

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CCC)

www.ballaterandcrathiecommunitycouncil.com

Minutes of AGM and Meeting held at Mike Sheridan Room, Ballater on Monday 12th
June 2023 at 7.00pm

Present:	Apologies	Also present:
Jim Anderson - Chairman (WJ)	Cllr Geva Blackett	Dougal Morgan (DM)
Richard Frimston (RF) - Secretary	Mike Forbes	Paul Gibb CNPA (PG)
Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer	Jo Croll	Cllr Sarah Brown (CSB)
John Bannerman (JB)	Gareth Johnston	Callum Halhead -Abergeldie
Bill Braid (BB)	Simon Mearns	Gordon Riddler - Halls (GR)
Tom Flynn (TF)		Kate Allum
Lewis Macdonald (LMM)		Bruce Lawson
Ellie Kinghorn (EK)		
Iain Henderson (IH)		
Linda Drever (LD)		
John Burrows (JB-BRD)		

1 Welcome

WJ welcomed all to AGM & BCCC meeting. He announced that Janet Feeney had resigned as Crathie area representative and thanks were given for all her efforts on the community's behalf. **WJ** announced that he is now resident in Strathdon, but retains his business in Ballater, so may continue in his role on CC.

2 B&CCC Office Bearer Roles. As there had not been an election, there was no requirement to re-allocate office bearer roles.

3 Emergency Services Report No report received.

4 Approval of minutes AGM minutes from June 2022 approved. Minutes from May 2023 approved. See Action Tracker update for matters arising. **LD** reminded **RF** to request a copy of map from Angus McNicol, showing all local footpaths and land-owners through which they passed.

5 Conflicts of interest **WJ** made clear that he would not vote on any matters regarding H1 development. As a resident of Ballater for 41 years, he had been unable to find a property in the area so H1 represented his best possible chance of resolving this problem.

6 Action Tracker update

CSB reported progress on road safety on Bridge Street with drawings to be available shortly (no 69). Paintwork issues on Old Railway building are ongoing (no 90). **WJ** will speak to local roads team to clarify a start date for the Inver underpass (no 109).

CSB will contact Ian Shand regarding the slope behind the railway station for disabled access (no 117). There will be a meeting with Balmoral Estate regarding the issues of

parking, litter and pedestrian safety. **EK** had been approached by a local farmer concerned about safety while using farm vehicles on this road. There have been 20,000 more visitors this year to date at Balmoral.

7 Sub-committee Reports

Housing and Planning

- a) No general planning matters to report.
- b) Scotia have suggested that a planning application might be submitted by September following a further drop-in consultation. **JB** had contacted Jo Croll about the possibility of distributing a flyer about H1 development. A member of the public asked if it would be possible for Scotia to produce a 3D plan of the development so that residents might gain a sense of the height of the development and its roads in relation to other housing in the area.

TF had finally been able to obtain a leaflet from Abco regarding the vacant flat at Sluie Mhor, which had been vacant since January. To save money, Abco no longer advertises vacancies in local newspapers. Moreover, it will only advertise a vacant unit for one week on its website and then remove it in order to avoid cluttering up the website. If there are still no applications after 6 weeks, then the unit will be re-advertised on its website for one week. **TF** has spoken with Jo Croll and the vacancy details will be put on the BCCC Facebook page to inform and encourage local applicants. **TF** will also arrange for a housing officer to come to the July BCCC meeting to explain how the system works

FIG

RF concerned as to how **FIG** can ensure that flooding concerns are addressed in the H1 development, but until an application is made, Abco and CNPA can have no input. **FIG** will raise issues with Aberdeenshire Council Flood Group.

JB reported that Abco have not made any announcements regarding the RPS survey on the February flooding, nor suggested how they will make the information available to the community. The survey has suggested an option 7 of clearing the river and building a bund parallel to the 4th fairway, but this still must be costed. **FIG** has also met with local councillors to explore how to remove option 3A from the table. To date, **FIG** has been very disappointed in the response from Aberdeenshire council.

BRG

LD reported that work had started on updating the register of households requiring assistance in the event of disaster. **RF** reported that a draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Halls, Abco and BCCC was making slow progress and that a meeting with Emergency Services was also required to draft a Memorandum of Understanding.

CRG

Nothing to report until contractor had completed works.

8 Crathie issues

IH reported that gates at Crathie cemetery were very stiff and badly needed to be repainted. Also, the grass had been cut very roughly, although it is understood that the grass can no longer be collected. The Old Graveyard at Crathie could be deemed a tourist attraction as being the site of John Brown's grave. **JB-BRD** suggested that perhaps a local group could be formed to look at funding to repair gates etc.

9 Other Reports

BRD

JB-BRD reported that the Duck Festival had been successful with a profit of £2,500. The lease on the community bus costing £1,200 pcm will not be renewed. Instead, a Community Transport fund will be set up and from June 19th, qualifying community groups will be able to apply to BRD for a grant to a maximum of £100 or the cost of transport, per event, whichever is the lesser amount.

The avenue of trees on the approach to Ballater is an Invercauld Estate initiative and not part of BRD. There has been concern that these trees are non-native species and that the view of the village from the east might be spoiled. **PG** has been asked to verify if CNPA had been consulted. **RF** will write to Angus McNicol to query the lack of consultation with the village regarding the avenue and concerns regarding use of non-native species and the effect on the view.

BCE

The caravan park has been fully booked.

Aberdeenshire Council

CSB had discussed local concerns regarding 201 service with Stagecoach. She had pointed out that BBA members had suggested that the bus timetable, especially on Sundays, was not conducive to local workers using the service. Stagecoach will look at amendments to the timetable. There has been a nationwide shortage of bus drivers and the A93 route had been particularly damaging to vehicles with several buses being out of commission due to broken springs. Double deckers had been introduced on the route to deal with increased passenger capacity, but these vehicles were not able to transport bicycles. Various strategies were being looked at to overcome this problem.

CSB had spoken to waste about changing the garden collection to end in November rather than in October, but Waste had indicated that their evidence suggested that the spring collection was the busier and heavier period. **JB** pointed out that this might be because people were storing garden waste all through the winter months.

CSB had spoken with Bank of Scotland regarding their planned closure of Ballater and Braemar branches to get further information on what the bank's future plans might be. Kate Allum reported that the Co-op is in dialogue with Bank of Scotland to find out how to best manage this branch closure. It will certainly put more pressure on the Post Office within the co-op and will mean that Ballater will have only one ATM.

Kate Allum suggested that a collective letter from CCs of Ballater, Braemar and Strathdon would be helpful and to send this letter to Bank of Scotland, Post Office, Co-operative and Link (who operate cash machines), making clear the difficulties

facing a rural community with an aged population, and seeking assurances as to next steps to be taken. It would also be helpful for individuals to make clear to the Bank of Scotland what future services they require. It is difficult, for example, for another building to host an ATM for security reasons and the risk of ram-raiding. A risk assessment of the local community would be helpful to verify the difficulties faced on the closure of the bank. Kate Allum would work with **RF** to create a collective letter.

CNPA

WJ welcomed Paul Gibb to BCCC as elected member of CNPA. **PG** had attended meetings addressing problems of sustainable transport on Upper Deeside. Also raised with issue of River Dee Catchment with Grant Moir of CNPA, who had attended a meeting with Aberdeenshire Council, River Dee Trust, River Dee Catchment Management Team and Chief Executive of SEPA. Grant Moir would produce a report of the meeting to be shared with **FIG**.

CAP

Draft **CAP** should be available for further consultation by end of June following sterling efforts of Richard Frimston and Kate Allum.

Halls

GR reported that looking at upgrading Albert Hall to same standard as Victoria Hall, in terms of heating and insulation.

CAN

A further 200 trees to be planted at Golf Course.

10 Correspondence

Ian Mitchell had contacted **RF** regarding extending the Deeside Way beyond Ballater to Braemar. **RF** suggested he contact Ken Gibson. Callum Halhead, Abergeldie, reported that the estate was in the early stages of looking at the feasibility of a path from Polhollick to Strathgirnock (previous road washed way in Storm Frank).

RF had received correspondence regarding the Co-op. Kate Allum suggested the correspondent should contact Head Office directly to address stock issues as this was not a matter for store colleagues. The correspondent's concerns regarding road safety and disability access should be addressed to the relevant department of the Scottish government. A donation of £200 from BCCC to the Jubilee fund should be diverted to meet the costs of the coronation celebrations. **TF** had received concerns from residents of Morven Way requesting help to reduce the speed of cyclists using the cinder path. Ken Gibson will be contacted regarding possibility of barriers.

11 Finance **PD** produced audited Balance Sheets for BCCC and for the BCCC Resilience Group. Approved.

12 AOCB **LD** had reported the raised ironwork on the pavement outside Wilkies on Bridge Street, which was a trip hazard.

WJ presented a gift token to Moira McDougall for assistance with minute taking.

The meeting ended at 20.40.

The next meeting is planned for Monday 10th July 2023 at 7pm at Mike Sheridan Room, Station Square, Ballater

Approved