

## BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CCC)

[www.ballaterandcrathiecommunitycouncil.com](http://www.ballaterandcrathiecommunitycouncil.com)

Minutes of Meeting held at Moxon Quarry Studios, Crathie, on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024  
at 7.00pm

<b>Present:</b> Jim Anderson - Chairman (WJ) Richard Frimston (RF) - Secretary Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer Bill Braid (BB) Ellie Kinghorn (EK) John Bannerman (JB) Tom Flynn (TF) Jo Croll (JC) - Vice Chair Gareth Johnston (GJ) Simon Mearns (SM)	<b>Apologies</b> Cllr Geva Blackett Cllr Sarah Brown Cllr Anouk Kloppert Paul Gibb Scott Peacock	<b>Also present:</b> Linda Drever - BRG (LD) Bruce Lawson (BL) Dougal Morgan Ray Riddoch (RR-BRD) Ken Gibson (KG) - Paths Calum Halhead -Abergeldie Angus McNicol AMN - Invercauld Estate Philip Farquharson - Invercauld Estate Lucile Verrot (LV) Martin Ellison Duncan Steven Sergeant Allan Masson - Police Scotland Helen Miskelly Ron Drever
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### 1 Welcome

WJ welcomed all to BCCC meeting.

### 2 Conflicts of interest.

### 3 Emergency Services Report

Sergeant Allan Masson summarised his crime report for this quarter. There were only 6 crimes reported in Ballater, none of which were significant. Also several mountain rescue call outs, but reduced due to less serious weather this winter. PC Simon Anderson will work out of Ballater Police Station, with specific responsibility for upper Deeside. PC Ben Avery, based in Banchory, will be undertaking speed checks in upper Deeside in the next few months. Sergeant Masson urged BCCC to e-mail him should there be any further questions or matters arising.

### 4 March minutes were approved

### 5 Matters arising from previous meeting.

### 6 Action Tracker Update.

Jim Bowe had a meeting with representatives of BCCC and council officers in partnership with Aecom consultants to discuss 2 options to relocate the bus stop from Golf Road and the possibility of introducing a Mobility Hub in Ballater. The two locations are Bridge Street and Church Square. Following feedback from BCCC and

local councillors, adjusted designs will be put forward in a public consultation, possibly May/June to enable the community to discuss the ideas and contribute to final solution. A Mobility Hub is defined as "a recognisable place with an offer of different and connected transport modes supplemented with enhanced facilities and information features to both attract and benefit the traveller".

While the final prices for installation of Snow Cam at Gairnshiel (no 121) have been submitted, and applications may be made for grants to Marr Area and BRD, there are concerns regarding the ongoing maintenance costs of the camera, as this would have to be owned by BCCC. Neither BRD nor BCCC are keen to bear such costs. **BB** pointed out that other snow cameras owned by Community Councils also have a Just Giving link on their websites to encourage users to contribute to costs. **WJ** suggested the possibility of local businesses agreeing to sponsor the cameras. **GJ** would investigate sponsorship options. **AMN** confirmed that Invercauld Estate would meet the electrical costs of the camera.

There are still ongoing issues with parking problems at Balmoral Estate. The poor repair of the road at Balmoral Gates (no125) would be raised at next meeting with Balmoral Estate, in particular damage caused by coaches turning at the gates. Concerns about the safety of the Seven Bridges Walk at Red Braes would be raised again with Balmoral (no 128). **RF** reported that the ATM was not working again last Saturday. Kate Allum continues to press for a new machine with possible deposit facility. **BL** had received no response from Stagecoach regarding complaints about noise and other issues at the bus garage and would press for further information (no 133).

## **7 Sub-committee Reports**

### Housing & Planning

- a) Duncan Steven presented his objections to the BCCC regarding the planning application for a 4-bedroomed house at Greystones. BCCC agreed to discuss his concerns at the end of the meeting.
- b) **EK** reported that Scotia would like to meet with BCCC representatives, Ballater Games representatives and BRD to discuss the HI planning application. **AMN** anticipated that the application would be made in the next few weeks. There was concern that the 3d images, requested 6 months ago, had not been produced. **RF** would contact Scotia to urge them to produce the 3d plan as the community were concerned about heights of buildings and road in the development. **JC** reminded everyone that nothing can be changed after the application has been made and so the 3d plan was urgently required. **AMN** would also remind Scotia to produce the plan. There was general concern in the BCCC that Scotia were trying to avoid the issue.

### Flooding Issues Group (FIG)

**JB** reminded the meeting that there was a SEPA flood alert in place for Aberdeenshire for the next few days, with the river high already. **GJ** asked if it were possible to receive more localised alerts, as Aberdeenshire covered a fairly wide area, with many different weather systems. **LV** reported that SEPA are working on this and it is possible on the SEPA website to locate maps which will clarify the at risk areas. **FIG** had a meeting with SSEN and the Golf Club and there will be a new access road to the riverside path, which should make it easier for work to be done on the path following flood events, especially in the summer months, when access through the caravan park was limited. **CBEC** have looked at the work undertaken to date and have come up with further ideas to improve village safety and these have been presented to SEPA.

**FIG** have been drafting a letter to be sent to CNPA on behalf of BCCC, Mid Deeside CC and Braemar CC outlining a request for a climate change feasibility study to look at the problem from a catchment point of view.

**TF** pointed out that **FIG** would prefer if SEPA looked at the whole question of flooding and drought at catchment level rather than looking at PVAs - Potentially Vulnerable Areas. The Scottish Government allocates funding based on identifying PVAs. At the last round of funding in 2015, 42 projects were identified to be completed by 2021. To date, only 14 have been completed and these have used up all the funding available.

SEPA are currently undertaking public consultation on Potentially Vulnerable Areas asking if the PVA definition should be tweaked; should Ballater be a PVA and should Scotland have a different approach. **FIG** has completed the survey on behalf of BCCC, but **TF** would urge as many people in the community as possible to participate to get the message across that the system needs to change.

**RF** reported that **FIG** had increased membership undertaking different facets of the work.

#### BRG - Ballater Resilience Group

**LD** reported a successful meeting the Abco resilience group, working towards an Operational Document. There had also been a positive Teams meeting with Janelle Clark and Gordon Riddler of the Halls. A number of new volunteers means there is a healthy bank of volunteers should any emergency arise.

#### CRG - Crathie Resilience Group

Nothing to report.

#### Roads and Paths

**KG** reported that the various surveys were being undertaken to produce a plan for the improvement of the cinder path, with a view to planning application being made in June. However, there would then need to be a funding exercise for the construction work. There had been a Paths for All inspection visit. **RF** had joined the Paths Group to ensure connection with other areas of planning. It is hoped to achieve a more coordinated approach. **KG** had approached CNPA to look at the erosion of the Gairn

river bank on the 7 Bridges Walk. As this is probably one of the most popular walks in Ballater, it is important to maintain it. **WJ** would have a look at the site. **AMN** would send the contact information for the local CNPA ranger service to ensure signage for the walk was correct. Another section of the 7 Bridges Walk on the South Deeside Road continued to raise concerns. The sign suggesting the off-road walk up Craigcoillich to reach Glen Muick is counter intuitive. **WJ** and others suggested a map at the foot of the hill, showing various sights on the walk and how it looped towards Glen Muick would be helpful. **KG** had spoken with Inchmarnoch Estate regarding the boggy section of the Cambus O'May circular path at Glascorrie and to speak with Glen Muick about water on the path from the Curling Ponds on Craigcoillich. **KG** would also have a stand at Aboyne Games as well as improving links with Ballater Walking Week. **RF** raised concerns about the masonry at Postie's Leap and **AMN** said that this had already been reported and is scheduled to be checked out.

### **8 Crathie issues**

Nothing to report.

### **9 Other Reports**

#### Aberdeenshire Council

No reports

#### CNPA - Cairngorm National Park Authority

**RF** and **BL** had attended a Cairngorm Communities Event held by CNPA at Boat of Garten in March. It was interesting to note that many communities across the Park area had similar problems. **BL** reported that several communities on the north side of the Park found it difficult to have a functioning Community Council.

#### CAP - Community Action Plan

**TF** reported that there would be a Home Energy Scotland visit on 26<sup>th</sup> June, further details in the Eagle, giving residents advice on insulation and other energy saving ideas. Further information would be available on CAP after a meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April.

#### BRD - Ballater (Royal Deeside) Limited

Ray Riddoch reported that a 3<sup>rd</sup> power bank was due on the Green and maintenance funding of the 2 current power banks had been agreed. The Duck Festival is in early June and Ballater Walking Week was nearly sold out, following a feature in The Guardian a few weeks ago. Planning application is ongoing for a squirrel bridge in the Pass of Ballater. Ray Riddoch commended Scott Peacock on doing an excellent job of raising awareness in the community regarding environmental issues.

#### BCE - Ballater Community Enterprise

Ray Riddoch reported that the caravan park had been busy following a busy period of maintenance and re-painting work.

#### Halls

Nothing to report

#### CAN - Climate Action Now

Nothing to report

**10 Correspondence**

**11 Finance**

PD was awaiting bank statements from Bank of Scotland to complete the financial year.

**12 AOCB**

Scottish Water will officially open the Drinking Water Fountain on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

RF suggested that BCCC should ensure that it is part of discussions with Abco, CNPA and VisitScotland following the news that the Information Centre would close at the end of 2025 season.

**The meeting ended at 20.10**

**The next meeting will be held on 13<sup>th</sup> May at the Mike Sheridan Room, Station Square, Ballater at 19.00hours.**

Approved