

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (B&CCC)

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Minutes of a Meeting held on 10th February 2014, Mike Sheridan Room, Ballater

<p>Present: Graham Adams (GA) Chair Susan Matthews (SM) Secretary James Anderson (WJ) Jane Angus (JA) Cllr Katrina Farquhar (CKF) (also CNPA elected rep) Cllr Geva Blackett (CGB) Pat Downie (PD) Finance Francis Duguid (FD) Vice Chair Ian Cameron (IC) Sheila Sedgwick (SS) Billy Duguid (BD)</p>	<p>PC Jeff Hall, for Police business Crew Manager Dave Murray, for Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Jack Coull/David Horne for BRD Nick Mardall (NM), DDDP Lee Haxton (LH), CNPA Kenneth Bain, Lumphanan CC Cat Houston (CH) Minutes Apologies received: Anne Reid (AR) Cllr Peter Argyle (CPA)</p>
<p>1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence.</p>	ACTION
<p>2. Police Business. PC Hall reported an incidence of minor vandalism in the village, and said lines of enquiry were ongoing. He indicated that he had had an email from PC McLeod regarding yellow lines. BD repeated his suggestion to PC McLeod that there should be double yellow lines all the way on the A93 (chemist side) (Bridge Street and Braemar Road) from around the corner of Rock Salt and Snails up to the Larks Gallery. This, he said, would stop parking on the brow of the hill on Braemar Road and also give vehicles a chance to exit from Provost Craig Road. Additionally he suggested double yellow lines on Hawthorn Place (Church Green side) from Bridge Street up to Monaltrie Road, keeping parking to one side only, and the reinstatement of the double yellow lines directly in front of the Alexandra Hotel, which were removed during road works and not replaced. PD enquired about the progress of the 45-minute waiting signs for Bridge Street. PC Hall indicated that relevant shop owners had been approached to ask permission for the signs to be placed on their buildings, rather than inserting new poles into the walkway, but as yet no permissions had been forthcoming. If this permission was not received, then poles would be utilised.</p> <p>2a. Fire Service Crew Manager David Murray said the Ballater team had received 73 callouts last year, adding that a lot of the time the team goes out, they don't know what they are going to find when they get there. 10 of the team were water trained and had helped out in previous floods in Stonehaven. The base had received a forestry unit last year and they were now trained to deal with hill fires. Ballater presently had 15 retained firefighters, but the ideal number is 22; it was hard to get people to join up. The Balmoral crew also needed additional members. Ideally retained firefighters needed to be five minutes away from the base. Minimum age is 18 and there are no height restrictions.</p> <p>2b. Zip Wire</p>	<p>SM</p>

<p>Lizzie Scripps made an appeal for a zip wire to be installed in Monaltrie Park to increase the variety of play equipment available there. CGB emailed Ian Welsh of AbCo as he would be in Ballater the following week and could arrange a site visit. There was some discussion over the wisdom of introducing more play equipment when the park's toilets are so desperately in need of replacment. NM asked if it was known if AbCo owned the present toilets, saying if they do, then it is their job to remove them. GB said she had received an answer to an email that indicated AbCo did not think it owned the toilets.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes from the January meeting. The minutes of the January meeting were agreed as an accurate account, with the clarification of CGB's mention of the Housing Bill. GB had met with representatives of Shelter and had been impressed with their take on rural issues.</p>	
<p>4. Matters Arising from the January meeting. GA indicated that a number of emails to Peter Argyle had gone unanswered. He stated that while he had much sympathy for CPA's position, CPA had a key role to play in CNPA and shire matters and the community council needed to know answers to its queries or an alternative place to find them. CKF said she would make contact with PA.</p>	CKF
<p>5. Reports. AbCo: CKF flagged up an initiative called Local Energy Scotland, aimed at getting community groups involved with renewable energy schemes. FD queried the CNPA's objection to the wind farm development at Dava Moor and suggested that it was just the sort of thing the community council and the CNPA should encourage. CGB said she would be going on a visit to the new Peterhead Prison in the coming week. She said she'd heard reports likening the new facility to a hotel and that she would give a full report of the reality, if she was let out again. She added that an AbCo Budget would be released on the following Thursday and that she had contacted Ralph Singleton last week about the state of the roads, as the roads between Aboyne and Braemar are "appalling". IC said that there were three potholes at the bottom of the Pass of Ballater that had been there for six or seven years and never properly repaired. He also alluded to persistent standing water in the area. WJ added that he had done work in the area and that there didn't appear to be a problem with the drains under the fields there. He also raised the fact that there were culverts that need cleaned as there is a lot of standing water on the pass and one section is washing down the Balmenach farm road, causing damage. PD reported that a resident in Deebank Road was having to leap her own boundary wall to gain access to the road as drain problems had created such a large puddle near her gate. CGB indicated that she had emailed Ralph Singleton on February 6 to report that Ballater Library's drain puddle was covering the disabled parking signs. BD asked what was a reasonable timescale to wait for a reply to such a query. CGB suggested a fortnight was generous. SM suggested five days was the norm, if the query centred around something the council was going to address, and added that the waste department was quite good at responding. CGB indicated that April was the time the council made a list of its priorities and that</p>	CGB

<p>she would email Stephen Archer (Director of Infrastructure Services) to ask him what he thinks is a reasonable time scale for a response.</p> <p>FD asked why a reference system was not used, where each query was assigned a number, which could then be tracked and followed up.</p> <p>SM said she would email Stuart McFarlane (Transportations and Infrastructure) to ask him to come to a community council meeting so that the council could ask their questions in person.</p> <p>SM indicated that plans had been published to amend part of the Seven Bridges trail on the South Deeside Rd to make it safer for walkers. Drawings in the park office were very detailed and they were also available online. Consultation was running until the end of Feb.</p>	<p>SM</p>
<p>6. Election.</p> <p>The deadline for nominations was noon on February 20th, after which it would be seen whether an election was necessary.</p>	<p>PD, JA, SM</p>
<p>7. Ballater News.</p> <p>Victoria Week: CH said brainstorming sessions for new events for 2014 had been going very well, with the last scheduled for March 13th. Among the suggestions was a speed dating night and a Scrabble competition. Local outlets were being sought to sell Victorian Heritage Trail Tea Towels to help raise money for VW causes and to stage events. There was some discussion as to the nature of the speed dating event.</p> <p>BRD: There was some discussion over whether a meeting between BRD and the BCCC scheduled for the next day would be necessary, and indeed who was to be charged with chairing and minuting the meeting. Ballater Walking Festival is due to take place 17th-23rd May. 50 walkers had signed up so far. The new Warden's office at the caravan park is nearly completed and the BRD office is due to move there from the Bank House. As regards the proposed Heritage Centre, BRD is still working on feasibility. Dalmochie sale paperwork to be completed by February 24th.</p> <p>BBA: Nothing to report.</p> <p>V&A Halls: JA reported that things were going extremely well, with the transfer to trustee status almost complete. Work on heating and insulation will start next. JA added that the community should be extremely grateful for the effort put into the work done and also try to use the halls to keep the money coming in.</p>	
<p>8. Scottish Government Consultations.</p> <p>LH stated there was to be a consultation on Local Authorities on March 28th and also a survey in the summer on parking in Ballater. FD queried if information such as registration numbers could be used on account of confidentiality. LH assured him it would not be an issue. BD said it was futile offering conference facilities for 100 at the halls, if there was nowhere for the delegates to park. GA suggested a park and ride facility could be proposed. JC said the area behind Dee Valley Confectioners could hold up to 40 cars without much additional work to it. JA suggested the village's children would thus lose a play space. It was suggested that the Barracks could be used for parking when not otherwise in use.</p>	
<p>9. Planning Matters.</p> <p>BD indicated that he had sent relevant emails to all parties and they were invited to respond or feed back if they felt it necessary.</p>	
<p>10. Finance. PD indicated that the May meeting would take place in the Beaton</p>	

<p>Craigie Room, not the Mike Sheridan.</p>	
<p>11. Correspondence. Janet Bailey, secretary for St Kentigern's Church, had written and invited a representative from the BCCC to attend the induction of the church's new rector, Vittoria Hancock, on Friday February 28th. WJ had received a letter from John Armitage of Glen Muick, regarding AbCo's apparently devastating cutting of his property's hawthorn hedge. Some discussion followed. SM agreed to visit the site with WJ soon and GB indicated an interest in the matter also.</p>	<p>SM, WJ</p>
<p>12. AOCB.</p> <p>NM indicated that Thursday March 6th at 6.30pm in the Mike Sheridan Room would see a Leader development strategy consultation, discussing how the new round of Leader will be spent. The funding period will cover 2014-2020 and £7m will be available to communities over those six years. NM said a lot of groups had benefitted from Leader so far and it was important to get together and discuss the best way to spend this money, which is EU funding. He added the aim was not to speculate about individual projects, but the broader themes. FD suggested that the area's broadband internet connection could be one of those themes.</p> <p>WJ expressed concern that a riverside homeowner had seemingly moved or rearranged blocks from an earth-retaining wall to create steps from the riverside path to their property. He said in so doing they have potentially created a hole in the dike which could leave the area open to erosion or flooding. It was agreed that members would take a look and contact the homeowner if necessary.</p> <p>FD stated that as a result of the combined groups meeting on December 10 2013, he and Ian Hay had formed a steering group to decide the next steps forward.</p> <p>JA highlighted a Nature Festival during May 17-18 and urged consultation on the Deeside Way in terms of where it should be going. FD said the present plans concerned the stretch from Ballater to Braemar and that at this time things were totally undecided. SM added that it was very early days.</p>	
<p>13. Date of Next Meeting. Monday 10th March at 7pm in Mike Sheridan Room, Ballater, V&A Halls. The meeting closed at 9.15pm</p>	
<p>14. Appendix.</p> <p><i>CFK sent the following communication after the meeting by email:</i></p> <p>The Application for the erection of eight houses at Sir Patrick Geddes Way has also been lodged. Application number APP/2014/0288.</p> <p>Local energy Scotland is a free and impartial service through which you can access Scottish Governments Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES). It provides grants and loan funding to help community groups get involved in renewables, whether taking forward a community owned scheme or engaging in a large scale commercial project. www.localenergyscotland.org</p> <p>North-east residents have been asked to give their views on equalities in Aberdeenshire. The survey is open until Friday, February 28 and is an opportunity for residents to provide feedback on a range of issues including disability, jobs, transportation and social care. Please complete the survey with your views: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GRECEquality</p>	

Inspiring Aberdeenshire! It's a Creative Place. Aberdeenshire Education, Learning & Leisure is hosting an event to celebrate the achievements, hard work and success of our children, young people, communities and staff. On the 13 June 2014 an awards ceremony will be held at Haddo House Theatre where a number of awards will be presented to people from all over Aberdeenshire. Anyone can nominate someone else for an award [Inspiring Aberdeenshire Award Form 2014](#)

For a copy of these minutes in a larger font contact the secretary on 0785 2414024.