

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Minutes of a Meeting held on June 11th 2012 at V&A Halls Ballater

<p>Present: Graham Adams (Chair) Jane Angus Francis Duguid (Vice Chair) Susan Matthews (Secretary) Anne Reid Sheila Sedgwick Ruth Sim Phil Swan Cllr Peter Argyle Cllr Geva Blackett Cllr Katrina Farquhar (also CNPA elected rep)</p>	<p>Present: Members of the public PC Lafferty for Police Matters.</p> <p>Apologies received from: Ian Cameron Pat Downie (Finance)</p>
<p>1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence. As above.</p>	<p>ACTION</p>
<p>2. Police Report</p> <p>2.1. A written police report was available prior to the meeting.</p> <p>2.2. PC Lafferty was pleased to report that there had not been any problems associated with the Olympic Torch route.</p> <p>2.3. Following up from the last meeting's item on tour buses using the South Deeside Rd between Ballater and Crathie, the coach owners have been contacted and informed of the concerns. People are encouraged to continue to report any instances of bad driving. The signs are advisory only.</p> <p>2.4. Operation Zenith, to reduce the number of accidents involving motorcyclists, is again in action with high visibility patrols and officers providing advice and enforcement, where necessary. The popular biker stops are regularly used as an opportunity to engage with riders.</p> <p>2.5. Following a recent death of a young car driver from the Aboyne area, the Grampian Police Road safety unit have included an additional date to a series of 'Young Driver Roadshows' which are being held throughout Aberdeenshire over the next few months. The additional date is Tuesday 3 July at the Bellfield Car Park in Banchory from 6.30 pm. Community Council members volunteered to help spread the news of this and requested copies of any posters.</p> <p>2.6. Anne Reid had reported damage/vandalism under the Victoria Bridge and along the river bank. PC Lafferty said that it has been known as a location for under age drinkers to gather. They will add the route to their patrols.</p>	

<p>3. Activities/Projects for Young People in Ballater</p> <p>Three young people provided a presentation on the bike (bicycle) area they have developed by Sluievannacchie Wood and asked the Aberdeenshire Councillors for help in making it more permanent. They have done all of the work themselves to build up the jumps and have taken care not to damage tree roots. The jumps get eroded and they are also popular with visitors from the caravan park. Unfortunately, on occasions, they have also been deliberately damaged.</p> <p>The Community Council are supportive of the project.</p> <p>Cllr Blackett provided a contact for advice on what can/cannot be done in the area, which is an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) as well as the property of Invercauld Estate.</p>	<p>Cllrs</p>
<p>4. Minutes.</p> <p>4.1. The minutes of the May meeting were approved.</p>	
<p>5. Matters Arising</p> <p>5.1. Re Minute 5.1.4 of previous Meeting "Phil Swan stated that he had heard that the land at the junction of the A93 and Craigview Rd was to be sold by Aberdeenshire Council with development approval..."</p> <p>This item has generated a great deal of local concern and a number of members of the public attended the meeting to hear more and ask questions. The discussion took some time and therefore the following minutes are a summary and not verbatim.</p> <p>Cllr Peter Argyle reported that he had looked into the matter and that the land was acquired by Aberdeenshire Council in 1989 for employment/housing use. Following an approach by an interested party it was advertised for sale. This attracted four notes of interest of which two submitted offers by the closure date of 12/10/2009. On 3/11/2009 an "in camera" discussion of the Marr Area Committee decided to accept the highest bid, which they considered a most attractive offer. This bid was for business use of the site. Since then negotiations have continued on the details of the deal.</p> <p>Cllr Blackett had received a response from Aberdeenshire Council Legal Services including the following as quoted, "that the negotiations for the sale of this site have been ongoing for some time and the missives have yet to be concluded which is not unusual in this type of commercial deal. As the bargain has yet to be finalised, the details can still not be made available due to reasons of commercial confidentiality. However, I am assured that missives are close to being concluded and a planning application will follow soon thereafter. The planning application will be a matter of public record. We cannot discuss sensitive commercial</p>	

negotiations as that may prejudice any proposed sale. This proposed sale would have been taken to Committee as a reserved matter due to the commercially sensitive information and democratically scrutinised in accordance with Council procedures. The details would be protected until the matter is one of public record i.e. after the price is paid and the title transferred."

There was a great deal of local concern from members of the public present and from the Community Council about the intention of the negotiating party. Was it a developer/third party who would then offer the land to another? Would it be beneficial to the community? What would be the effect on Bridge Street and existing retailers?

It appears that no-one locally can recall the advertising of the land as available or knew that it was under negotiation for sale.

No-one on the Community Council has recollection of information on the land being available for sale/under negotiation.

Two householders, present, who live near/adjacent to the land, had made enquiries of Aberdeenshire Council, within the last 18 months, regarding purchase of part and/or plans for its development. Neither had received answers that referred to its purchase being under negotiation. They will forward relevant documentation to Cllr Argyle.

Phil Swan stated that he was concerned that Aberdeenshire Council had been involved in negotiations to sell land for an undisclosed purpose at a time of uncertainty about future land use in Ballater, pending the findings from the Reporters' inquiry of May & June 2009.

Cllr Argyle stated a number of times that he could not answer the concerns raised because of the confidentiality required by the conditions of the negotiations and the ensuing planning application. While recognising this, there was a strong feeling from the meeting of criticism and suspicion of how the decision and process (as is currently understood) was made in 2009.

Cllr Argyle undertook to inform the Community Council about the details of the purchaser as soon as he is able to do so and would seek to establish whether there is a 'timetable' for this.

Cllr PA

5.2. Re item 12.3, barriers have been placed around the storm drain covers along the golf course path, by COAT.

5.3. Carry over actions from previous meetings:

5.3.1. Can we have elections such that the whole Community Council is not up for election at the same time? (ref AGM/May)

SM

<p>5.3.2. Status of Cinder Path Maintenance contract with Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust (COAT).</p> <p>5.3.3. Follow up discussion on Outdoor Access and any outstanding issues re Tom Meann with Murray Ferguson (CNPA). (ref March)</p> <p>5.3.4. Response on Ballater Traffic Review Consultation, due by June 22nd, including a request for the 30 mph limit to be extended to include the junction at the Craigendarroch Hotel/Time Share.</p> <p>5.3.5. Attendance of an officer from Fire and Rescue at a meeting.</p> <p>5.3.6. Attendance of Tesco Community Champion at a meeting. (ref May)</p> <p>5.3.7. Clarification on Community Council's role/responsibility re BOVOF (Ballater One Voice Our Future). (Ref May).</p> <p>5.3.8. Use of Community Councils funds and clarification on what is allowed re fund raising. (ref AGM).</p>	<p>IC</p> <p>GA/IC/SM</p> <p>GA</p> <p>SM</p> <p>SM</p> <p>SM</p> <p>PD</p>
<p>6. Reports</p> <p>6.1. Aberdeenshire Council.</p> <p>6.2. Cllr Blackett gave a brief update on what she has been involved with since elected. She:</p> <p>Is on the Social Work & Housing Committee and on a working group for European, and also Rural Affairs (and seemingly numerous other smaller ones).</p> <p>Has been appointed to the joint Grampian Police Board and intends to spend a shift with some of the local police.</p> <p>Has taken some fellow SNP Councillors to look at the Gairnshiel Bridge.</p> <p>Has been spending some time with Community Council members, familiarising herself with building features in Ballater and Braemar</p> <p>Is trying to find out more information concerning £20 million available due to budget savings.</p> <p>6.3. Cllr Argyle reported that Aberdeenshire Council have launched their 5 year programme and announced a 100 day challenge. Details are available on the website. He also noted that the torch procession events had gone smoothly and generated a lot of media attention, which is good for the area. He is Chair of the Infrastructure Services Committee and addressed questions regarding the methods used for road maintenance and particularly the use of chippings. He stated that the treatment is carried out in accordance with a standard and reflects best practice. He will forward a paper describing the process and why it is used.</p> <p>6.3.1. Overtime for Ian Munro litter pick up duties has been re-instated. The Community Council thanked Cllr Argyle for this. There will not be a temporary summer orderly this year - same as last year.</p> <p>6.4. Jane Angus requested that a letter of appreciation be sent from the Community Council for the clean up post Jubilee events.</p>	<p>Cllr PA/SM</p> <p>SM</p>

<p>6.5. Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA)</p> <p>6.5.1. Cllr Farquhar reported that the actions regarding the gates at Tom Meann have been resolved. Also that the website will include an option to avoid uploading pictures for users on slower connections.</p> <p>6.5.2. Cllr Farquhar gave more information regarding the park website: there will be RSS feeds added so that people can register and get updates when anything they have registered an interest in is amended or additions are made. Also if users wish to remove pictures to speed up downloads they need to manually apply on their personal computer.</p> <p>6.5.3. Maintenance costs have been agreed for the notice board on the green and CNPA will retain their use of space on the board.</p> <p>6.5.4. Local Development Plan - Detailed large scale settlement maps have been issued for comment (by 28th September). The Community Council has received three copies and the relevant core path maps. This is an interim step in the process to try to get the maps as accurate as possible before the formal consultation. The Community Council needs to consider how to best consult with the community and handle feedback. Jane Angus requested that we hold a dedicated meeting for this. It was decided to start with a meeting with Karen Major (CNPA Development Plan Manager) in order to fully understand the thinking that has led to the map details.</p>	
<p>7. Vision for Ballater</p> <p>7.1. Co-Op - Anne Reid has volunteered to take on the lead and is currently monitoring the situation. She will co-ordinate with Braemar.</p>	
<p>8. Ballater News - nothing additional to report.</p>	
<p>9. Scottish Government Consultations. The list of new consultations was issued and is available in the library, on noticeboards and the website. Cllr Blackett and Jane Angus both mentioned the importance of the Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill.</p>	
<p>10. Planning</p> <p>Phil Swan reported that he had received some comments on the second part of the planning application for Tullich Churchyard, concerning the area for the ancient stones. They will be submitted to CNPA.</p> <p>Details of the sub-committee's comments on four retrospective planning applications for garden extensions at Craigendarroch Walk/Monaltrie Avenue were circulated prior to the meeting. (Phil Swan had excluded himself from these discussions as he is a neighbour). We are opposed to changing shared amenity areas, outwith the settlement boundary, to domestic gardens. However, Marr Area planners have already set a precedent in approving a prior application so we don't see how they can refuse permission for these. We are recommending that they write to property owners on the settlement boundaries and remind them of the</p>	

regulations. The Community Council supported the sub-committee's comments.	
11. Finance. Nothing to report.	
12. Correspondence. The correspondence report was issued prior to the meeting.	
13. AOCB. 13.1. Anne Reid had circulated pictures of the broken fence at the foot of Craigendarroch Hill adjacent to Monaltrie Avenue gardens. It presents a hazard to walkers, pets and children. Cllr Blackett arranged for someone from the estate to look at it.	
14. The next meeting will be on Monday July 9 th 7pm Mike Sheridan Room, V&A Halls, Ballater.	

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