

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

www.ballaterandcrathiecommunitycouncil.com

Minutes of BCCC meeting, Village Meeting held at Michael Sheridan Room, Ballater on
Monday 10th November 2025 at 7pm

Present:	Apologies	Also present:
James Anderson -Chair (WJ) John Bannerman - Vice Chair (JB) Richard Frimston - Secretary (RF) Jennifer Davidson - Asst Secretary (JD) William Braid (BB) Linda Drever (LD) Jo Croll (JC) Scott Peacock (SP) Simon Mearns (SM) Lewis Macdonald (LMM)	Cllr Geva Blackett Anouk Kloppert Ellie Kinghorn Kate Allum Gavin Miles - CNPA Martin Ellison Weston Main	Cllr Sarah Brown (CSB) Paul Gibb (PG) - CNPA Ron Drever Eric McQueen (EM-BCE) Bruce Lawson (BL- BCE) Sergeant Allan Masson - Police Scotland Dougal Morgan (DM) Mike Hadley Cat Scripps Athol Bowman Ray Riddoch (RR-BCT)

1 Welcome and apologies by WJ

2 Emergency Services Report - Police Scotland

Sergeant Masson reported that poachers had been apprehended at Loch Kinord, assisted by them posting images on Facebook of their catch. There had been several anti-social events linked to one individual. A pedal bike had been stolen at Glen Muick, when a cyclist/walker had left their bike to complete a climb. Traffic police continue to monitor speeding vehicles on Upper Deeside. There had been several small-scale Mountain Rescue events, although **WJ** pointed out it was now coming into the 'silly season'. There had been a moor fire deliberately set near Coull House, but fortunately it had not spread. A secluded property was discovered to be cultivating cannabis with a potential six-figure street value if it had been harvested, however a change of ownership of the rental property had resulted in it being abandoned. Mountain Rescue had worked with Police Scotland and Thrive to promote safety when out and about on mountain bikes. **RF** raised the issue of motor bikes using the cinder path, which is currently undergoing remedial work, and asked how such behaviour should be reported. Sergeant Masson suggested going on to Police Scotland website and reporting by e-mail, especially if registration number had been caught and if it had been safe to take

a photograph of the perpetrator. Alternatively, dial 101. If there is an immediate risk to life, then dial 999 to report.

3 Minutes of October 2025 were approved.

4 Conflicts of interest would be raised as and when during the meeting

5 Action Tracker

AECOM, had submitted a Note to give an update to BCCC regarding the Ballater Mobility Hub and associated coach parking site. There will be a public consultation on 25th November in the Mike Sheridan Room. There was considerable discussion regarding the project objectives which currently hopes to develop a mobility hub at the Church Square car park, incorporating the removal of the bus stop from Golf Road, along with a design for coach parking out with the village. **DM** was concerned that the project had developed arms and legs as really the main concern was to move the bus stop, this being due to funding being available for a transport hub, but not for a simple change of location of bus stop. **CSB** pointed out that basic things cannot be done by Abco because funding streams from central government have been allocated to other bodies. **RR** suggested that the coach parking situation had to be solved first before any other, so that the relocation of bus stop to Church Square would not impinge on parking availability. **JD** suggested that an out-of-town bus park would not work due to limited time available to tours. **RR** reported that it might be possible to communicate with Aberdeen Port Authority regarding cruise ship coach tours. **RF** emphasised that removal of the bus stop was the essential request taken from the 2018 and 2023 Community Action Plan. Athol Bowman pointed out the dangers of the current bus stop with people walking on the road to avoid queues for the bus and to use the ATM. **CSB** raised the possibility of the bus stop being relocated to Bridge Street, although **DM** pointed out that this would be a loss of parking spaces and green local amenity space. **RF** would request an update from AECOM following the public meeting (no 6).

CSB pointed out that a survey of Ballater pavements for mobility access would come under the Ballater Mobility Hub Project (no 139). A quote of £7,000 had been received to remove and rebuild the cairn on top of Craigendarroch (no 140). Work has started on cinder path, to be completed by 12th January. If there are no sheep in the field, then pedestrians may be diverted through the field, otherwise the contractor will ensure safe passage through the work area (no141). Having been informed that overgrown verges at Eastfield is not a road safety hazard, **JD** will raise the matter at a higher level with Abco (No 146).

6 Sub-committee Reports

Housing and Planning

A Planning

BB reported there had been 3 planning applications in the last month: solar panels at a house in Golf Road (**RF** declared a conflict of interest), construction of bike store at caravan park and pruning of trees at Sluibeg.

B H1

JC suggested that BCCC needed to regroup regarding H1. Nothing had been heard from Scotia, although Angus Macnicol at Invercauld still seemed confident in the project.

Flooding Issues Group (FIG)

JB reported that the FIG work streams have been updated and circulated to all. There were no objections, and these will be issued.

As previously reported the CNPA have agreed to partner with the Ballater community on the next phases of the CBEC work. To this end a MOU has been agreed between the CNPA, BRD and the BCCC. It was agreed that **WJ** will sign the MOU on behalf of BCCC.

On 27/11 ABCO Flood team will be presenting an interim report to the Infrastructure Services committee on the "North East Region Local Flood Risk Management plan".

FIG request BCCC approval to speak at this meeting to raise the following points:

- 1) Request ABCO to continue to support each of the FIG work streams preferable with a formal contact point within the ABCO organisation for each work stream.
- 2) Request ABCO to highlight to Scottish Government the limitations of the current terms of reference for the flood management plans. These plans currently focus on "Potentially Vulnerable Areas" and ultimately lead to local flood defences being constructed. There is consensus that flood and drought go hand in hand and a catchment level approach may be a more cost effective and satisfactory method of adapting to the new climate reality. The current flood management plan does not address this, we believe this should change.
- 3) In representing the community views the BCCC opposes the ABCO recommended solution for protecting Ballater from Storm Frank type flooding (3A). Currently, we have agreed to disagree with Abco and we appreciate that it is difficult for ABCO to retract the associated funding request. However, if funding, full or partial for 3A were to be forthcoming and ABCO were to start the engineering of the 3A scheme, BCCC would need to establish its response. The best way to achieve this would be in a public meeting. It is likely this would result in a formal campaign against 3A. BCCC agreed to all these proposals and **RF** would seek permission to speak at this meeting, although this might not be granted by Abco.

Ballater Resilience Group

LD had met with a group in Tarland interested in setting up a Resilience Group. Abco has also been persuaded to give a large battery to BRG, supplied by SSEN. **LD** is awaiting confirmation for a date for a tabletop exercise for all coordinators set up by Abco using AI.

BB reported that BCCC are responsible for care & maintenance of 5 publicly available defibrillators at Victoria Hall; Church Square Public Toilets; Park House Caravan Park; H M Sheridan Butcher and Crathie Gallery & Post Office. All are registered with 'The Circuit' managed by the British Heart Foundation showing location of all public defibrillators. BCT had funded the replacement of defibrillator pads at Park House Caravan Park and H M Sheridan (£59 and £56 respectively). **RF** proposed a vote of thanks to **BB** who inspects all defibrillators monthly and undertakes all such replacements.

Economy

RF expressed disappointment that little progress is being made regarding the Old Royal Station, but he will meet Tim Stephens on 17th November to raise the issue again. The demise of Ballater Business Association means that there is no united voice for businesses in the community.

Roads & Paths

SM was concerned that 2 gritting bins, one at Sluie Mohr and one at the Old School development, would be removed if BCCC were not willing to adopt them. However, public liability insurance and other costs made this impossible for BCCC to undertake. **CSB** would contact Housing Officer to check status of bin at Sluie Mohr. **WB** suggested placing on Facebook page to ascertain if any local member of the community would be interested in adopting.

7 Crathie Issues

RF had received reports that the 20mph signs at Crathie School were not working and had been reported to Abco, but the repair was not scheduled until October 2026. **CSB** was asked to investigate this.

8 Other Reports

Abco

CSB had submitted a report to the BCCC. Following the introduction of 20mph speed limits in urban areas, further requests had been received, such as Crathie to be reduced from 50mph to 30mph; Bridge of Gairn from 60mph to 40mph and Pass of Ballater from 60mph to 40mph. None of these requests met the criteria to reduce speed limits, but all had been referred to the Infrastructure Services Committee. **CSB** had urged Abco to repair the bollard on Station Square as costs can be recovered from the motorist who damaged it. The partial nighttime lighting switch off will be slower to implement as the network was more complex than initially thought.

CGB - Apologies and report - I attended the drop-in session for the community hospital review last week at the community centre and was pleased that it seemed pretty busy and well attended. I am sure that like me, no one wants to travel to ARI and so the more services that Aboyne Hospital can deliver the better! I am exploring a human rights angle to health care delivery in the remote parts of the ward as centralisation obviously has a detrimental impact on everyone not least those who can't

drive for whatever reason. The survey is still open online until 16th November so please can the community council ensure as many people as possible have completed it.

She will once again be distributing food in Christmas week, thanks to donations from local Estates of venison and pheasant casserole. She asks only for name, address, phone number and number of mouths to be fed to add to the Hardship Fund.

Cairngorm National Park Authority

Paul Gibb pointed out that CNPA did not have the power or financial wherewithal to implement changes to road widths or bus stop relocations, but it did have the means to work with stakeholders and other groups to bring about changes. He had raised the matter in meetings that CNPA must be careful to limit itself to what it can deliver. While CNPA had received a grant of £40 million from the Heritage Horizons Lottery Fund, which allowed them to promote active travel, this had to be done in conjunction with other bodies and stakeholders.

RF said that BCCC appreciated its relationship with CNPA and attendance at last month's meeting by Adam Streeter Smith.

Community Action Plan

RF reported that the Hub was now on winter hours. **KA** had reported delivery of a new power processor for the Greens and she was awaiting delivery of new bins for the Greens.

Ballater (Royal Deeside) Ltd - Ballater Community Trust

RR reported that AGM had taken place and accounts had been finalised and submitted. The new Chair in 2026 will be Kate Allum. While Oil Club membership has increased, the recent mild weather has resulted in decreased demand for oil.

Ballater Community Enterprise

EM reported that the caravan park will be closed at the end of November for the season. Improvement works over the winter will include redecoration of toilet/shower facilities, road resurfacing, tree planting and installation of CCTV to improve security. Discussions are at an early stage with Abco to explore the possibility of creating a campervan Aires at Monaltrie Park to generate future income to transform the Park into a wider community asset.

The caravan park had won the AA Scotland's Campsite of the Year award which was testament to the hard work of the team at the campsite, but also to all those through the past ten years who have contributed so much time and energy to the park. **RR** raised the point that, apart from the revenue from the park itself, there is an intangible revenue to the village in the region of over £1 million. The Golf Club likewise brings revenue to the village. **JB** remarked that was one of the fundamental reasons to oppose Option 3A which would have such a detrimental effect on both caravan park and golf course.

Halls

BB reported Halls continue to be well used and busy.

Ballater Golf Club

WM asked that the forthcoming Bingo Night to raised funds for Crathie Opportunity Holidays should be highlighted: to be held on 27th November and tickets available at the Club bar.

Ballater School

The school newsletter had been circulated to BCCC.

Climate Action Now

SP submitted a report. The Aboyne and Mid-Deeside Community Shed have confirmed that they welcome Ballater & Crathie residents to join the Shed and make use of DIY advice and tool access. The next litter picking will be on 22nd November. CAN will be restructuring their projects. While CAN assists with the Food Pantry, there is already a group who have responsibility for it.

9 Correspondence

JD had received an email from a disgruntled former CC member seeking anyone interested in lobbying the Scottish Government to secure better funding and power for local CCs. **JD** would circulate to all members. **JB** suggested it would be a long-term project for anyone in the community who might be interested in taking this on and reporting back to BCCC. **RF** suggested it might be something which BCCC could look at in conjunction with neighbouring CCs. Other areas of concern include the share of council funding received by Abco from central government along with the share of funding which NHS Grampian receives in comparison with other regions in Scotland. **BL** remarked that devolution within Scotland had happened at a slower pace than in England. Much of power in Scotland is still located in the Central Belt.

10 Finance

No Change

11AOCB

JC will represent BCCC at wreath laying at Crathie on Tuesday 11th November.

JD will host an event at the Hub on Wednesday 12th November 2025, 1pm - 3pm, to assist anyone interested in completing the Community Hospital Survey.

The meeting concluded at 20.45

The Next meeting will be held on 8th December at 19.00 to 21.00 hours in the Mike Sheridan Room, Ballater.