

# BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

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Minutes of a Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015

7pm in Mike Sheridan Room, Victoria and Albert Hall, Ballater

<b>Present:</b> James Anderson (WJ) Jane Angus (JA) Ian Cameron (IC) Sheila Sedgwick (SS) Pat Downie (PD) Mike Forman (MF) Sheila Sedgwick (SS) Phil Swan (PS) Cllr Katrina Farquhar (CKF) <b>Apologies</b> Billy Duguid (BD) Mike Forman (MF)	<b>Also present:</b> David Horne - Ballater Royal Deeside Limited Lee Haxton (LH) -CNPA Tony Cox (TC) - Community Plan PC Donald Macleod (DM) - Police Scotland Ruth Sim (RS) - Access Panel Moirra McDougall (minutes)
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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.

**DM** reported low levels of crime in the area, apart from the distraction theft at Rowan Antiques into which enquires continue. Operation Cedar, concentrating on safe driving, speed checks and general road safety, continues. The local Police Service has been busy assisting in public order at local Games and Shows over the summer as well as involvement in two Mountain Rescue call-outs.

With regard to road safety, **PD** drew **DM's** attention to several issues raised by the forthcoming cycle race on 27<sup>th</sup> September. It had been understood that there would be rolling road closures during the event, with roads closed for short periods of time. However, publicity material issued this week, as well as recently erected sign-posts on routes, suggested that roads would be closed for the entirety of the event. **TC** pointed out that Mr Fox-Pitt, organiser of the event, had intimated that there would be rolling road closures at a meeting two weeks ago. **LH** reported that CNPA had also understood that a rolling road closure programme would be implemented, although road signage was not clear in this respect. **TC** will contact Mr Fox-Pitt to clarify the matter. **DM** will contact the Police Events Management Department to also seek clarification.

## 3. Minutes from the July meeting were agreed.

## 4. Matters arising from the July meeting.

The possibility of snow gates on the Gairnshiel-Crathie road is still on-going.

**CKF** will report to the Community Council with regard to the extension of 20mph areas in the village.

**IC** queried the current condition of the Gairnshiel Bridge, in particular the placing of tall metal posts on the verge to keep traffic off the edge of the bridge. He criticised them as unsightly. **PD** asked if it would not be possible to replace the Gairnshiel Bridge with a Bailey Bridge and retain the historical character of the old bridge. **FD** suggested re-classifying the road and placing a weight restriction on the bridge, but as this is the main tourist route connecting Deeside and Donside, it would not be in the community's interests. **CKF** and **JA** will contact the Roads Department.

**LH** will contact the Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust with regard to the repair of the bridge at Posties Leap on the Old Line. **IC** reported that the original culverts to take away rainwater had been damaged when the new water supply pipe to the village had been laid, resulting in there being excess water lying on the footpath and leading to erosion and landslips. He suggested that there should be an allocation of budget made to ensure maintenance of footpaths as well as opening new footpaths. **LH** explained that funding for new paths was generally easier to raise as the opening of a new path generating good publicity more so than the repair of an existing path. **CKF** pointed out that funding for the maintenance of paths was generally revenue raised from car-parking fees. **LH** reported that in future, when **COAT** is considering funding for a new path, then an element for maintenance should be included.

**JA** will speak with Mr Grant of the Waste Department to find out about the possibility of a composting bin to be located at cemeteries.

## **5. Reports**

### **Ballater Royal Deeside Limited**

**DH** reported that the carved nativity scene, funded by BRD, will start this week. Ross McNeill, the sculptor, arrived today (Monday) and will carve the figures at St Kentigern's. The figures will then be displayed on the Church Green.

It is unlikely that there will be funds available from BRD next year as any surplus funds will be diverted to upgrading the toilet block at the caravan park.

Following a query from **PS**, **DH** reported that Richard Carrington will update the BRD website in the near future, having recently completed a website for the Caravan Park.

### **Aberdeenshire Council**

**CKF** had received a letter from Balmoral agreeing to the siting of a defibrillator at Crathie Information Centre. **FD** will send in the planning application forms for the defibrillators as a matter of urgency. Once all defibrillators are in location, a map will be produced and **CKF** has gained permission from Stagecoach to put the maps on all buses. There will be a training day on the use of the defibrillators on 26<sup>th</sup> August at the Scout Hut, Aboyne, 10am to 12.30pm.

The official launch of BT's superfast broadband is on 29<sup>th</sup> September.

The AGM of the Marr Area Partnership Forum will take place on 30<sup>th</sup> September at the Lumsden Scottish Sculpture Workshop at 6.30pm.

Following a query from **PS**, **CKF** reported that there is an ongoing consultation with regard to the Tree Preservation Order for this area, which was last done in 1957. **CKF** agreed to re-

send the Tree Preservation Order package via e-mail to all members of the Community Council.

Councillor Peter Argyle has replaced Duncan Bryden as Convener of the CNPA.

**PD** asked why work appeared to have stopped at the Tullich cemetery extension and car park. **IC** replied that this had been due partly to Aberdeenshire Council holidays and partly to the discovery that there were a number of extremely large boulders on the site. This had necessitated double digging and the removal of any large stones from the earth to allow easier excavation of future lairs.

Aberdeenshire Council had appointed a contractor to demolish the Old Railway Station ready for redevelopment. This decision had followed the correct process as Finance Regulations usually required four tenders to be requested for this type of work, but the appointment was made to save time. There will be a table at the Halls Open Day on 3<sup>rd</sup> October for the community to be involved in plans for the future of the Old Railway Station.

#### **CNPA**

**LH** reported that early sketches for lay-byes at Glenshee and at the Old Mine at the Lecht had been completed.

There will be a meeting of the Association of Cairngorm Communities on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September, which will also mark the launch of Leader, with £3 million available to local projects.

There is a Community Empowerment Event at the Kintore Arms in Inverurie on 1<sup>st</sup> October organised by the Garioch Partnership.

Following the Scottish Rural Parliament meeting in Oban, a survey has been sent out to Community Councils to find out the needs of rural communities.

The lease to Visit Scotland for office space in the Park Authority Office has been extended. Town Centre's Development Plan has money available for projects which do not require or already have planning permission in order to improve local facilities.

The new CNPA website launched this week.

#### **Community Action Plan**

**TC** will send his initial report to **BD** and **FD**. There are a number of successful groups operating independently of each other in Ballater and **TC** would like to see the creation of a Community Hub whereby all such groups might meet on a regular basis to discuss and learn about each other's plans. **DH** indicated that BRD would very much wish to be involved in this project and BRD is in the process of producing a report on their current and future plans. **TC** also suggested that an economic health check of the village might also be beneficial. **WJ** to assist **TC**.

#### **6. Planning Matters**

Currently, **BD** checks all planning applications on Aberdeenshire Council's website on a weekly basis and if there are any of local interest, then these are forwarded to all members of the Community Council by e-mail for comment. It is then up to individual members to decide if they wish to comment to **BD** so that he might put forward the CC point of view or alternatively, to contact Aberdeenshire Council directly themselves. Following discussions,

**IC** will put forward alternative methods of handling planning applications at the next Community Council meeting at Crathie.

### **7. Correspondence**

There had been no replies from the Co-op or the Post Office to letters from **JA** outlining the community's concerns with the current arrangements. **RS** asked **FD** if he would make contact with the PO and request a meeting between the Community Council and the Post Office. **FD** will report back to **RS** when a meeting is arranged. **CKF** will contact Janelle Clark who will also contact PO.

### **8. Finance**

No change.

### **9. AOCB**

**PD** reported that residents at Sluiemohr were concerned about people taking shortcuts down the back of the building and through the private gate to Hawthorn Crescent. **CKF** will look into this. **PD** confirmed that flowers had been ordered for next year.

**CKF** confirmed that Janelle Clark is currently looking at various locations and solutions to the problem of the bus stop. School buses are currently parking at the RC Chapel on Golf Road.

**WJ** and **PD** had both heard a number of complaints about parking round the Glenmuick Church and in particular damage to the verges of the Church Green.

Also queried why buses were being parked outside the Church overnight.

**WJ** asked **CKF** to approach the Roads Dept with regard to white lines on the South Deeside road from the Ballater Bridge to Glenmuick, as well as the siting of a barrier on the river side of the road.

The Meeting closed at 9pm.

The next meeting will be 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015, at the Church Hall, Crathie, 7-9pm