

Minutes of the Braemar Community Council meeting held on Monday 20th June 2016 at Braemar Primary School at 7.30pm

SEDERUNT: Councillors: Mrs Carole Paterson, Mrs Joanne Morris, Mrs Caroline Hadley Smith, Mrs Sue Sherrard, Mrs Selena Hill, Michael Holley and Miss Kim Neilson. Also Cllr. Katrina Farquhar and Cllr. Geva Blackett.

In attendance: Janelle Clark (Aberdeenshire Council), Angus McNicol (Invercauld Estate), Simon Blackett (BCL), David Geddes (BRHS), Brian Wood (CNPA), PC Jeff Hall, Federica Bertolini (Fife Arms), Sue Harper Todd and Julian Fennema (BTG) and 10 members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Alasdair Colquhoun

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS:

Carole Paterson proposed Joanne Morris for the position of Secretary and Michael Holley seconded this. There were no other nominations for this post so Joanne was duly elected and was happy to accept.

A letter has been received from John Torrance expressing his wish to step down from the Community Council due to work and family commitments. Carole Paterson thanked John for his hard work over the past four years.

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD 18th April 2016:

The minutes were proposed by Selena Hill and seconded by Caroline Hadley Smith.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 18th April 2016

Carole Paterson asked if Ellie McLaren had won an award at the Inspiring Aberdeenshire Awards ceremony. Cllr. Farquhar advised that unfortunately she didn't but she had performed at the awards ceremony.

Carole Paterson asked for more information regarding the Green Dog Walkers scheme. Cllr. Farquhar will organise that.

Regarding memorial benches, at the last meeting it was suggested and agreed that they should be made from recycled plastic or stone to avoid any future maintenance issues. Carole Paterson suggested that we ask for a contribution from the people erecting wooden benches to cover the cost of future maintenance. Selena Hill said that recycled /stone benches were the better option and all the members agreed that this was the way forward.

POLICE:

PC Hall wanted to remind the community to remain vigilant as thefts are continuing further down Deeside, with the criminals coming from Aberdeen.

PC Hall advised that a driver from the Braemar area was reported for drink driving and this was acted upon by the police and the person concerned was arrested.

Carole Paterson asked PC Hall what he thought about the village parking. PC Hall said we had to decide whether it was dangerous or just inconvenient. PC Hall was aware that there was a problem at the junction of Balnellan Road and the main road and reminded people that they needed to be patient. PC Hall is willing to hear any concerns. Caroline Hadley Smith pointed out that this morning the bus had got stuck trying to drive through the village as cars were parked on both sides of the road. Selena Hill asked if they should call 101 if anyone is parking irresponsibly and PC Hall said yes. A member of the public asked about the junction at the top of Collies Brae saying it was almost impossible to pull out safely. Caroline Hadley Smith asked if marked parking bays could be created, PC Hall advised that this would also require signage. Janelle Clark said Aberdeenshire Council would not support this. Carole Paterson asked if the use of cones was legal, Janelle Clark said you would need planning permission and really this was used for a one off event. Janelle Clark said Aberdeenshire Council would need to do a traffic assessment before any measures were put in place. Cllr. Farquhar said the parking issue had been raised in other Community Councils and the Head of Roads said they wouldn't be doing any assessments in the near future. PC Hall will speak to his Inspector and ask if a Police car could be in the village at weekends and bank holidays.

PC Hall confirmed he was aware of the dog fouling issue. He said it was a council issue unless someone was doing it vindictively.

REPORT FROM BRAEMAR COMMUNITY LTD:

Simon Blackett was reporting to the meeting. Laura McMeekin has now left her post as manager of the castle. Fiona McCulloch is attending to the administration work.

Castle: He advised that visitor numbers for May were up on previous years. They are looking for volunteers. BCL is currently in the process of applying for LEADER funds for the castle. There will be an event at the castle on 29th July, more details to follow.

Auchtavan: Will be having its usual Open Days. They are working with Aboyne Academy. The students are wanting to build a turf bench, volunteers needed.

Braemar Outdoor Group: 4 subgroups have been set up which include looking at Paths (including extending the Deeside Way), looking at organising a Winter Festival, the possibility of putting in tennis courts at the Golf Club and looking at cycle routes especially focusing on routes for families.

Friends of Kindrochit Castle are now under the umbrella of BCL.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER GROUPS:

St Margaret's: Brian Wood thanked BCC for the letter of support for the Heritage Lottery bid. In all a total of 25 letters were received and forwarded to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The result will be announced on 13th September 2016. The recent concert with Beth Neilson was a sell-out. There is a full programme of exhibitions and events over the summer, check the website for details. Concern was raised over events clashing within the village. There will be a co-ordination and collaboration

meeting with Braemar Village Hall, Braemar Castle, St Margaret's and Braemar Creative Arts festival, to discuss using Google calendar.

Braemar Play Park: Joanne Morris advised that the Leader application was now on hold as Leader were not happy with the lease arrangements. Joanne is continuing looking for other grant sources.

Braemar Tourism Group: Julian Fennema advised that they are looking at two different projects. One is to follow on from the recent workshop by looking at ways to market the village and they hope to work with BCC on this. Secondly they are working with CBP and other tourism groups to submit a funding application to Scottish Enterprise to help with marketing the "Snow Road". They are through to the second round and have been led to believe they will be successful.

Invercauld Estate: Angus McNicol advised that the bat surveys had now been done on the Strachans building. They are awaiting the results but don't anticipate any problems. They can then submit planning applications. The Lade had now been cleared although there was still some ditching work to be done. Invercauld Estate have produced a "Sustainable Future" newsletter which is on the Estate website.

REPORT FROM C.A.P:

Trevor Garlick has accepted the appointment of co-ordinator of CAP and will head up a group that will take this forward.

As part of the CAP Carole Paterson advised that the Braemar Health Initiative has received £12000 to look into home care and care in the community.

REPORTS FROM ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCILLORS:

Cllr. Blackett advised that the A93 is closed every night 8pm till 6am Mon-Fri for road repairs. Aberdeenshire Council hadn't been notified of this by Tayside and neither had BCC. The A939 is also closed at Corgarff during the week. This may be for up to a period of 3 weeks.

Cllr. Blackett received a letter from Dee Blair regarding camper vans parking at the top Games car park and emptying their toilet waste in the woods very close to a stream. Cllr. Blackett informed the Environmental Health Officer and in turn he has written to Mark Nicholson asking him to put up signs informing people about this issue. Simon Blackett said they should use the camp site. Joanne Morris suggested that we could create a designated area for camper vans and provide waste disposal facilities and fresh water. There may be grants available to do this. Julian Fennema (BTG) suggested that BTG and BCC could work together on this.

Cllr. Blackett advised the meeting about the situation with the posties in Ballater. Royal Mail no longer has any premises in Ballater so the post is arriving on a lorry from Aberdeen and the posties have to transfer the mail into their vans on the public car park in Ballater. This presents Health and safety risks together with security risks. Also this is far from satisfactory working conditions for the posties especially in bad weather. Aberdeenshire Council has advised Royal Mail that as from 21st June they are not permitted to operate from the car park. Cllr. Blackett has put together a petition which has now gone online. Carole Paterson advised that she had paper copies of the petition and

they would be around the shops in the village. David Geddes asked whether we still needed to have Ballater as our postal address now there was no longer a sorting office there.

CNPA UPDATE:

Cllr. Farquhar asked if BCC were happy for someone from CNPA to do a presentation at the next BCC meeting. The presentation would be on the next CNPA partnership plan. Everyone agreed to this.

Brian Wood advised that Aberdeenshire Council planning department have released the results of the planning applications over a 12 month period. In total there were 361 applications, 27 of these were called in by the National Park. From these 361 applications, 351 were approved, 10 not approved and this included only one rejected by CNPA.

PLANNING:

APP/2016/1170 Balnellan House. Mr & Mrs Blackett. Alterations & extension to dwelling house. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1235 Six Sisters Invercauld Road. Mr & Mrs Morris. Removal of occupancy condition. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1263 Six Sisters Invercauld Road. Mr & Mrs Morris. Formation of new vehicular access. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1197 Mar Cottage, 17 Chapel Brae. Mrs Morrison. Installation of replacement windows and reslate roof. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1148 Braemar Caravan Park. Invercauld Estate. Erection of 6 holiday chalets. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1462 Land adjacent to Corndavon Lodge. Invercauld Estate. Formation of an agricultural track. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1458 An Cnocan Dubh Braemar. Mrs Marie Helfrich. Alterations and extension to dwelling house. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1058 Linn Cottage, Fife Brae. Mrs Susan Farquharson. Erection of 3 double pen cattery. No objections raised.

Liquor Licence Application Variation. Co-operative Stores. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1491 Birchwood, 42 Chapel Brae, Braemar. Mr Falconer. Erection of outbuilding. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1256 Beinn Macduibh, Cairnadrochit. Mr Walker. Alterations and extension to dwelling house. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1665 land adjacent to Braehead Cottage 1 Cairnadrochit Road. Installation of DSLAM by BT Open Reach. No objections raised.

APP/2016/1672 & APP/2016/1673 Derry Lodge. National Trust for Scotland. Change of use of existing derelict shooting lodge to form tourist hostel accommodation. Not all of the BCC members had had the chance to look at this application but will do so over the coming week and report any objections to the secretary.

VILLAGE SIGNAGE:

Carole Paterson said that Ian Peacock will be in Braemar sometime over the next week to look again at the signs again and measure up for replacements. He will also speak to Ralph Singleton (roads dept.) about the possibility of incorporating historical street names. A member of the public, Karen Noble, asked if they could have a street sign (Cairnadrochit) for her street. Carole Paterson will look into this.

Joanne Morris brought up the problem of speeding on the A93 past the garage and asked if more 30mph signs could be erected. Janelle Clark said that Aberdeenshire Council don't put up repeater signs but she agreed to take this away as a query. Caroline Hadley Smith asked about if anything could be done about the speeding out of the village heading south. This is particularly dangerous as there is a crossing used by walkers on this section of the A93.

COACH AND VILLAGE PARKING:

Carole Paterson asked if we could now draw a line under the coach parking issue as the new signage from Highlands Hospitality was now in place. Selena Hill asked if Aberdeenshire Council could put up some yellow signs directing coaches to the Games Park. Cllr Blackett said that Aberdeenshire Council shouldn't have to pay for additional signage, this should be provided by Highlands Hospitality. Janelle Clark agreed that additional signage would be a good idea but that wasn't Council responsibility. Federica Bertolini pointed out that there was already a yellow sign near Taste and that she was planning to put another one on the bridge. She added it might be useful to have a brown tourist sign indicating the whereabouts of the Games Park. Carole Paterson advised her that the brown signs are provided by the individual tourist attraction. Michael Holley said the two coach parking signs directing coaches into the former coach park should be covered up. However it was pointed out that the coaches still need to know how to get to the drop off point. Janelle Clark suggested that Mark Skilling could come up and meet with Federica. A member of the public, Jennifer Greenshields, said that a chain is put along the entrance to the coach drop off point when the JCB and other equipment is in use. Therefore the coach can't enter the drop off area and has to reverse into Clunie Bank road. Federica advised there should be an "A" board at the war memorial when the drop off point is closed advising coach drivers of this. She thought this was being used but will speak to the workmen again. Cllr Farquhar suggested a meeting between Mark Skilling and Ian Peacock to look at signage.

David Geddes asked Federica if she could speak to one of the local coach drivers, Debbie Gaze, and try and ascertain which coach operators have stopped coming to the village. Federica said she had given out letters and maps to the coach drivers as they arrived in the village but admitted that she wasn't around at the weekend.

David Geddes read out an email he had sent to Aberdeenshire Council about coach parking in the village. He suggested that they look at the possibility of directing the coaches down Balnellan lane and they could then reverse park at the land at the bottom known as the Lade. This currently has a small stream running through it but this could be piped under the car park. David Geddes is awaiting a response from the Council.

Although there is concern that some coaches may no longer be stopping in the village Selena Hill reported that the village seemed busier than usual and Julian Fennema confirmed that occupancy levels were up.

With regard to the village parking Joanne Morris advised the meeting that Alasdair Colquhoun had asked whether BCC should consider getting in specialist traffic consultants to give us advice on how best to deal with the village parking. It was pointed out that appointing a traffic consultant would have to be paid for.

BRAEMAR IN BLOOM:

Carole Paterson expressed her thanks to Caroline Hadley Smith and her team for all their hard work. Caroline will designate people to water the pots.

UPDATE ON CLEARING OF THE LADE AND LAND BEHIND SHOPS ON GLENSHEE ROAD:

As previously reported by Angus McNicol the Lade has now been cleared as has the land behind the shops. Carole Paterson asked if Braemar Tourism Group or Braemar Outdoor Group would like to take on the responsibility of keeping the area tidy. Historically this was done by BCC. Julian Fennema agreed to look into it.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Secretary received a newsletter from Invercauld Estate dated May 2016 titled "Braemar – A Sustainable Future". The meeting was advised that they were welcome to read through it at the end of the meeting.

Notice of road closure received advising that Castleton Place will be closed for one day commencing 28th July 2016. This is to allow for Scottish Water to carry out works.

Email received from David Roger dated 15th June 2016. Mr Roger's late mother was a ranger at Morrone Birkwood and he would like to have a bench in her memory. Joanne Morris advised him that BCC are asking that all new benches are made from stone or recycled plastic to avoid maintenance issues. Mr Rodger however would like to restore the existing bench at the indicator which is a bad state of repair. Everyone was happy with this. Joanne Morris asked the meeting if

anyone was aware that the existing bench was in built in someone's memory even though there is no plaque on it. Nobody was aware of this and Michael Holley thought it was a council bench. Joanne Morris will email Mr Roger and advise him to go ahead. Mark Nicholson (Mar Estate) is already agreed there is no problem with this request.

Email received from John Mcpherson dated 16th June 2016. Mike Smith from Ballater has written to him advising that there is some money left in the Ballater and Deeside Flood Relief fund and wanted to know if Braemar would be interested in receiving a satellite phone which would obviously be useful should all communications be cut off as they were in the aftermath of Storm Frank. Everyone agreed this would be a good idea. Michael Holley agreed to contact Mike Smith and advise him of this and discuss which would be the best phone to get.

Letter received from village resident, John Macpherson, expressing his concern about the appalling situation for the postmen in Ballater.

A.O.C.B:

Carole Paterson – proposed that Trevor Garlick be co-opted onto the Community Council. Everyone agreed with this. Seconded by Selena Hill.

Carole Paterson – welcomed Kim Neilson as a new member of BCC.

Carole Paterson – with regard to the concerns raised that some of the lampposts are on all the time. David Geddes advised that this was due to a wiring fault and the Council are having to put individual sensors on each light which will obviously take time. There are no additional electricity costs with the lights being on all the time. However Sue Sherrard said this was also an environmental issue.

Caroline Hadley Smith – A resident has asked when will NECR radio station be back working in the village. The problem is due to the mast on Morrone. Angus McNicol said that Invercauld have offered to take an engineer up to repair the fault but he has not had a response yet.

Caroline Hadley Smith – suggested a bin for dog waste was put at the duck pond.

Michael Holley – a resident has complained about people putting bags of dog waste under her tree. It was suggested that she contacted the police about this matter.

Date of next meeting: Monday 15th August 2016.

Meeting closed at 21.10 hours

