

# BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

[www.ballaterandcrathie.org.uk](http://www.ballaterandcrathie.org.uk)

Minutes of a Meeting held on 8th February 2016,  
7pm in Michael Sheridan Room, Victoria & Albert Halls, Ballater

<p><b>Present:</b> Francis Duguid (FD) - Chair James Anderson (WJ) - Vice Chair Jane Angus (JA) - Secretary Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer Iain Latta (IL) Phil Swan (PS) Cllr Katrina Farquhar (CKF) Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB)</p> <p><b>Apologies</b> Ian Cameron Sheila Sedgwick Cllr Peter Argyle</p>	<p><b>Also present:</b> Jack Coull (JC) - Ballater Royal Deeside Limited Lee Haxton (LH) - CNPA Alexander Burnett Iain Catto (IC) - Foundation Scotland PC McFadzean (PC) - Police Scotland Moirra McDougall (minutes)</p>
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## 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

## 2. Emergency services

Although there was no formal police report, the officer welcomed any questions and comments from the CC. He had been in Ballater on 30<sup>th</sup> December during the flooding. Community Reassurance Teams remain in place, although scaled back, but officers are operating out of the Ballater Police Office. **CKF** asked that the community's gratitude to Police Scotland during the emergency should be noted and passed on to all officers. **CGB** also expressed the gratitude of people in remote locations who had been visited by police officers during the flood to ensure all was as well as it could be.

## 3. Minutes of January's meeting were passed

## 4. Matters arising from January's meeting

**FD** had been unable to write to Post Office, but would now do so.

**FD** would ensure that the planning application for the defibrillators at the Victoria Hall and Church Square would be sent off as soon as possible. **CKF** and **JC** stressed that it was important to fit them as soon as possible in order to ensure that the warranty did not expire before they were in place.

**CKF** reported that Graham Duthie had visited Ballater businesses last week as those affected by flood would be offered a hold on business rates and refunds on rates already paid. Businesses affected by flood would also be eligible for £3,000 grant being offered by Aberdeenshire Council on behalf of the Scottish government.

## 5. Reports

### BRD

**JC** hoped that the touring section of the caravan park would be in operation later this year. The static section is still in a very bad state. Graham Duthie, rates assessor for Aberdeenshire Council, had reported that 90 of the 103 static caravan owners have claimed

the £1,500 grant and many have said they would be keen to return. However, new regulations require that static caravans must now be 6 metres apart, which means that plumbing and electrical points in the static section of the park would be in the wrong position. The original installation of plumbing and electricity had cost Aberdeenshire Council £500,000 two years ago. **CKF** asked **JC** if BRD had applied for the £3,000 grant.

### **Aberdeenshire Council**

With regard to grants available to individuals and businesses, **CGB** mentioned Foundation Scotland as a source of funding. Iain Catto, the North-east representative of Foundation Scotland, clarified that funding would be available to individuals or families as well as to Community Groups and Social Enterprise Groups affected by the flooding or who were assisting individuals affected by flooding. However, funding would not be available to businesses. A grant of £1,000 per household and up to £5,000 for groups was available. Foundation Scotland is working in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council to set up a local panel consisting of representatives from community councils, emergency services, Area Partnerships, etc to decide on the allocation of funding to groups. **IL** was proposed to represent BCC. As a member of Elgin Community Council, an area with major flooding issues in the past, Iain Catto expressed sympathy with the Ballater Community. Mr Catto also highlighted a forthcoming Funding Seminar to be held in Ballater on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February, 6.45-7.30pm attended by the Lottery, LEADER, Scottish Land Fund, Foundation Scotland and other funding bodies.

**CKF** and **CGB** had heard of problems arising from landlords and tenants both claiming the grant of £1,500 from Aberdeenshire Council. Technically, landlords, as businesses, should have applied for the £3,000 grant and the tenant for the £1,500 grant, but should there be any problems, please contact **CKF** and **CGB**.

**CGB** reported that Angus McNicol (Invercauld Estate), Aberdeenshire Council Waste and unpaid volunteers were prepared to clear the river banks at Eastfield Farm but were still waiting to hear from Scottish Water. It is anticipated that waste will be recycled as much as possible to alleviate landfill tax costs.

**CKF** said that residents may keep sandbags for future use, preferably in a dry location. Aberdeenshire Council would provide pallets for sandbags to be returned and the Charitable Chiels would assist in this venture.

Any future Waste collections may be arranged by phoning 03456 081207.

Furniture and Household Utensils may be collected from the containers at the car park behind the station and Glenmuick Church.

### **CNPA**

**LH** reported that an active audit of footpaths had been undertaken by COAT, estate staff, rangers, Aberdeenshire Council and Forestry Commission. Over 249km across the Eastern Cairngorms had been audited, with 146km damaged and 72km effectively closed. On Deeside, 79km of paths have been damaged, 32km completely washed away and 22km not completely available. **CKF** reported that £160,000 of damage had been estimated, excluding the damage to the bridges at Polhollick and Cambus o'May. Any reinstatement of the footpaths would be subject to funding available. It would also be preferable to include flood defence planning in any review of the footpath planning. The Ballater Pathways leaflet would be reviewed with alternatives suggested.

On 24<sup>th</sup> February, CNPA volunteers would join the River Dee Catchment Group to work on clearing the Tullich Burn - more volunteers warmly welcomed.

### **Ballater Resilience Plan**

John Boulton and Tony Cox were both working on a model of this, based on resilience plans completed at Peterculter.

### **Ballater Community Flood Event**

FD and the Community Council felt it was important to bring together as many groups and individuals as possible to report on the actual day of the flood, the repercussions for the village, and the way ahead. It will be an opportunity for members of the community to come and listen to and question representatives of SEPA, the Fire Service, Scottish Flood Forum, Foundation Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council. It will be an attempt to capture the experiences of all those affected. Thanks to funding from CNPA, it will be chaired by Councillor Peter Argyle, 7.30-9.30pm, Victoria and Albert Hall. On Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February, there will be a drop-in centre in the Beaton-Craigie Room from 10am to 7pm.

### **6. Community Council Elections for 2016**

FD and CKF will seek clarification from Janelle Clark as to the possibility of a short delay in holding elections to the Community Council.

[This has now been confirmed as a course of action : 11,2,16]

**7. Planning Matters** - There was nothing to report.

### **8. Correspondence**

Ron Drever had written to the Community Council to ask for consideration of the number of disparate groups which had been set up in the wake of the flood. FD agreed that it was important to bring the interests of these groups together to ensure a unity of purpose. IL felt that the CC should take the lead in providing a central platform for all groups to share information. FD hoped that the Ballater Community Flood Event would in some way fulfil that role and would ask Mr Drever to come along.

WJ had received an e-mail from Citizens' Advice seeking the support of the Community Council. Citizens' Advice currently operates from the Library and notices are being put up.

**9. Finance** - There is no change.

### **10. AOCB**

WJ inquired about the possibility of future dredging of the River Dee.

IL reported that the Halls committee had been offered the services of a ten-piece swing band for an evening of entertainment on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April which would go towards raising funds for a generator for the Halls.

FD asked about improving access between the Old Railway Station and the cycle shop. LH reported that an e-mail had been sent to COAT requesting the removal of the large footpath sign. CGB contacted Ralph Singleton to re-iterate concerns expressed by FD and PD regarding parking on the left hand side of Hillies' Brae on Braemar Road and to request double yellow lines. The removal of double yellow lines on the left hand side of Viewfield Road was again requested.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

The next meeting will be 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016, Michael Sheridan Room, V & A Halls, 7-9pm