

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

www.ballaterandcrathie.org.uk

Minutes of a Meeting held on 13th April 2015

7pm in the Mike Sheridan Room, Ballater

<p>Present: Billy Duguid (BD) Chair Francis Duguid (FD) Vice James Anderson (WJ) Jane Angus (JA) Ian Cameron (IC) Mike Forman (MF) Phil Swan (PS) Cllr Katrina Farquhar (CKF) (also CNPA)</p> <p>Apologies received: John Bolton (JB) - Flood Plan Pat Downie (PD) Dr Sheila Sedgwick (SS) Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB)</p>	<p>Also present: Jack Coull (JC) - Ballater Royal Deeside Limited John Burrows Iain Latta Steve Lafferty (SL) - Police Scotland Faye Swan Moirra McDougall (minutes)</p>
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1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

2. Emergency services - Police

The Police Service current report is available on the Community Council website. Low levels of crime were reported including one attempted unsuccessful break-in to a property in Golf Road. There has been an increase in break-ins in Aberdeen in order to steal car-keys and thereby the vehicles. SL recommended householders to make use of the free home security visit provided by Police Scotland which includes advice on locks, alarms and CCTV. The Police Office in Ballater is open to the public, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Plans are also well in advance for the Balmoral Road Races, Highland Games and Etape Royale Bike Race.

BD raised the problem of parking on yellow lines in Ballater, highlighting the steps taken in Peterhead and Fraserburgh whereby the community itself had policed illegal parking. The area in front of the new Co-op store was a particular problem and the CC will write to Aberdeenshire Council to request the removal of the yellow lines on the Green side of Golf Road. In the meantime, the police would enforce the parking restrictions and would issue tickets.

SL had no knowledge of a proposed national scenic route on the Old Military Road B976. JA will consult David Clyne of the CNPA.

WJ raised the issue of damage to the Gairnshiel Bridge approaches, as a result of the road being used by unaccustomed heavy goods vehicles. It was suggested that an approach be made to Aberdeenshire Council to introduce a weight restriction on the Bridge and proper signs at junctions leading onto the A 939.

IC questioned the need to close roads in the Ballater area for the Etape Royale in September. CKF will contact Etape Royale to ensure that they are aware of all potential problems and that they will have procedures in place to ensure that all residents will have access in and out of their homes and businesses on that day.

3. AGM, Chairman's Report.

There have been a number of problems arising from the new Co-op store and the removal of the Bus Station and the CC will make representations to the Co-op, Bus Services and Aberdeenshire Council concerning these matters.

The new development on Sir Patrick Geddes Way has been named Sheridan Place following a request to the pupils of Ballater Primary School to suggest a name. The winning pupil, Fraser Donald, will open the development.

As a result of various representations made to Aberdeenshire Council Roads Department, the A939 has finally had repairs made to the corner which had no underpinning.

The CC has had a member attending meetings of the Old School Working Group which has been working towards using the Old School to the benefit of the local community. The matter is now with the Aberdeenshire Council and the CC congratulates the Old School Working Group for their hard work and commitment in bringing the plan to this stage.

The rivalry between Wales and Ballater as to which had the tallest Christmas tree brought considerable media attention to the village and it is hoped that there might be further initiatives to encourage both Welsh and Ballater schools to determine the truth of the matter.

Mike Forman joined the CC in May 2014, but there are still vacancies available for Ballater and Crathie on the CC.

Thanks are due to JA for accepting the role of Secretary of the CC.

Thanks are due to MM for agreeing to take minutes.

4. Scheme of Community Councils Establishment Changes proposed by Aberdeenshire Council. The B&CCC response was as follows:

It was agreed : a) that the AGM should remain in April, alternating between Ballater and Crathie, because of possible snowy conditions rather than in March, or as directed for the whole A'Shire.

b) membership should be restricted to registered residents - co-option is available for special projects and expertise.

c) election votes should be counted as by 'first past the post' rather than by STV, for practical reasons.

d) by a majority, that elections should all be for a four year term, not the proposed half membership every two years.

5. Listening Post

WJ moved to discontinue the Listening Post as there had been a low take-up of the service by the community. After discussion, the majority voted in favour of stopping the Listening Post, with two abstentions. Alternative means of ensuring the CC was aware of the needs of the community and to represent those views to the powers that be were also discussed.

6. Minutes from the February and the adjourned March meetings were agreed.

7. Matter's arising from the February meeting.

CKF had put Ruth Sim (Access Panel) in touch with the Co-operative regarding access to and in the new store. CKF reported that the gutters at the old store on Bridge Street were being repaired and that the problem of overflowing dog-waste bins had been dealt with.

8. Reports

Ballater Royal Deeside Limited

JC reported that the attempts by BRD to purchase the Caravan Park lease had failed and were unlikely to be taken further.

JC had met with the organiser of the Chris Hutchon Trust, set up in memory of Kirstine's husband who tragically lost his life earlier this year. Kirstine is very keen for the money to be used to improve public access to life-saving equipment.

The CC is keen to support the initiative and requested JC to contact the Chris Hutchon Trust with a view to installing two public access defibrillators in Ballater, possibly at the 'shielded from the sun' part of the Old Station and Church Squares and one at Crathie.

Old School Working Group There was no news from Aberdeenshire Council.

Aberdeenshire Council CKF confirmed that new Monaltrie Park toilets would open permanently, possibly serviced from the Church Square facilities. Members of the Council expressed thanks for all her effective efforts in this matter.

Garden Waste Collections will start on Saturdays from April 18 to November 7.

Polhollick Bridge will be closed from May until September for refurbishment, not fuller repair.

FD met with Lorna Hogg from Aberdeenshire Council and 3 mini bins for recycling glass are to be installed at the entrance to Ballater Business Park.

CNPA There was no report.

9. Planning

The retrospective application for the bus stop in front on the Co-op store has been received. JA will send a letter of objection on the grounds of safety, parking and access. Members were encouraged to send their own letter of objection if they wished to make any further points.

10. Correspondence.

John Bolton (JB) sent an e-mail outlining the progress he has made so far with regard to a Flood Resilience Plan for Ballater. He will require assistance from someone local to Crathie to get a better understanding of needs there. He has requested a site visit through SEPA from the Scottish Flood Forum, particularly with regard to recent bank erosion. Contact has been made with Lauren Mackie from Flooding and Coast Protection - Infrastructure Services, who will provide further information on products available to householders to safeguard their homes against flooding. Ciara Wilson at SSEPD has added Ballater to the Register of Interest and will forward application forms to access funding for Resilience Planning at the end of April, when funds for the North of Scotland will be available. Janelle Clark has expressed keen interest in moving this issue forward and would welcome a meeting with the CC at a future date. JA has information on historic levels from SEPA and in Crathie. BD will contact JB to ask that he sends any information on flood plans to BRD. JB also raised concerns at damage to the green space adjacent to the CLAN shop. Parking on the grass has resulted in the area being badly churned up.

11. Finance The grant from Aberdeenshire Council is £534.

12. AOCB

FD had been in touch with Ruth Sim regarding the disabled access for the new Co-operative store. He requested CKF to make clear that the removal of the bus stop would ensure that disabled parking would be available at the entrance to the store. Ruth Sim had also said that the Post Office counter in the Co-op was too high for wheel-chair users and also queried the lack of a separate convenient post box in the vicinity of the store.

Following problems with O2 mobile phone reception in the area, WJ reported that all masts would be closed from 10am on 25th April to 6am on 26th April for upgrading. Faye Swan raised concerns about the errors in the local telephone system recently, which also caused problems for users of the Community Alarm system. This meant that while the Community Alarm may raise an alert, it was impossible for the Community Alarm team to make contact.

Material about the Data Protection Act and the proposals for the Marr Area Community Plans are available from the Secretary or online,

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.

The next meeting will be 11th May, 2015 at Crathie, 7pm to 9pm.