

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

ballaterandcrathie.org.uk

Minutes of a Meeting held on 12th October, 2015

7pm in Crathie Church Hall, Crathie

<p>Present: Frances Duguid (FD) - Vice Chair James Anderson (WJ) Jane Angus (JA) Ian Cameron (IC) Pat Downie (PD) Sheila Sedgwick (SS) Cllr Katrina Farquhar (CKF) Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB) Apologies Billy Duguid (BD) Mike Forman (MF) Phil Swan</p>	<p>Also present: Alan Harrison (AH)- Ballater Royal Deeside Limited David Fox-Pitt (DFP) - Etape Royale Susan McGregor (SM) - Community Learning and Development Members of the public Moira McDougall (minutes)</p>
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1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Mike Forman will be resigning his position on the Community Council.

2. Emergency services - Police

The Police Service current report is available on the Community Council website.

3. Minutes from the September meeting were agreed.

4. Matters arising from the September meeting.

FD will complete planning application for defibrillators to be located in Ballater. **CKF** advised that the local CNPA office would be able to assist.

JA reported that she had received no response to her letters to the Post Office raising concerns about the current operation of Post Office services in the Co-op. **CGB** had received complaints from members of the public feeling vulnerable while using the services.

WJ raised the issue of there being no post office box within the store. **JA** will make a list of all problems so far reported and will circulate this to Council members for further comment. **FD** will then forward the completed list to the Post Office and request a meeting in the Store with Post Office representatives and members of the Community Council.

JA has received confirmation from Aberdeenshire Council that composting bins would not be available at cemeteries.

5. Etape Royale Review

DFP reported that 1033 cyclists had registered for the event, with 800 turning up on the day. The break-even point for such an event is 2500 participants but it was decided to go ahead with the Etape. Planning for the event had started two years before the event took place, but consultation with local communities only took place in January, February, March, 2015. On reflection, this consultation should have started earlier.

10% of the registration fees (£70 for 102 miles/£50 for 65 miles) would be available to local communities' funds and to date Etape Royale had received 50 applications from around the route. The registration fee included free camping and car-parking at Rhyne and Ballater, with approximately 600 people using the camping at Monaltrie Park on the Saturday night.

Mark Beaumont, the long-distance cyclist, had cycled the 102 mile route on a penny-farthing on 2 July, which had been televised on the Cycle Show but there could possibly have been more marketing of the event to a wider audience.

DFP indicated that £24,000 had been spent on sign-posting, £4,500 on mail-shots highlighting road closures to local people and £14,000 on providing medical support.

Fortunately, there had been only one accident when a rider came off his bike on the Suie.

Unfortunately, the event started off in the dark at 6am, which required all bikes to be fitted with lights. It is proposed to bring the date forward next year to 11th September.

This should also avoid the weekend coinciding with the Aberdeen September holiday. It is hoped to introduce a 45 mile ride from Dufftown in addition to the 65 mile ride from Rhyne and the 102 circular ride from Ballater. The overall response from participants had been very positive, with glowing reports of the welcome and scenery enjoyed by them.

In response to **DFP's** request for community feedback, it was noted that road signage could have been much improved to make it clear that Ballater was still accessible. **CGB** pointed out that the mail-shots regarding road-closures should have been sent to households in Braemar and Crathie which were also affected by the road closures. **FD** questioned the information available with regard to public transport which had been in some disarray. **DFP** indicated that there had been discussions with Stagecoach to improve this issue next year.

PD had received reports from some businesses in the village that they had been less busy than expected, particularly given that it was a holiday weekend. This had been due in part to the way in which the barricades on Bridge Street had been erected, making it difficult to cross from the Green to the lower end of the village. Etape Royale would be looking at providing crossing points in future years and in ways to increase the participants' access to the rest of the village in order to make use of shops, cafes and restaurants.

PD had also received complaints from residents who had been unable to park their cars in front of their houses or within the vicinity of their houses due to parking restrictions. There had also been problems with malfunctioning traffic lights installed to control traffic.

IC read out a letter outlining problems caused by the Etape Royale to the local community.

CGB and **CKF** suggested to **DFP** that the Etape Royale should consult with local Community Councils in Braemar, Cromar, Donside and Ballater & Crathie prior to next year before hosting meetings to the wider community, both business and public. **CGB** also suggested making greater use of local media. **DFP** thanked the **CC** for their input and time.

6. Community Learning and Development

SM introduced herself and outlined the three main areas of interest of Community Learning and Development: firstly, youth work, both in terms of those struggling at school and also to offer young people the opportunity to be involved in the decision-making in their local community. **SM** spoke of the Youth Bank, which encouraged young people to raise funds for the benefit of other youth activities. Secondly, adult learning, in particular literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology training and English as a Second Language. Thirdly, in family learning which includes working with Parent Groups in schools. Although based in Aboyne, Community Learning and Development is available in Braemar, Crathie and Ballater to provide educational support to people throughout their lives. Contact can be made by telephone, 013398 86222 or by e-mail

susan.mcgregor@aberdeenshire.gov.uk. The department also welcomes volunteers who might be able to offer support. All learning events take place in public/community halls.

7. Reports

Ballater Royal Deeside Limited

AH reported a very successful year for the caravan park. Refurbishment of the toilet block will start in November and it is hoped to create a campers' kitchen. Aberdeenshire Council have also agreed to listen to an appeal from BRD on the Council's refusal to sell the caravan park to BRD.

The BRD AGM takes place on 19th November at 7pm in the Victoria Hall and all are welcome. The 2015 Walking Festival was very successful and plans for 2016 are already well underway. BRD have purchased land at Dalmochie from the Forestry Commission and plans are underway to hand this over to the Dalmochie Forestry History Group.

Although BRD, the School and Aberdeenshire Council have agreed to funding for the Monaltrie Toilet Block, there is still a shortfall, given the total cost of £45,000. An approach will be made to Ballater Games Committee and the Ballater Chiels, as well as Etape Royale.

Aberdeenshire Council

CKF attended the re-opening of the Polhollick Bridge today. The Seven Bridges Walk is now possible once again. **JA** asked if there were any plans to refurbish the bridge at Aspenholme in the near future.

Members of the public raised their concerns with regard to snow-clearing in the winter from Fergach Cottage to the School in Crathie. There was also a problem with regard to the grass-cutting on the verges of the road towards the church-yard. They also reported that members of the public were using the verges as a toilet when the public conveniences were closed at night. **CKF** will look into this.

PD also asked **CKF** to confirm snow-clearing proposals for Ballater this winter as she understood that Bridge Street pavements would only be cleared as far as Yule's newsagents and that pavements on side streets would not be cleared. Clarification was also sought on what time snow clearing would start in the morning.

CKF reported that it would not be possible to put white lines in the middle of the road at the junction of the Glenmuick and South Deeside Road as the road was not wide enough at that

point. **CKF** will look into the possibility of a barrier at the edge of the South Deeside road and the river.

CKF had written to Aberdeenshire Council regarding the condition of the verges of the Church Green due to increased parking and has been informed that the Council has this matter in hand.

CKF will look into the matter of the phone box at Khantore being left to house community notices. A postal box will be installed there in due course.

CNPA

The designs for the lay-byes at Glenshee and the Lecht have now been accepted.

The CNPA offices will be refurbished once the TIC returns to the Station.

Scaffolding has gone up at the Old Railway Station to allow work to begin. Architects have been appointed. The exterior will be the same but there is ongoing discussion with regard to the interior layout.

Community Action Plan

There was no report.

8. Planning Matters

Nothing to report.

9. Correspondence

Michael Coletta had written to express concerns about the loss of the Station, in particular the Royal Carriage and Museum, as a Visitor attraction. There had been a noted reduction in footfall to the top end of the village. The Community Council would welcome suggestions as to how the history of the village might be best displayed in the coming months until the Old Royal Station is back in operation.

10. Finance

No change.

11. AOCB

WJ reported that 3G was now available on Vodaphone in some areas, but that other providers still had to catch up.

The Meeting closed at 9pm.

The next meeting will be 9th November, 2015, Mike Sheridan Room, V & A Hall, 7-9pm