square.

4 Reports

BRD

BRD-JB reported that there was not incentive for BRD or any other community group to accept the offer of a lease of the Church Green from Aberdeenshire council. BRD had taken on the Monaltrie Toilet block from BCCC. **JC** to pass on two sets of keys. Also possibility raised of BCCC making a financial contribution to the management of the toilet block.

BCE

The caravan site has been busy.

Aberdeenshire Council

CGB will have a meeting on Wednesday to visit the social housing development. **CPA** reported additional £10.5 million had been allocated to road repairs. He acknowledged that there would be disruption and road closures and asked for community patience, that the community should not abuse council road workers who were trying to get the job done. **CGB** asked for clarification on road closure communications and signage, citing the contradictory information regarding when the road was closed/open at Kincardine o'Neil.

The 40mph speed limit at Cambus o'May would remain in place until October because of concerns about emerging traffic on to A93.

CNPA

Nothing to report.

FIG

RF reported that all efforts were being concentrated on the 19th May meeting with Aberdeenshire Council, SEPA, Ballater Golf Club et al. FIG would like an expert report on the implications of the river changes following the February flood along with any suggestions for improvements to be made in the short term. An approach would be made to CBEC, who are currently working on the Glen Muick side of the river.

CAP

BRD-JB would be concentrating on creating a list of potential volunteers for pathways, farmer's market, environmental maintenance.

Following a question from **WJ**, **JC** reported that Marr Area Partnership had recommended that the CAP should be re-visited at least every 5 years with a Community Engagement meeting to report on what had been achieved and to ask the community what else was required. Covid-19 restrictions had obviously delayed any community engagement plans.

Halls

GR reported that Victoria Hall inner door is being repaired. All work on basement and Victoria Hall kitchen is underway. 3 new trustees have joined - John Rutherford, Amy Muir and Lyndsey Boden, who had taken on the Facebook

page with excellent results, increasing membership by 15. Over the past few years, £570,000 had been raised and spent on improvements to the Halls.

WB is still consulting with companies to replace the lift, so that there might be increased access to the halls.

JC reported that the Food Pantry would be launched on 19th May, although there might be some water/electricity interruptions as tradesmen were still working on site.

Enhancement Group and Improvement Group

PD asked for volunteers to help plant, weed, and water the tubs, hanging baskets and flower beds in the village centre. Applicants to Anne Reid, Pat Downie or Alistair Cassie. Aberdeenshire Council would supply up to 1500 plants but would not give any other assistance. **WJ** suggested an appeal on Facebook.

Paths

Nothing to report.

Other

Scott & Jean Peacock have recently moved back to Ballater and joined BRD, with particular interest in environmental issues and have been in talks with Thelma & Jennifer Macmillan from Ballater-CAN to feed a list of requirements into the Community Action Plan.

They are especially concerned about the state of the oak trees on Craighendarroch and about the possibility of regeneration. **KG** had spoken with Ian Hill and reported that the SSI described the oakwood as being both natural and a result of planting, so there was no reason why re-planting could not be considered. The acorns are viable, the saplings requiring protection.

SJP also concerned at the 60mph speed limit on Pass of Ballater, with blind corners, wildlife, and pedestrians all at risk. **CGB** will raise the issue of speed limits, but **CPA** pointed out that limits on rural roads rarely succeeded. The possibility of squirrel bridges was raised. **KG** understood that there had been plans in 2007 to extend the cinder path in front of the private houses at Morven Way towards the start of the road to Scarbuie but for some reason this had not come to fruition. **JB** asked if there was any data available on accidents in the area.

5 Planning Matters Nothing to report.

6 Correspondence

RF reminded all councillors that they had until 4pm on 24th May to submit their nominations for re-election, excluding Lisa McMahon and himself. **WJ** will remind **EK** and **GJ** that they need to submit their applications.

7 Finance No change since last meeting.

8 AOCB

PD asked when the Old School project was due for completion. **CGB** understood that they would be finished in June/July, open for viewing with letting in the

early Autumn. Applicants should be on both the Aberdeenshire Council list and Grampian Housing list to enhance their chances of allocation. **JC** will update facebook with details of www.thesehomes.com, the website on which applications may be made.

PD had received a letter from Alison Mcleod regarding records to be kept by the Community Council. Minutes, Agendas, Financial Statements should be held in perpetuity and passed on from secretary to secretary. Any records of historical interest should be passed to local libraries. Any other records may be destroyed.

BRD-JB and Ian Ritchie would attend a meeting regarding the cancellation of the Braemar bus service on Sundays.

The meeting concluded at 20.40hours. The next meeting is scheduled for 14th June, 19.00 to 21.00 hours, possibly by Zoom, and will include an AGM.