

Ballater Flood Response Group
(A sub group of Ballater and Crathie Community Council)

Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 28 August 2019 in the BRD offices at 1900 hours

In attendance: Jim Anderson (JA), John Bolton (JB), Bill Braid (BB), Michael Coletta (MC), Tony Cox (TC), Allan Harrison (AH), Jim Hunter (JH), Angus McNicol (AM), Colin Smith (CS)

Apologies: Paul Gibb (PG), Douglas Johnston (DJ) Alan Nicoll (AN), Sandy Mitchel (SM)

Technical: TC updated the group on the meeting attended by DJ and himself with Aberdeenshire Council on 21 August 2019.

As was expected there remain differences of opinion between the BFRG technical team and the Council and these relate to:

- the impact of any flood devices being used upstream of the bridge;
- the impact of the bridge on any flow of water (the council maintain their view that 95% of the water that flowed during Storm Frank passed through the bridge);
- and that the collapse of the Red Braes had an impact on the water flow, although the council have now agreed that the collapse did result in the deposit of significant levels of sand, trees, boulders etc into the river.

TC advised the group that the technical review could continue and present challenges to the study but warned that this would impact on any funding application and if this was delayed the resolution to the defences would be postponed for several years while the village remained exposed. For these reasons it was acknowledged that the technical review had reached a point where engagement with the council should be suspended, but that research will most likely continue in the background.

TC and DJ were thanked for the work that they have been carrying out on behalf of the community.

Consultation: The group discussed the time line for the funding application which had been shared by TC and agreed that it would be in the best interests of the community to support the application, but only with a qualified acceptance, which is yet to be determined.

It was acknowledged by the group that regardless of opinions on either side of the debate, the village needed hard defences and that this will affect the golf course in some manner and that this point should certainly be addressed by any qualified acceptance i.e. Aberdeenshire Council must fully engage with the Ballater Golf Club and work to produce plans that will secure the future of the club beyond the conclusion of any defence project.

A more detailed review of the reasons for the relocation of the Caravan Park is also required.

Aberdeenshire Council will be holding a “drop in session” on 25 September 2019 in Ballater and all agreed that the format of this was not the most efficient use of the

agencies resources that were being deployed and that it appeared to limit the engagement opportunities with the community.

Because of the Councils plans, the group agreed that a community meeting will be held on the evening of 19 September 2019 between 1830 and 2030 hours in the V&A Halls. This will be an interactive session which will start with an overview of the timeline and events since the Stakeholder meeting in Stonehaven in March 2019 and will welcome all questions and views from the community. The purpose of the meeting will be to ensure that the community are fully engaged in the consultation that the council are undertaking and that their voices are being heard.

Actions: Meeting room to be booked for the event on 19 September.

Action by: BB

Flyer/poster to be produced and circulated to the group for review and development.

Action by: MC/Group

Flyer/poster to be displayed in as many locations as possible.

Action by: JA

Presentation for the evening to be agreed.

Action by: MC/Group

Next Meeting: The date of the next meeting is 19 September 2019 at 1830 hours in the V&A Halls.

Close: The Chair declared the meeting closed at 2030 hours, thanking all for their presence and ongoing support.