

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

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Minutes of a Meeting held 14th December via Zoom at 7pm

Present:	Apologies	Also present:
Jim Anderson (WJ)- Chair Jo Croll (JC) - Vice Chair Richard Frimston (RF) - Secretary William Braid (WB) Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer Ellie Kinghorn (EK) Gareth Johnston (GJ) John Bannerman (JB) Fiona Presslie (FP)		Cllr Paul Gibb (CPG) Cllr Peter Argyle (CPA) Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB) Alexander Burnett MSP (AB)

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

2 Emergency Services Report received from Police Scotland

3 Matters arising from previous meeting and Action Tracker update.

The minutes of the November meeting were approved.

RF will contact Frances Duguid for an update on the Coat of Arms plaque for the Halls. **WB** had investigated the question of CCTV for the village centre but had discovered that the cost for only 6 to 8 cameras would be in the region of £70,000. The temporary provision of a bin lorry during November had mixed results. The exclusion list was extensive, so of no use for many people. The majority of people had continued to use the service for garden waste, however the truck was for landfill only and not recyclable materials. It was asked why a booking system was required for this service. **JB** suggested that an extension of the garden waste service might be useful, but agreed that it was difficult to justify a continuation of the bin lorry when **CPA** pointed out that it cost £135 per ton to deal with landfill waste opposed to £57 per ton for recyclable waste. **RF** will contact CNPA and CGB to check on the issue of Old School drains. **CPA** will contact the roads department regarding overhanging trees on south Deeside road between Ballater Bridge and Invermuick Bridge.

4 Reports

BRD

WB reported that the Cambus O'May Bridge is nearing completion with official opening scheduled for January 2021. Access to the bridge is prohibited until then.

FP introduced BRD plans for a Pump Park to be in the field to the right of the other side of the Ballater Bridge. This allows cyclists to practise balance and tricks on a track. **FP** requested that BCCC put forward the planning application to Aberdeenshire Council to reduce the cost of doing so. BRD had been in discussion with Aberdeenshire Council Flood Group as the park would be designed to flood. CRC, a company who specialise in construction of such parks, had also been consulted. **WJ** suggested that picnic tables and chairs might be a welcome addition. **FP** noted that no permanent building would be permitted. There is funding available to improve cycling availability at grass roots level - initial plans suggest the park would cost £40,000. BRD and BBA are also planning a Bike Festival, potentially in September 2021, in conjunction with an events company, Best of British. This would include suppliers of cycling equipment having stands as well as local guides showing visitors cycle routes. There would be no road closures. **FP** and Kate Allum will meet via Zoom with Aberdeenshire Council next week to also discuss the possibility of the Tour of Britain passing through Ballater in 2021.

Aberdeenshire Council

No updates from **CPG**.

CGB mentioned that the new Gairnshiel Bridge had been approved, possibly to be completed within two years from the start of construction.

CNPA

CGB reported that the Local Development Plan had been submitted to ministers for approval. Plans were underway for the Big Nature weekend in the Spring, both in real and virtual terms. Several peatland restoration projects have started. Access to the park has been a major issue this past year. Glen Muick continues to be busy and it is possible that it will continue to be closed during busy periods. In the light of restrictions to travel to ski resorts in Europe, **CGB** had been in discussion with Glenshee and Lecht ski resorts. Although the resorts intend to use online booking for ski passes and equipment, she felt that there would always be a few people who travelled without any planning and that there should be a plan in place to deal with this. **WJ** remarked that the electronic signage had not been used correctly to inform people that car parks were full and inaccessible.

FIG

RF had hoped to have the first draft of his report ready, but Aberdeenshire

Flood Team had requested more time and so the report would hopefully be ready by the next meeting in January 2021.

Halls

WB reported that the Hub office was finished, and the architect had already made a snagging visit with no major issues in evidence.

Plans were being made for improvements to the basement area to include the toilets, a store-room and office, as well as a new lift and possible new kitchen for the Victoria Hall.

Enhancement Group

The Christmas lights were looking lovely and **PD** announced plans are underway to extend the lights to the lower Green in 2021.

Improvement Group

There had been a good turnout of people at the Hut for consultation on the future of the Green.

Paths

BRD have been looking at improving the Golf Course path, with the assistance of Bill Stephens, Invercauld Estate, Sepa and the Golf Club. **JB** reported that it was a delicate balance between improving the path but not interfering in the flood bund. Bill Stephens had taken advice from Sepa to ensure that maintenance of the bund was undertaken correctly. It is hoped that the Golf Course path might once again be accessible for wheelchair users.

5 Planning Matters Nothing to report.

6 Correspondence

Nothing to report.

7 Finance **PD** reported that a donation had been received from Balmoral. As all Meetings have been by Zoom this year, there have been no costs incurred in paying for meeting rooms. **PD** suggested that surplus funds might be contributed to a project for the benefit of the village.

8 AOCB

PD remarked that the lights at the police station/ambulance station remained on 24 hours a day and were shining straight into the houses opposite. **CPG** would follow this up. **JC** reported that the solar powered speed indication sign on the Aberdeen side of the village was not working. **CPG** will contact Martin Hall and his team.

WJ invited Alexander Burnett MSP to speak if he wished. **AB** offered a donation of willow to the team repairing the golf course path to stop erosion. He also reported that many were concerned about the rollout of vaccinations for Covid-19 in a rural area.

The meeting concluded at 20.10 hours. The next meeting is scheduled for 11th January, 19.00 to 21.00 hours, possibly by Zoom.