

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

www.ballaterandcrathiecommunitycouncil.com

Minutes of a Meeting held 14th March 2022 in Michael Sheridan Room at 7pm

Present:	Apologies	Also present:
James Anderson - Chair (WJ)	Nadine Stuart	Cllr Peter Argyle (CPA)
Richard Frimston (RF) - Secretary	John Bannerman	Cllr Paul Gibb (CPG)
William Braid (WB)	Jo Croll	John Burrows (BRD-JB)
Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer	Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB)	Janet Feeney (JF)
Ellie Kinghorn (EK)		Mike Forbes (BRG-MF)
Gareth Johnston (GJ)		Linda Drever (BRG-LD)
Lewis Macdonald (LMD)		Iain Henderson (IH - Crathie)
Tom Flynn (TF)		Scott Peacock (SP-CAN)
		Gordon Riddler (GR-Halls)
		Helen Miskelly
		Mike Hadley

1 Welcome

2 **Emergency Services** No report received

3 Approval of Minutes

Minutes February meeting were approved.

4 Matters arising from previous meeting.

Nil

5 Notice of election of BCCC member

Janet Feeney will be co-opted as member for Crathie to be voted on at April BCCC meeting.

6 Appointment of Associate Members

Iain Henderson and Lyndain O'Brien to be associate members from Crathie.
Linda Drever and Mike Forbes to be associate members from the Ballater Resilience Group.

7 Action Tracker Update

The issue of businesses parking around the Green (101) to be passed on to BBA via WB.

8 Sub-Committee Reports

FIG

TF gave a presentation on the effects of climate change on the River Dee catchment area, based on the 2018 report from the Met Office for the period 2021-2040.

This showed the river's 'natural storage' of snow to be declining causing wetter winter and drier summers. Higher winter and lower summer rainfalls resulted in wetter winters and drier summers, while higher summer temperatures would lead to more evaporation and so greater risk of drought. Since 2018, several bodies have been set up to deal with this both on a national and local level, led by Scottish Government, Aberdeenshire Council, CNPA, SEPA, Nature Scot and Dee Catchment Partnership.

The question is what is being done now. **SP** asked if there was any way to ensure the various groups could be brought together to ensure joined-up thinking. **TF** replied that the information is available for action to be taken, primarily upstream natural storage. However, many people are aware of the flood risk posed by the river, rather than the future drought risk posed by climate change. **JB-BRD** also pointed out that recent world events in Ukraine made it even more difficult to encourage policies to deal with climate change.

RF reminded BCCC of the Public Meeting arranged for 7th April at 7pm in Victoria Hall to discuss the community response should funding be forthcoming for the 3A option to flood defences. Aberdeenshire Council Flood Team would attend and it was hoped that SEPA would also attend.

Resilience Group

Terms of Reference have been agreed for the Ballater Resilience Group to be a sub-committee of BCCC. This will be a template for other Resilience Groups to come under the BCCC umbrella.

MF reported on BRG, which now has a Steering Committee of 6 coordinators plus an interim representative from BCCC (**JB**) and from the V&A Halls Trustees. There are 25 helpers, plus a further 11 new volunteers. A Memorandum of Understanding between Aberdeenshire Council, BRG and the V&A Halls is currently with Aberdeenshire Council legal department for review, with sets out the use of the Halls in an emergency, regarding call-out arrangements, insurance, costs etc. BRG feel they now have the confidence of Aberdeenshire Council. The emergency standby equipment (portable gas heaters, lights & generators) purchased by the Halls in 2017 will be transferred to BRG who will now be responsible for maintenance, although equipment will remain stored in Hall's basement. BRG, in conjunction with Crathie Resilience Group, will make a list of equipment considered necessary to support the community in emergencies. This list will be given to BCCC to make an application to the SSEN Resilient Communities Fund. Work continues updating and improving forms, maps and other documents following recent storms. The Ballater Resilience Plan has been provided to other communities on Deeside as well as to the Marr Area Office for use elsewhere in Aberdeenshire.

IH reported on behalf of the start-up of Crathie Resilience Group - a steering group had been elected and its scope & purpose agreed. A list of residential properties had been made, including those vacant; a watch-list of residents still to be completed; there had been a visit to Crathie Hall as a storage space for equipment; a coordination/rest centre had been assessed and a visit to BRG to review equipment had been made. Approaches had also been made to liaise with Aberdeenshire Council.

9 Other Reports

BRD

JB-BRD submitted a report to BCCC. The Strategic Review will be circulated in due course. This has highlighted the importance of parties bringing new ideas to meet

community needs to realise that they must be prepared to be involved in the fulfilment of these plans. OSCR regulations mean that BRD must show suitable supervision of charitable payments to any groups. Progress is being made on the Greens despite weather holdups. 100th anniversary of War Memorial dedication on July 24th.

Tony Cox had asked if the community might be interested in wind turbines. **CPA** pointed out that commercial wind farms would not be permitted under CNPA rules, but there might be a possibility of small-scale domestic turbines.

Footpaths Hub signage has now been fully supported and an application for the Marr Grant will be made in the next few weeks. Further donations for the Hardship Fund are being sought.

BCE

The caravan park is fully booked.

Fences are being repainted in June - **WB** is seeking volunteers.

Aberdeenshire Council

CPA reported that the No Entry signs at Deebank Road will be replaced as soon as possible, following concerns from **PD** about HGV lorries and caravans using the road.

CPA had also spoken to Roads regarding the concerns about heavy traffic on the Glengairn road as spoil was being removed for the new bridge and this was in hand.

CPA had been in discussion with various groups regarding the question of offering support to Ukrainian refugees. The UK government was look at this from the point of view of what individuals could do, while the Scottish government was considering it from the point of view of what local authorities could do. He reminded people to think very carefully about any commitment they were prepared to make as it could be long-term rather than short-term.

CPG had spoken with Roads, who were prepared to set a 40mph speed limit from the Cambus o'May Cheese Factory to the Hotel in the summer on an experimental basis.

CNPA

Responses, which had been numerous and wide-ranging, to the Partnership Plan are now being reviewed.

CAP

Nothing to report.

Halls

GR reported that a lift will be installed in April, following delays. The Games Dinner for 100 people had gone well, using the new kitchen facilities. A sum of £44,000 would be set aside to refurbish the entrance to the Albert Hall. There was a new noticeboard on the external wall, which would mean that notices currently on the Hub windows could be properly displayed outside. New storage facilities were being set up for equipment. Progress had been made with the assistance of Neil Cameron from Aberdeenshire Council regarding the issues of insurance etc during emergency use of the Halls.

CAN

SP reported that the litter-pick in March had been so successful that it was planned to make this a monthly event. Tree planting would go ahead on the Golf Course with advice from Woodland Trust. The project to determine Net Zero evaluation had been put on hold as this required a professional approach. NESCO had provided wildflower seeds to be sown to improve biodiversity. Approaches would be made to Aberdeenshire Council (Ken Regan) to find suitable planting locations in Ballater and Crathie.

10 Planning Matters

EK had been asked if there were planning restrictions on the colour of properties within the conservation area. **CPA** indicated that planning permission was required for colour changes and it could be applied for retrospectively.

There had been reports of breaches of conditions of use at Ballater Bus Station on Craigview Road. **WB** and **EK** would investigate further.

Concerns had been raised by residents regarding water supply and road safety following the development at Balnault. **IH** questioned the validity of a speed review undertaken in November, a quiet period of road usage compared to the summer months when the route was popular with tourists and motorbikes. **CPA** pointed out that Police Scotland is currently fully stretched, and speed traffic checks were not being undertaken as frequently as in the past. Also fixed speed cameras were not policy in this area.

11 Correspondence

RF had received notification from Marr Area Partnership that Lisa McMahon and he would be due for re-election in June.

The Balmoral Bar had asked if BCCC would be willing to support their application to continue to use the Green to serve food & drink. While the BCCC was sympathetic to the request, it was noted that there was also community opposition to this and so the BCCC would not form a view. The BCCC also did not have any role on the issue of re-naming the Deeside Inn (formerly the Loirston Hotel) as the Balmoral Arms.

12 Finance

PD had donated £200 on behalf of BCCC to the Jubilee Fund.

11 AOCB

JF asked **CPA** to raise the issue of the electronic sign at Coilacriech facing into the field. Also to request the replacement of the No through Road Sign at Aberarder.

PD asked **JF** if a decision had been reached regarding the noticeboard at Crathie. **JF** said that no decision had yet been made on location or design, but they were looking into it. The planning application should be made through BCCC, before 1st April, as planning application costs were rising substantially after that date. **CPA** pointed out that charges were imposed on local authorities by central government.

EK produced a banner to insert in the noticeboard for all BCCC notices.

Thanks to the BCCC for the gift voucher given to MM for taking minutes.

The meeting ended at 20.40

The next meeting is planned for Monday 11th April at 7pm in Crathie Hall

Approved