

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

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

Minutes of a Meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 in Mike Sheridan Room, Victoria & Albert Halls, Ballater at 7pm

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Also present:</b>
James Anderson - Chair (WJ) Jo Croll (JC) - Vice Chair Richard Frimston (RF) - Secretary William Braid (WB) Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer John Bannerman (JB) Tom Flynn (TF) Ellie Kinghorn (EK) Gareth Johnston (GJ) Nadine Stuart (NS) Lisa MacMahon (LMM)	Lewis Macdonald (LMD) Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB) Moira McDougall	Cllr Paul Gibb (CPG) Cllr Peter Argyle (CPA) John Burrows (BRD-JB) Scott Peacock - CAN (SP) For the later part of the meeting Ade Scripps (AS)

### 1 Welcome WJ

2 **Emergency Services** A report had not been received.

### 3 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of September meeting were approved.

### 4 Matters arising from previous meeting.

CGB reports snow gates approved on the right side of the road at Crathie. **WJ** thought that one was in the appropriate place, one not. In the interests of safety, second gate would be better further up the road.

### 5 Action Tracker Update

Aboyne Hospital issues were deferred to CPG's report.

### 6 Reports

#### BRD

**BRD-JB** reported that the Hardship Fund is still running at £1200+ per month which is down from £4000 from Dec- Mar and that there is still 12 months funds available. There are concerns about fuel prices increasing. **JC** asked if it is worth re-advertising and **BRD-JB** advised that an ad will be placed in the Winter Eagle. Recipients are able to use the funds for electricity but not other fuel but can make up any income that goes towards the higher fuel prices, on food. There may be the potential of Christmas food parcels again this year.

**BRD-JB** reported that a town fund award has been made by AbCo for the village green, but delays mean that there could be a cost increase. Flowerbeds, footpaths and

power to the Victoria Road Green are all a priority.

The toilets in Monaltrie park will cost £3000-£5000 in repairs to get back up and working. The plumber states that until the water is turned on he is unsure what work is needed.

BRD are writing to initial sponsors of the fund to ask opinions and whether this is an asset that is worth the further cost and time. Money already donated would cover toiletries but not the £3000-£5000 repair bill.

Careers in hospitality has been left to the BBA, they will lead and inform BRD of funds needed etc.

Footpath hub planning on Station Square, 4<sup>th</sup> June and currently raising money. There will be signage to finger point walks positioned where the barrel is. Janelle Clarke has been informed and is dealing with planning. CPA said that AbCp can potentially help with funding, that there is a Council meeting regarding hospitality, and that he will report back if feedback useful.

#### BCE

WB reported that BCCC had asked for BCE minutes but BCE declined as inappropriate due to sensitive commercial info. WJ suggested that sensitive info could be redacted.

WB will ask if this can be done. WB reported that maintenance of shower block and installation of mountain bike & dog washing facility will be going ahead in the caravan park. BCE are obtaining quotes for Park House painting.

#### Aberdeenshire Council

CPG reported Crathie School concerns regarding pick up and drop off. Some suggestions given but he has asked for designs for school. Group keep care in community is cross ward.

A decision on Aboyne Hospital is due to be made on 31<sup>st</sup> Oct. NHS Grampian has been and continue to be transparent at all times. Pamela Milligan thoughts awaited, next Thursday. CPG stated that the group should become larger and more experienced to discuss what to do.

BRD-JB: Working with groups & asking for letters for P Milligan.

CPA was surprised not to have been involved and stated that NHS recruitment is a huge issue. CPA understands that the Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA - previously highlighted) is completely separate from the questions around Aboyne Hospital. The hospital was closed due to Covid19 and staffing rearrangements. In patient treatment moved to Banchory, but is now back in Aboyne. The SNA will be transparent and look at all hospitals, GPs, Care homes, etc. CPG had unsuccessfully asked 5 times about Aboyne Hospital and is asking as to the current interim position.

Old School. RF drew attention to CGB's report of her old school visit included electrical issues as well as entry for tenants by Christmas.

#### CNPA

CGB had asked as to whether people had responded to the National Park Partnership Plan. <https://cairnngormsviewsmat.commonplace.is/comments>

## FIG

**RF** reminded as to the SEPA consultation and BCCC confirmed that FIG can put in a community response on its behalf prior to closing on 31 Oct. **TF** said that a wall in Ballater may stop a flood but not a drought and that dams are needed as per the Article in the Eagle. **JB** added that the dam option (1b) in the RPS study is budgeted at 127M£ with a cost benefit 0.26. FIG continues to work on understanding the basis of the RPS numbers.

**TF** reported that with the approval from BCCC, a St Andrews university student is carrying out a Hydro Project on flooding community involvement and will be reporting this to the Scottish Government in 2022.

**RF** reminded that after the the high water event in February 2021 there was a marked change in the course of the Dee and some of the village bund had been washed away. FIG in conjunction with BGC have been discussing with AbCo Flood Team improving low level defences.

**CPA** confirmed that AbCo have assigned funds for a study to put the bund back, take out trees etc. States the flood study is going ahead and has £65000 allocated and understands concerns about urgency and proportionality. The request for CeBec to be involved has been approved

**RF** FIG will also be lobbying our MSP to look at flooding issues and also raise AirBnB etc.

**JB** reported that a meeting took place on Sept 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss lessons learnt from February's high water event and circulated the minutes of that meeting. Progress is being made for a High Water Event Plan to be agreed with police and fire to better reflect the village needs and for an agreed policy regarding sand bags.

**JB** FIG is also working to promote property level protection (PLP). Sand bags may be for village protection rather than individual property protection and that legally where houses may be at risk that is the responsibility of owners. AbCo have suggested an event with PLP manufacturers in Sept 2022.

## CAP

**JC** reported on the Hub & actions discussed with AS.

## Halls

**WB** confirmed that AS is now part time Hub Manager, hopefully full time from April. The lift in the halls are out of order until December.

## CAN

**SP** reported that there are viable oak saplings and with approval from NatureScot will relocate these on Craighendarroch. The litter picking event was successful with 20 adults and 3 children in attendance picking 38kg of litter. There will be a second litter picking in the Spring. Litter pickers are available to be borrowed via WB.

The Facebook page is growing and contains information on climate action, drought, flooding etc.

### Improvement Group

PD confirmed that the village green works will proceed now that there was agreement with AbCo.

### Paths

BRD-JB, Ken Gibson has nothing to report.

### **7 Planning Matters**

BB reported that the Deeside Inn is replacing its windows with bi-folds.

### **8 Correspondence**

WJ had an email about issues with the cost and availability of accommodation and bus travel, £5 one way to Crathie. Car share may be an option with 'Blah Blah Cars'. BCCC is very sympathetic to all the issues involved.

### **9 Finance**

PD confirmed that the hall had been booked for future meetings until Sept 2022. Constitutionally meetings must also be held in Crathie in April and October. No other change on finance.

### **10 AOCB**

PD confirmed that village flowers and wreaths for Nov have been ordered. GJ agreed to lay the wreaths.

JB said that David Cobban is looking for Winter under cover storage for the flower planters.

PD asked about an open day for old school. JC said that a firm date had not yet been agreed.

**The meeting concluded at 20.55. The next meeting is scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> November, 19.00 to 21.00 hours in the Mike Sheridan room**