

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

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Minutes of a Meeting held on 13th June, 2016, at 7pm
Mike Sheridan Room, Victoria & Albert Hall

<p>Present: Francis Duguid (FD) - Chair James Anderson (WJ) - Vice Chair Jane Angus (JA) - Secretary Iain Latta (IL) Sheila Sedgwick (SS)</p> <p>Apologies Pat Downie Phil Swan Ian Cameron, Tony Cox - Ballater Flood Group John Bolton - Ballater Resilience Plan Cllr Geva Blackett Cllr Katrina Farquhar</p>	<p>Also present: Allan Harrison (AH) - Ballater Royal Deeside Limited PC Bill Riley - Police Scotland Wendy Miller - CC candidate Joanne Croll - CC candidate Fiona Williamson-Presslie - CC candidate Iain Murray Moira McDougall (minutes)</p>
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1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

2. Emergency services : Constable Willian Rafferty

Police Office is now open in Ballater, Mon-Fri, 9am to 5pm, staffed full-time by Karen. Contingency plans are now in place should there be another event like the flood of 30th December to ensure better functionality. PC Riley reported very little crime - a theft from a holiday cottage and an opportunistic theft in a local hotel. He advised the public to be particularly vigilant in locking cars and property and to ensure that keys were stored securely. A recent spate of thefts in lower Deeside had been largely opportunistic, forcing entry to property and then stealing vehicles with keys left in full view. These vehicles were then used in further crimes. **IL** asked if there had been any developments in the investigation into the theft at Cycle Highlands, but the officer was not aware of any. PC Riley also mentioned that Operation Zenith, using marked and unmarked police vehicles and motor bikes would be operating in Upper Deeside during the summer to monitor motor cycle traffic in particular. **FD** highlighted the problem of emerging agricultural traffic at the end of the Tullich straight. **FD** also suggested that a Police van located at Braemar, which was one of the main gathering points for bikers, might be a means of Police Scotland making informal contact with bikers. Operation Zenith, in conjunction with other projects such as television advertising, had worked well in reducing the number of bike accidents.

IL had sent a letter to Lee Westwood to congratulate the Fire Service on the recent awards.

3. Minutes of May's meeting were approved.

4. Matters arising from May's meeting

JA had received no response to her e-mails regarding the issue of safety at the landscaping project at Crathie School, which had not been discussed with the Community Council. This matter will be raised again in July when Councillors from Aberdeenshire Council will be present.

5. Reports

BRD

AH reported that the touring section of the caravan park opened on Friday 13th May and had been fully booked most weekends, with good feedback. Thirty-two of the forty touring sites had been sponsored by groups and individuals, each paying £300, which had assisted in the cost of re-turfing the site.

BRD were now considering how best to proceed with the static section, although as leaseholders, rather than owners of the site, securing funding would prove more challenging. The Royal Guard would assist in the clearing of the static section during the summer and this was welcomed.

An amended Walking Week took place in mid-May, attended by 38 people.

AH reported that local churches on Deeside had been offered assistance from other church groups throughout Scotland to send volunteers to help people return to their homes eg helping the elderly to sort out their gardens. Gillie Inglis (at the Barracks) will be co-ordinating this, matching offers of help with those in need. The Army are also keen to offer help at this level. Apparently, the Army were disappointed to have their offer of help rejected in January by Aberdeenshire Council who had been concerned about the cost. **FD** suggested that the **CC** should request an explanation from Aberdeenshire Council

Aberdeenshire Council

No councillors were present, but concerns were raised about the condition of the Cock's Neck to Mill of Sterin road as there was insufficient warning of the drop and no barrier. **IL** suggested that Aberdeenshire Council should be congratulated on the repair of the footpath between Ballater and the A93 and on towards Tullich.

Ballater Resilience Plan

This had been separated in to two parts to cover Ballater and Crathie. John Bolton has sent a copy of the plan to all members of the **CC**. **WJ** will forward a copy to Jo Croll, Wendy Miller and Fiona Williamson-Presslie. John Bolton had appealed for volunteers in the recent Ballater Eagle but had been disappointed by the response so far. Wendy Miller suggested contacting the Piper, the Press and Journal and local television news to highlight what is required. **IL** suggested that until the Resilience Plan had been accepted by the emergency services and Aberdeenshire Council, recruitment of volunteers would be put on hold. Concerns were also raised about how to collect and store information on all those requiring assistance in the event of any future disaster and the 'Data Protection' problems. Wendy Miller suggested that the local clinic might be a good starting point. Linda Drever had already made an informal start on this simply in the recent surveys.

Ballater Flood Group

IL made the report on behalf of **TC**. A technical meeting between Aberdeenshire Council, SEPA, the Ballater Flood Group and Douglas Johnstone, hydrologist, is scheduled for Tuesday 14th June. The Community Council agreed that the Ballater Flood Group should be congratulated for ensuring that the community's concerns for the immediate future risk of flooding had been brought to the attention of the relevant bodies. However, **FD** wanted to be sure that any scheme to protect Ballater would not be detrimental to anyone either upstream or downstream of the village. The capacity of the river was of concern. **FD** cited the example of the Elgin Flood Defences which had been shown to be effective without damaging other communities.

6. Community Council Elections for 2016

The CC elections will take place on Thursday 16th June.

7. Planning Matters

Multiple applications for access tracks to Invercauld grouse butts had been called in by CNPA and for repairs to estate roads and bridges and the CC remained supportive of working estates improving and maintaining existing tracks. There were no objections to illumination of the Co-op sign, a change of use in Crathie and alterations of houses.

8. Correspondence

WJ had received correspondence from Iain Murray and Mike Rasmussen with regard to the Pictish stones at Tullich. Mike Rasmussen had been commissioned by Aberdeenshire Council to design a shelter for the stones, which he had done, but had heard nothing further from the Council. Iain Murray felt that the stones should never have been removed from Tullich in the first place and should certainly not be returned to the proposed museum in the Old Royal Station building. There was no funding available to make appropriately safe the walls of the Church at Tullich. **IL** will convey the opinion of the CC that the stones should be returned to Tullich when he attends the next Old Royal Station working group meeting. **JA** also asked that a section on Natural History should be included in the museum and all parking spaces retained.

JA reported that the designated assistant for the Post Office in the Co-op had left the store and various points again made to the recent re-organising team. The Co-op appears to prefer to have someone able to do both Post Office and Co-op transactions. Disability access and signage remained poor. **FD** suggested that an information leaflet from the Co-op outlining the post office services available in the store should be made available. Wendy Miller suggested names for making further contact with the communications department of the Co-op to this end.

There had been news of meetings to take place on the Aberdeen By-Pass, and at Mar Lodge for the Cairngorms Business Group. The Flood Liaison Group meets on June 16th and minutes etc are available from the secretary. Marr Area Forum had met in Braemar and heard about Health and Social Welfare etc. with opportunities to discuss matters of mutual interest with officials from both Park and A'shire.

9. Finance

No report

10. AOCB

IL congratulated David Barr and his team on the success of the street party to celebrate The Queen's 90th Birthday.

SS is going to re-do her book on Ballater and would welcome any information that the anyone feels should be included.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

The first meeting of the newly elected Council will be 11th July 2016, Albert Hall, 7-9pm.