

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Minutes of a Meeting held on November 12th 2012 at V&A Halls Ballater

<p>Present:</p> <p>Graham Adams (Chair)</p> <p>Jane Angus</p> <p>Francis Duguid (Vice Chair)</p> <p>Martin Holroyd</p> <p>Susan Matthews (Secretary)</p> <p>Anne Reid</p> <p>Ruth Sim</p> <p>Phil Swan</p> <p>Cllr Geva Blackett</p> <p>Cllr Katrina Farquhar (also CNPA elected rep)</p> <p>Police for police matters.</p>	<p>Present;</p> <p>Members of the public.</p> <p>Apologies received.</p> <p>Ian Cameron</p> <p>Pat Downie</p> <p>Sheila Sedgwick</p> <p>Cllr Peter Argyle</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 1.2em;">For a copy of these minutes in larger font contact the secretary on 0785 2414024.</p>
<p>1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence. As above.</p>	<p>ACTION</p>
<p>2. Police Report.</p> <p>There have ben two recent breakins to property in the Deeside area and damage to a car parked in "The Square" in Ballater. The police ask people to report anything that appears suspicious, no matter if they are not sure about what they have heard/are seeing. The police response time will vary depending upon what else is happening, but even if the police cannot respond immediately the information may help solve other cases. Sometimes unruly behaviour can escalate and a call to the police may prevent something more serious.</p> <p>Following up from previous issues; the Community Council had noted the efforts of the Royal guard in cleaning up the river. These were much appreciated and a letter of thanks will be sent.</p>	<p>JA/SM</p>
<p>3. Minutes. There was no meeting in October as few Community Council members could attend. The minutes of the September meeting were approved.</p>	<p>FD</p>
<p>4. Matters Arising</p> <p>4.1. Re 4.1 Cllr Farquhar has been discussing the informal bike area at Sluivannachie and they seem content with as it is. If the Council are to formalise it, it has to be what the youngsters want. Phil Swan suggested holding a "free pizza" meeting to encourage attendance and find out what is wanted, if anything. Anne Reid volunteered to help out.</p> <p>4.2. Re 5.2; through Cllr Blackett's efforts, the Chair received notification in writing from Aberdeenshire Council, Legal and Governance, regarding the sale of land at Craigview Rd. The potential purchaser was given until 5 November to conclude the deal. This deadline expired and further discussions continued to be unproductive so the site is no longer under offer and the property department are considering what other options are available. The Community Council requested that the Councillors ensure they are kept informed of any future plans/decisions and that lessons are learned from this experience, such as reasonable time limits for negotiations being written into contractual agreements.</p>	<p>PS/AR</p>

<p>(This could develop into a police report if action isn't taken to reduce the noise). The discussion ended with people feeling very frustrated (still) by the lack of response from Co-Op senior management. Anne Reid will follow up with a note to Mr McCarthy the Area Manager. She asked that people continue to provide her with comments /suggestions. Phil Swan also requested that we consider contacting Dennis Hilton who is based in Manchester.</p>	<p>AR</p>
<p>6. Reports</p> <p>6.1. Aberdeenshire Council.</p> <p>6.1.1. A member of the public asked the Councillors to have the road markings at the junction of the B972 (Pass of Ballater Rd) and A93 at Tullich repainted after the road repairs, as he had seen two cars exit onto the A93 without stopping.</p> <p>6.1.2. Cllr Blackett reported that she is concerned that a firm line will be taken by Aberdeenshire Council on the situation re a single pupil at Crathie school this year and that it is possible that the child and teacher may not stay together. While the cost of keeping the school open all year for one pupil is unreasonable, it had been hoped that the child and teacher could be moved together.</p> <p>6.1.3. Cllr Blackett reported on the "Social work and Housing Committee". She advised that it is important to understand what is meant by "local" which in this context means "local authority" not local to Ballater. Also the term "key worker" needs to be specified.</p> <p>Councillors are expecting to receive a briefing note on the upcoming changes to the benefit system. These are being directed from Westminster and mean that for people of working age receiving housing benefit the future benefits will be based on the size of the household. If a house is being "under occupied" residents will have to pay for the unused space (or move). It is very important that people in such positions contact the Council or their Councillors to find out what their situation is. If they don't act now they could find themselves faced with payment arrears.</p> <p>6.2. Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA)</p> <p>6.2.1. An appeal has been filed following the judgement on the legal case, which was in the CNPA's favour. The appeal has been based upon material issues, such as surveys and assessments on wildlife and plants. (This case challenges the basis of the CNPA Development Plan for the Cairngorm National Park).</p> <p>6.2.2. The search for a new chief Executive (to replace Jane Hope who has given notice of her intention to retire) has yielded 42 applications. The applicants will be shortlisted and then interviews carried out.</p>	
<p>7. Vision for Ballater.</p> <p>Phil Swan was most concerned that there is no progress being made on providing more youth facilities in Ballater and that we don't have anyone willing to lead this. Ann Reid and Jane Angus volunteered to help Phil get things moving.</p>	
<p>8. Ballater News</p> <p>8.1. V & A Halls - Ian Hay reported that plans and fund raising to refurbish and upgrade the kitchen, toilets, stair treads and lighting was progressing well and he is hopeful that work will be carried out in the spring months.</p> <p>8.2. Ballater Royal Deeside (BRD Ltd):</p> <p>8.2.1. A joint meeting of BRD and the Community Council was held on 2nd October. These meetings are 6 monthly and again there was poor attendance from the</p>	

<p>Community Council - only one of the Ballater members attended. The next meeting is Tuesday 19th February 2013 in the BRD offices and it is the Community Council's turn to chair the meeting and take minutes.</p> <p>8.2.2. BRD would like to progress a "Ballater Heritage Site" in which to display and store a variety of photographs, papers and local memorabilia. The Community Council agreed that it would support such a project in principle and would like to be kept informed.</p> <p>8.2.3. BRD would like to investigate a Coat of Arms for the village. This topic re-ignited an old debate about a Coat of Arms for the Community Council to use and it was agreed by a vote to start using the one already in existence for Ballater. Jane Angus and Phil Swan requested their opposition be recorded. Jane's reason is that this is illegal and Phil thought it a waste of time.</p> <p>8.3. The Ballater Christmas lights will be switched on 24th November at 6pm and the "Winter Festival" will take place over the same weekend. Posters will be going up shortly.</p>	
<p>9. Scottish Government Consultations. The list of new consultations was issued and is available in the library, on noticeboards and the website.</p>	
<p>10. Planning</p> <p>10.1. Phil Swan reported that we missed some planning application deadlines during the last two months due to members of the planning sub-committee being away but nothing important was missed.</p> <p>10.2. Re work ongoing at Birch Cottage, 14 Dee Street which has received planning approval. It appears that the work is significantly different from the original application and that the Community Council has not been informed. Phil Swan will contact Aberdeenshire Council, copying in the Councillors on correspondence, to express our concerns about this.</p>	
<p>11. Finance. Nothing to report.</p>	
<p>12. Correspondence. Nothing significant to report. Routine correspondence and notices are forwarded via mail as they arise.</p>	
<p>13. AOCB.</p> <p>13.1. Francis Duguid asked the Councillors about the status of the area at Raebush once used by Aberdeenshire Council since it may be of interest to off road "dirt" bikers. The response was that it was thought to be still owned by the Council. Francis has contacted Les Allan, Marr Area Manager, whose response was that the area being a Natural Nature Reserve would prevent any such activity. However the council owned land appears to be outside of the protected areas and isn't being used. Francis will pursue the enquiries with Les Allan.</p> <p>13.2. Jane Angus will contact Aberdenshire Council again about plants for and care of the flower beds.</p> <p>13.3. A session was held "in camera" to resolve some internal differences of opinion within the Community Council about how to move some actions forward. Actions were agreed and will be reviewed at the next meeting.</p>	<p>PS/MH/ AR/JA</p>
<p>14. The next meeting will be on Monday December 10th in the Mike Sheridan room, V&A Halls Ballater starting at 7pm Ballater,</p>	