

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CC)

www.ballaterandcrathiecommunitycouncil.com

Minutes of a Meeting held 8th November 2021 in Michael Sheridan Room at 7pm

Present:	Apologies	Also present:
James Anderson - Chair (WJ)	Geva Blackett (CGB)	Cllr Paul Gibb (CPG)
Richard Frimston (RF) - Secretary	Peter Argyle (CPA)	John Burrows (BRD-JB)
William Braid (WB)	Jo Croll (JC)	Scott Peacock - CAN (SP)
Pat Downie (PD) - Treasurer	Gareth Johnstone (GJ)	Linda Drever (LD)
John Bannerman (JB)	Ellie Kinghorn (EK)	Ron Drever (RD)
Lewis Macdonald (LMD)		David McNeill - Ballater Golf Club (DMN)
Tom Flynn (TF)		
Nadine Stuart (NS)		
Lisa Macmahon (LMM)		

1 Welcome WJ reported that Francis Duiguid had resigned as a Community Council member.

2 Emergency Services No reports of anti-social behaviour or vandalism in Ballater & Crathie, but Police Scotland advised residents to remain vigilant and ensure property, including cars, garages & sheds, remained secure. New speed detection equipment is being rolled out and police are aware of local concerns regarding anti-social driving and speeding. No wildlife crime reported.

3 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of October meeting were approved, with thanks to Cheryl Barr.

4 Matters arising from previous meeting.

BRD-JB reported that Geva Blackett will be working on Christmas Food Parcels.

5 Action Tracker Update

No changes.

6 Reports

FIG

FIG is still waiting for a meeting with MSP.

There is concern about the timescale of the study to be commissioned and the funding for it. It was understood at an informal meeting with **CPA** and the Aberdeenshire Flood Team that funding was available for a study to determine if opening up the Legacy Channel and clearing blocked channels on the river might successfully prevent further damage to the banks of the river, as witnessed following recent high-water events. It was understood that there was already funding available for such work. However, it now seems that the Flood Team is now putting forward for an in-depth study of the river. It is the opinion of BCCC and Ballater Golf Club that such a study

is unnecessary and too time consuming. The river is changing on a daily basis and such a report would be obsolete by the time it was published. **CPG** suggested that **BCCC**, **FIG** and **Ballater Golf Club** should obtain a copy of the papers 6 days before the planned **Marr Area Committee** meeting on 23rd November to ensure that they are able to insert their own requests regarding the type of study required. They should also ask **Marr Area** for permission to speak at the event, preferably as separate groups to maximise the message to be put across. It seems unlikely that **Aberdeenshire Council** would fund a study which they did not own, so it would be in the interests of **FIG**, **BCCC** and **Ballater Golf Club** to ensure they get the study they believe best suits the needs of the village. **DMN** said that **Ballater Golf Club** did not wish to undertake any work on the river bank without at least knowing that the results would not be damaging.

JB had spoken with **Aberdeenshire Flood Team** about **Property Level Protection** and the personal responsibility of householders. They had put him in touch with **Paul Laidlaw** of the **Scottish Flood Forum** who would be visiting **Ballater** on 10th December and there is a possibility of setting up a public demonstration of **PLP** equipment. He had also spoken with **FloodRe**, who work with insurance companies to ensure affordable insurance for properties in flood areas. They have a trailer, designed to look like a domestic house, demonstrating various types of **PLP** equipment. It is hoped that they might be able to visit **Ballater** in 2022.

There will be a meeting on 22nd November with **Police** and **Fire & Rescue Services** to discuss the initial response of community groups following **SEPA** alerts. It is important that **Resilience Groups** work in cooperation with emergency services.

TF has been working with **Paddy Wright** and **Stuart Robertson** in looking at upstream works. Drought, as well as flooding, will be a major problem in the immediate future. There are reports from **CNPA**, **SEPA**, **NatureScot**, and **Aberdeenshire Council**, all highlighting this issue. **TF** agreed to circulate these reports with a short summary of each report to ensure **BCCC** members were fully aware of the position and could communicate this more broadly to residents.

Kirsty Halstead, **St Andrews University**, is working on a report for the **Scottish Government** with regard to how communities are engaging with public services and also speaking with local authorities to get their viewpoint as to how to deal with flooding/drought issues. **TF** pointed out the urgency of the matter in that the footpath which they had walked with **Kirsty** a few weeks ago had already washed away. **TF** pointed out that the **RPS** report had considered upstream storage options. However, in the **RPS** Report there appeared to be a requirement that any effective flood defence scheme would involve the building a flood wall, and the remit of the **RPS** report was on what kind of bund would be most effective in preventing flooding. Consequently, the option of "constructing sufficient upstream storage so that flooding from the river was effectively managed and a flood wall was not needed" was not considered by **RPS**.

RF pointed out that through working with the Scottish Flood Forum, FIG had become aware of the extent of suffering across Scotland due to flooding.

FIG will put in a response to the NPP survey.

BRD

BRD-JB reported that BRD have instigated a project evaluation plan as a process to debate any new piece of work. They have also reviewed HSE and Risk Assessment policy as well as reviewing their OSCR compliance in terms of how revenue is obtained and managed.

BRD had also applied for funding for town centre grants which will go towards work on the village green. This includes £129,611.50 from Scottish Government Town Centre, £10,000 from Phoenix and £10,926 from Scottish Government Place Based Investment.

BRD had also met with the Ballater Paths and Bridges Group and will offer assistance in implementing the needs and strategy identified by the Group.

Hub Signage in Station Square is also moving forward with the application to Marr Area Partnership for a grant of £2,000 and BRD will donate £4,000 with a short fall of £3,670.

BRD celebrates its 25th Birthday in December.

AGM is due on 30th November and new members always welcome.

BCE

A sum of £15,000 was paid from the Caravan Park to BRD, part of the strategy that revenue should flow back into the village.

Aberdeenshire Council

CPG suggested a meeting to discuss the road safety issue from Cambus O'May creamery to the Hotel should include BCCC with Keith Greig and Martin Hall.

Glen o'Dee and Aboyne Community Hospitals would both remain open following the recruitment of a number of staff. **CPG** suggested it was still important to ask what might trigger a review and what the timescale might be should a closure be envisaged at any stage. It had been made clear to the trust that the distance of areas of Upper Deeside from Aberdeen made the local community hospitals essential.

CPA had sent a written report of actions undertaken following the previous BCCC meeting, regarding the flood study, upstream storage, road signage at Glenmuick, road closure of A93 and finally short term lets in Ballater.

CNPA

Nothing to report.

CAP

RD had created a list of local groups and contacts for the provision of local community care, which would be available in the Hub, as well as hopefully in the next edition of The Eagle, as well as the Community Website. An attempt was being made to ensure that the information was available as widely as possible in the community.

BRD-JB, in his capacity as chairman of CAP, had spoken with the Old People's Association and Over 50s Association regarding the Hut on the Green, in order to regenerate the building as meeting place for people in Ballater.

Halls

Ade Scripps has started work. The bookings calendar is filling up and can be viewed online. A new noticeboard is to be installed outside.

CAN

SP reported that they are in talks with Woodland Trust to find a Scottish supplier of trees. Had positive feedback from Balmoral Estate. Glenmuick Estate were also interested.

The Banchory CAN group had put together a report showing the carbon emissions of their local area (based on population) set against how tree-planting etc reduced their carbon footprint. In this way, we could determine what we as a community still needed to do to achieve zero or even negative carbon emissions.

Improvement Group

Contracts have been issued and work will start on the green, probably after Christmas in the Spring.

Paths

See BRD report.

7 Planning Matters

Nothing to report

8 Correspondence

Nothing.

9 Finance

Nothing to report.

10 AOCB

JB asked for assistance in promoting PLP events in the village - will speak to Ade Scripps at the Hub.

PD will book the BCCC AGM in Ballater in April.

PD was concerned about the state of disrepair of roans on the council sheds on Deebank Road.

A number of people had approached **PD** about the proposed closure of the A93 from Dinnet to CambusO'May with diversions through Burn O'Vat, in particular for logging lorries on such a narrow road.

LD raised the issue of water damage on the path at Posties Leap, especially as the Old Line had more walkers on it than ever before due to the closure of the riverside walk following bank erosion.

The meeting concluded at 20.30. The next meeting is scheduled for 13th December, 19.00 to 21.00 hours, Michael Sheridan Room.