

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CCC)

www.ballaterandcrathiecommunitycouncil.com

Minutes of Meeting held at Michael Sheridan Room, Ballater on Monday 9th September 2024 at 7.00pm

Present:	Apologies	Also present:
Jim Anderson - Chairman (WJ) Richard Frimston (RF) - Secretary Pat Downie (PD) Jo Croll (JC) - Vice Chair Bill Braid (BB) Lewis Macdonald (LMD) John Bannerman (JB)	Gareth Johnston (GJ) Simon Mearns (SM) Ellie Kinghorn (EK) Scott Peacock (SP) Tom Flynn (TF) John Morrison (JM) Paul Gibb (PG)	Linda Drever - BRG (LD) Dougal Morgan (DM) Athol Bowman Ron Drever Ray Riddoch - BRD (RR) Calum Halhead (CH) Ken Gibson (KG) Weston Main Cllr. Sarah Brown (CSB)

1 Welcome

WJ welcomed all to BCCC meeting.

2 Emergency Services Report

No Emergency Service report

3 July minutes were approved.

4 Conflicts of interest would be declared as and when required during the meeting.

5 Action Tracker

JC reported that all feedback from meeting and Facebook would be examined and Abco would come back with report on relocation of bus stop (no6). JC reported that repainting of Old Station was due to start (No90). Sponsorship was still being sought for snowcam at Gairnshiel (£22 per month)(No 121). RF noted that there would a rule change regarding the feasibility of a Banking Hub so a re-application might be possible. The ATM had run out of money on several occasions over the summer months (no 127). The road gullies flooding on Queens Road are still considered a low priority, although

CSB reported that another survey would be undertaken as it was considered possible that there might be drainage issues which would need to be addressed.

6 Sub-committee Reports.

Housing & Planning

a) No contentious applications.

b) H1

JB queried the accuracy of the visual representations of H1 supplied by Scotia.

EK had requested further information and been assured that the Scotia architect considered them to be accurate. BCCC would raise this matter when addressing the Planning Committee.

Flooding Issues Group (FIG)

JB reminded the community that flooding can occur at anytime of the year however recent data suggests we are more exposed during the period Nov - Feb. SEPA Ballater flood **WARNINGS** have historically given us time to prepare before any water ingress to the village. However, if snow melt is involved the situation is more complicated for SEPA and the notice can be short and during the hours of darkness. We should be permanently prepared for flooding but as we move into autumn and winter even more so. Our local fire and rescue team have a direct link with SEPA and in the event of flooding will be the authority on the ground until Police Scotland arrive.

For those who have properties in the flood zone it is the moment to review, maintain and practise installation of your property level protection (PLP) equipment and property flood resilience (PFR) procedures. PLP prevents water ingress and PFR limits damage if water gets in.

FIG awaits a meeting with AbCo to continue to try and work together on Ballater flood defences. Our position, which AbCo is well aware of, is that the AbCo solution for Ballater flood defences, 3A, will never happen for three reasons; Scottish government have no funds to support it, the economic case kills it and the majority of the local community do not support it.

The Hesco Box project managed by BRD, our community trust continues, thanks to a grant received from the CNPA following on from funds donated by the Ballater Chiels, Ballater caravan park and AbCo. The waterside of the boxes has now been grassed over and is beginning to green up. The next stage is to position wind blown trees to protect the HB bund from erosion and work with the river to direct it away from the village and it is hoped that this is in place before November. Premature erosion of the waterside of the bund is a risk but since Ballater golf club donated the soil the decision was taken to proceed. Everyone should be mindful that the HB bund is only a protection for high frequency low level flooding.

As presented in last year's public meeting, BRD contracted a local company CBEC to look at options which could build on and/or compliment what we already have in place in order to increase the level of protection for the village. The preliminary options have

been received and the report will now be made public on BCCC Website. This work is at a very early stage. Until we understand better the level of protection that we now have and what each option can add in terms of protection and what it will cost, it is difficult to decide how best to progress. Next stage is mathematical modelling and then design for a selected option(s). This will require additional funding. A follow up public meeting will be held before the end of the year.

FIG continue to participate in the "upper Dee catchment workshops" with principally the CNPA and the DCP (Dee catchment partnership) but many other stakeholders (SEPA /Scottish water, Nature Scotland, James Hutton institute etc). There is general alignment in that it is in everyone's interest to "smooth the flow" of the River Dee (lower the peaks and raise the troughs) and the need to adapt to the dual climate change challenges of flood and drought. Restoration of the river and its flood plain and Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures, whilst useful, are unlikely to fully protect us moving forward. FIG will also be attending the Upper Dee river and floodplain restoration project - public event 12 Sep 4-7pm Castleton Hall, Braemar.

Ballater Resilience Group (BRG)

LD was delighted to report that after much discussion and hard work, an agreement had finally been reached with Abco as to how BRG should set up a rest centre in the village in an emergency. However, she remained very concerned that in the event of a power cut, Abco would only agree to set up a rest centre after 12 hours had passed. In her opinion, there were situations, especially in the winter, when a rest centre needed to be in place earlier than that. BCCC agreed to underwrite any decision made to set up a rest centre in the Halls before that 12 hour period had elapsed. BB and AB agreed as trustees of the Halls that it was important for the community to be supportive. RF suggested that BRD could also be prepared to offer assistance.

JB thanked LD for all her hard work and persistence in this matter.

BCCC approved BRG agreement with Abco.

CRG - Crathie Resilience Group

Nothing to report.

Economy

RF suggested it would be better to wait until the new Community Council was in post after the elections.

Roads and Paths

KG reported that the planning application for the upgrade of the cinder path had been approved and he was now seeking assistance to make a funding application to the Ian Findlay Paths Trust who might possibly provide part of the funding in conjunction with CNPA. Funding cuts might make this application more difficult and it might well be in the next financial year before any decision might be reached.

CNPA had consulted Abco about the possibility of calming measures on the South Deeside road between the Royal Bridge and Dalliefour, but Abco deemed there was

insufficient traffic. It is possible that Balmoral Estate might look at provided off-road foot path between Bridge of Muick and Dalliefour.

CNPA will engage a clerk of works to look at bank erosion of footpath on River Gairn section of 7 Bridges walk.

Invercauld Estate and CNPA are looking into condition of Old Railway Line walk. The Mackenzie Memorial path still requires attention although the estate is unwilling to do any additional work.

CNPA rangers had looked at the Cambus O'May circular walk at Glascorrie where there had been reports of boggy ground but did not find anything of concern. It may be that this will have to be looked at again.

CNPA is still looking at ways of reducing numbers of pedestrians on the south Deeside road between the Brunel Bridge and Distillery Brae. **KG** had suggested a signpost at the castle car-park directing Cairn walkers to the suspension bridge.

Ballater Paths leaflet had been re-printed and **KG** was looking in to internet promotion of Ballater paths.

7 Crathie issues

CH reported that the Crathie suspension bridge would be closed this week due to forestry operations by Abergeldie Estate.

8 Other Reports

Aberdeenshire Council

CSB had sent a report. Over the course of September, Abco is encouraging residents to consider how they might respond to a household emergency. You can look at 30 Days in 30 ways checklist on the Aberdeenshire web pages with lots of tips and contact details for various organisations. There is also a new website, dementia-aberdeenshire.org which tries to help people keep informed about dementia and the assistance available. **CSB** also directed those interested in the financial challenges facing Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership through the link About the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership-Aberdeenshire Council.

CSB had also attended a meeting with the Chief Inspector, Police Scotland who reported that 8 days would be devoted to road policing over the next month, covering dangerous parking, anti-social driving and speeding. She asked for examples in the community. **PD** suggested double-sided parking on Victoria Road was restricting access for emergency vehicles. **AB** raised the issue of parking on the blind summit opposite Emslie's shop. **WJ** reported the Railway Line path crossing the A93 at Eastfield. The eastern approach to the village was also highlighted for speeding. Also concern for vehicles emerging from Tullich graveyard. Pedestrian crossing between Crathie Kirk and Balmoral Car Park in a 50mph speed zone.

CNPA - Cairngorm National Park Authority

Nothing to report.

CAP - Community Action Plan

To be dealt with at inaugural meeting of new BCCC.

BRD - Ballater (Royal Deeside) Limited

RR reported that Ballater Walking Week had been huge success. BRD had provided funding for the Squirrel Rope Bridge over the Pass of Ballater. Funding also provided for recycling of medicine foil packs. Juvenile football was proving to be a great success. BRD had assisted FIG in seeking funding from other bodies to further its work.

BCE - Ballater Community Enterprise

RR reported that the caravan park continues to be very busy. He suggested that it might be helpful to locate sites in the village where a nominal charge might be made for motorhome stopover spots eg car park at Monaltrie Park. **KG** wondered if this might be a means of funding the toilet block on Monaltrie Park.

RF wondered if we might improve signage in the village to direct motor home owners to the caravan park to dispose of grey water waste which can be done for a charge of £5. **CSB** would ask if such signage was possible as **KG** suggested that there was a standard service sign available.

Halls

BB reported that fund-raising initiatives continue.

CAN - Climate Action Now

Nothing to report.

9 Correspondence

RF had received a letter commending the village on its floral display.

JC had received a letter from someone who had fallen on Dee Street. This was reported to Abco who maintain that it is a BT issue.

10 AOCB

JC had heard that the Pictish stones currently housed in the Tourist Information Centre in the Old Railway Station would be removed and returned to storage following the closure of the Information Centre in 2025. **RF** and **CSB** will raise with Janelle Clark as there is ongoing concern about the future role of the Old Railway Station.

PD reported ongoing concerns about wheelchair access on kerbs. **CSB** will consult with **SM** to organise a survey. To add to Action Tracker.

PD also concerned about outdoor seating on pavements restricting access to those using prams and wheelchairs. **CSB** will speak to Roads about this.

WJ thanked all members of BCCC for their service in particular Pat Downie who was retiring at the next election.

Elections for BCCC would take place on 19th September in Victoria Hall between 3 and 8 pm. The Count will take place on 20th September and the Inaugural Meeting will take place on 23rd September at 19.00 hours in the Albert Hall.

The meeting ended at 20.10 hours

Next meeting after inaugural meeting will be on 14th October 2024 at 19.00 hours at Quarry Studios, Crathie.

Approved