

BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Minutes of a Meeting held on September 10th 2012 at V&A Halls Ballater

<p>Present:</p> <p>Graham Adams (Chair) Jane Angus Ian Cameron Pat Downie (Finance) Francis Duguid (Vice Chair) Martin Holroyd 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:</p> <p>Nick Mardell Deeside and Donside Development Projects Manager. Members of the public</p> <p>No Apologies received.</p> <p>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>2.1. There has been some minor increase in petty crime, such as taking tools from garden sheds, which is typical during the summer period. It is a busy time for the police with the various village games and festivities but the excellent record of low crime and antisocial behaviour rates was maintained.</p> <p>2.2. Following comments at previous meetings the police patrols have been maintaining a watch on the river side by the Victoria Bridge. No indication of antisocial behaviour has been observed. Anne Reid had reported a recent incident when a young girl cut her foot very badly while trying to recover her shoe from the river. The Chair had passed this onto the Council and requested a clean up. It is possible that the incident was caused by litter in the river from old events. The police ask that events are reported when witnessed so that swift action can be taken.</p> <p>2.3. The police have considered the concerns expressed by Phil Swan regarding congestion on Bridge Street and the potential obstruction for emergency services and feel that their, relatively small, vehicles will be able to get through.</p> <p>2.4. The presence of the Royal Guard in the village seems to have caused very few problems this year and no complaints have been heard. Some of the Guard have been involved in Community work and overall it was felt this had been a good group.</p> <p>2.5. Nick Mardell, via the school parents association, has been in contact with the</p>	

<p>police to help raise awareness and educate school children about littering and its effect.</p> <p>2.6. A member of the public requested that more warning regarding the Tullich Rd 30 mph speed limit be considered, but Community Council members felt that local people quickly became aware of and familiar with the speed limits.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes. The minutes of the July meeting were approved. Francis Duguid agreed to take the lead on commenting on the Core Paths maps.</p>	FD
<p>4. Matters Arising</p> <p>4.1. Re 4.1, cycling area at Sluievannachie. Cllr Farquhar reported that she has been in discussion with the factor and he does not have any problems with the area being used for such purposes. Phil Swan has obtained a copy of the CD produced to illustrate what has been done so far in terms of jumps etc.</p> <p>4.2. Re 4.2. Craigview Rd land sale. A number of members of the public participated in this discussion, which was first raised at the June meeting. The Chairman reported that he has received written notice from Aberdeenshire Council legal department that the land is not being sold to Tesco. There is no time limit on the negotiations but they are "close" to conclusion.</p> <p>When the negotiations have been concluded the information on the party in negotiation can be made public and if a planning application is made anyone will be able to have their say. The situation as is, while unsatisfactory cannot be remedied by anyone in the Council and the only recourse would be via legal proceedings, which the Community Council does not consider worthwhile at this stage. It continues to be a situation of great concern for local people. Cllr Aryle tried to reassure the meeting that he still considered it a good deal for the community but in the absence of more information people remain greatly concerned. The Community Council hopes that such a situation will never occur again and that the Councillors take this message back to Council officials.</p> <p>A member of the public stated that he had received professional advice that the Council could legally make a general statement on the intended use without contravening confidentiality and also that the situation is now "unreasonable". The Chairman said that if he could forward any written arguments to him he would take them up with Aberdeenshire Legal Department.</p> <p>4.3. Re 4.5. Ian Munro has received notice of his overtime being reinstated - thanks to Cllr Argyll for following this up.</p> <p>4.4. Re minute 4.8. Anne Reid reported that the entire broken fence has been removed at the foot of the Craigendarroch Hill and thanked the estate factor for responding to this request so quickly.</p> <p>4.5. Carry over actions from previous meetings:</p> <p>4.5.1. Can we have elections such that the whole Community Council is not up for election at the same time? (ref AGM/May). This item will be on the agenda for the October meeting.</p>	SM

4.5.2. Status of Cinder Path Maintenance contract with Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust (COAT).	IC
4.5.3. Follow up discussion on Outdoor Access and any outstanding issues re Tom Meann with Murray Ferguson of CNPA (ref. March).	GA
4.5.4. Attendance of an officer from Fire and Rescue at a meeting.	SM
4.5.5. Attendance of Tesco Community Champion at a meeting (ref. May).	SM
4.5.6. Use of Community Councils funds and clarification on what is allowed re fund raising (ref. AGM).	PD
5. BOVOF (Ballater One Voice Our Future)	
<p>5.1. Nick Mardell (Deeside and Donside Development Projects Manager) explained the background, as he understood it, to BOVOF, which had been set up in 2009, to lead the generation of a Community Action Plan for Ballater. It co-ordinated groups that were already active as well as adding some new projects all of which were considered wanted by and beneficial to the Ballater community. It had been able to attract funding and completed some projects (such as the Monaltrie Park all weather pitch) successfully. In a recent review carried out by Nick two areas that could have improved the process were earlier and greater involvement of the business community and improved communication within the Community Council. Pat Downie mentioned that many people in the village had not been aware of the projects and BOVOF's role. Recognising that groups come together achieve something and then change Nick asked if there was any interest in refreshing the action list. It was agreed that this would be worthwhile but not as an urgent action as people are somewhat weary of being consulted on what they wanted and there was quite a lot already going on.</p> <p>5.2. Nick continued, with a short presentation of the "self build" project which is run by a group of seven householders who are considered to be currently residing in "first time buyer" properties and would like to move "up the housing ladder". The proposal is that they would self build new homes on estate land, contributed at a lower than market cost by the land owner. Their properties would be sold at a below market rate to make them attractive to local residents. Grampian Housing Association have agreed they would finance the difference in price, the estate would finance and build houses for their own employees on the plot and Aberdeenshire Council are prepared to relax the planning rules for rural housing. The proposed site is at Dallyfour, which is on the South Deeside Road west of the village, and is on the south side of the road. There are a number of items to be overcome if the project is to proceed, such as the "burden" to be placed on properties to ensure that they remain in the "affordable" range and occupied by local people.</p> <p>5.3. Nick was thanked for his presentation.</p>	
6. Reports	
6.1. Aberdeenshire Council.	

6.1.1. Cllr Blackett reported on the situation regarding the single child attending Crathie School this year. The Council are actively trying to find an optimum solution and Cllr Blackett felt strongly that they must retain the very good teacher. A possible solution is to relocate the pupil and teacher to an alternative school for 1 year and then return to Crathie.

6.1.2. Cllr Blackett has also been looking at a number of flooding/water issues in the village as well as the problem re access to Riverside Garage with the ongoing roadworks, that are disrupting trade.

6.1.3. Cllr Argyle reported that Aberdeenshire Council Social Work and Housing Committee will review proposals for contributing £1.875 million towards the building of 83 "affordable" houses across Aberdeenshire, of which ~8 would be at a site in Sir Patrick Geddes Way in Ballater. "Affordable" means that they would be run by a Housing Partnership and the rents lower than in the private rented sector because the construction costs are covered elsewhere and the housing partnership is not a "for profit" organisation.

6.1.4. Cllr Argyle has been a member of the committee reviewing the Aberdeenshire Council Design Awards the results of which were announced September 6th.

6.1.5. Cllr Argyle reported that recent figures show that 1/5th of all new houses started last year in Scotland were in Aberdeenshire and that the Council were determined to continue to make Aberdeenshire an attractive place to live.

6.1.6. Cllr Argyle reported that one of the projects being considered by the Council as a means of was a £50k contribution to the Ballater Halls refurbishment.

6.1.7. Cllr Farquhar reported that Aberdeenshire council are looking to provide financial assistance to COAT (Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust) to maintain the "7 bridges walk" path along by the Braemar Road.

6.2. Cllr Farquhar attended the Marr Area forum meeting which included an item on "how your Community Council works". The meeting was well attended.

6.3. The Ballater village Jubilee Cairn will receive an official visit on 27th September.

6.4. Pat Downie and Susan Matthews reported that the Braemar/Aberdeen bus service is overcrowded at times of the school run and evening "rush hour" out of Aberdeen, so that customers from Ballater and Braemar cannot get on and the school children cannot get seats: the capacity is limited in the morning due to the number of schoolchildren travelling from Braemar, in the afternoon it is overcrowded from Aboyne Academy to Ballater and in the city the bus is full for the first few miles within the city limit and then onwards relatively lightly loaded.

6.5. **Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA)**

6.5.1. The Community Council invited Cllr Farquhar to arrange a visit to the meeting by the Cairngorm Business Partnership new officer who has specific responsibilities for this area.

6.5.2. Jane Angus tabled a response, for discussion, to be made on behalf of the

<p>Community Council to the informal consultation on the Settlement Maps. She was asked to submit her comments as an individual and to add numbers where she is making statements on behalf of others. The Community Council did not intend to comment collectively at this stage but to forward comments received. The formal consultation will take place in early 2013, actual dates to be confirmed by the CNPA nearer the time.</p>	
<p>7. Vision for Ballater. 7.1. Jane Angus has received financial backing for a red squirrel bridge at Balmoral but Scottish Wildlife Trust does not support the location and wants to see it at the Pass of Ballater. Jane was asked to circulate a summary of the project proposal and the budget/finance plan. 7.2. Martin Holroyd reported that the Village sign and finger posts project is complete with thanks to Jack Coull who put in most of the work.</p>	
<p>8. Ballater News The method of booking the Halls is being revamped to make it easier to run and more accessible.</p>	
<p>9. Scottish Government Consultations. The list of new consultations was issued and is available in the library, on noticeboards and the website. There is a second consultation "Council Tax for long term unoccupied homes", following a number of comments received.</p>	
<p>10. Planning 10.1. Phil Swan reported that the application at Gairnshiel Lodge had been refused and the stone wall has been reinstated. No decision yet on the proposed development at the Inver Hotel. 10.2. Some residents have raised concerns that the development at Ellwood on Victoria Road is beyond the scope of the planning approval. Martin Holroyd will provide them with contact information for the Aberdeenshire Council enforcement officer.</p>	
<p>11. Finance. Nothing to report.</p>	
<p>12. Correspondence. The correspondence report was issued prior to the meeting.</p>	
<p>13. AOCB. A session was held "in camera" to discuss co-opting a member to the Community Council. Following a split vote, it was decided to ask the person to spend some more time with the Community Council attending meetings and participating in the discussion before deciding what project, if any, would suit.</p>	
<p>14. The next meeting will be on Monday October 8th 7pm Crathie Church Hall. Martin Holroyd volunteered to take the minutes. Apologies were made by Pat Downie (for both October and November), Susan Matthews, Sheila Sedgwick and Phil Swan.</p>	