

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

Minutes of Meeting held on Friday 12 July 2019 in the BRD offices at 1800 hours

In attendance: Jim Anderson (JA), John Bolton (JB), Bill Braid (BB), Michael Coletta (MC), Tony Cox (TC), Douglas Johnston (DJ), Angus McNicol (AM), Sandy Mitchel (SM), Alan Nicoll (AN), Colin Smith (CS)

Apologies: Paul Gibb (PG)

Opening: MC took the chair and asked everyone to introduce themselves and who they were representing at the meeting. This would assist everyone in understanding the roles that would be played within the group. The table below reflects this:

Name	Organisation/Skill	Residency
Jim Anderson	B&CCC	Ballater
John Bolton	Cornellan Squ Residents	Ballater
Bill Braid	BRD	Ballater
Michael Coletta	BBA	Ballater
Tony Cox	BFG and Engineer	Ballater
Douglas Johnston	BFG and Hydrologist	Edinburgh
Angus McNicol	Invercauld Estate	Ballater
Sandy Mitchell	BCE (Caravan Park)	Ballater
Alan Nicoll	BFG and Lawyer	Ballater
Colin Smith	Ballater Golf Club	Aboyne

The note of residency above is to demonstrate the level of community engagement in this group to readers.

MC briefed the group that the structure to the meeting would be to receive and overview of the technical discussion that TC and DJ have been having with Aberdeenshire Council, discuss as relevant and identify the next steps.

Technical: TC and DJ provided their overview of what discussions have taken place to date. Two key points of note were that it has been established that the Ballater flood was the highest loss to population damage ever recorded and that the report that was produced by the appointed consultants clearly avoided consultation with the community of the BFG.

TC remains adamant that the cause of the flood has not been fully understood or explained and therefore would suggest that until that technical issue is closed out no recommendations can be made. This was the purpose of the discussions that were underway between BFG and Aberdeenshire Council, which were halted but have reopened with the next meeting scheduled for 21 August 2019.

DJ advised the group that he believed that there were alternative flood strategies that should be investigated that would be significantly cheaper than the report recommendations and have less of a socio-economic impact on the village.

Actions: TC and DJ will be attending a meeting with Aberdeenshire Council on 21 August 2019. An offer of a minute taker from the BFRG to assist was made, but TC felt that this was unnecessary. The group felt that this was a good idea but recognised that any third persons presence would need to be agreed by Aberdeenshire Council. TC expressed that he was uncomfortable with this because it may upset the relationships that have been built up with Aberdeenshire Council and it was suggested that a telephone conversation with Lee Watson would quickly establish whether this would be a problem and that the assessment of this lay with TC.

Action by: TC

A list of questions for Aberdeenshire Council is to be developed for use at the end of the technical review, that will encourage the council to engage with the community in a collaborative and constructive way on the future of the flood defences.

Action by: AN and MC

MC suggested the next meeting of the group should be 28 August 2019, when a review of the meeting on 21st could take place but recognised that this may not be an end to the technical discussion which can only be determined by the BFRG technical team. The date is simply a bookmark to all to keep the issue on the radar.

Action by: MC

A note from the Chair of the BFR sub group to the Chair of B&CCC is required that will assist the community council in expressing the need for MAC not to make any snap decisions based on the report that Aberdeenshire Council have prepared.

Action by: MC

Next Meeting: The date of the next meeting is 28 August 2019 at 1800 hours in the BRD offices.

Close: The Chair declared the meeting closed at 1835 hours, thanking all for their presence and ongoing support.