

Minutes of the Braemar Community Council meeting held on Monday 19th December 2016 at Braemar Primary School at 7.30pm

SEDERUNT: Councillors: Mrs Carole Paterson, Mrs Joanne Morris, Mrs Caroline Hadley Smith, Mrs Sue Sherrard, Alastair Colquhoun, Mrs Selena Hill, Trevor Garlick, Mrs Jayne Watson. Also Cllr. Geva Blackett.

In attendance: David Geddes (BRHS), Sue Harper (BTG), PC Jeff Hall and 8 members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Katrina Farquhar, Michael Holley, Cllr Peter Argyle, Kim Neilson, Angus McNicol, Simon Blackett and Brian Wood.

Carole Paterson welcomed Jayne Watson (head teacher of Braemar Primary School) who has been co-opted onto the Council.

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD 17th October 2016:

The minutes were proposed by Sue Sherrard and seconded by Caroline Hadley-Smith.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 17th October 2016:

Carole Paterson advised that the matter of Crathie joining with Braemar Community Council will not be brought up again unless we are approached by residents from Crathie.

Carole Paterson advised that Ian Peacock and Mark Skilling, both from Aberdeenshire Council, have agreed to sort out the village parking signs.

With reference to the large numbers of deer culled at Glen Feshie Estate Carole Paterson asked if the council felt we should send a letter of concern to Glen Feshie Estate. Alasdair Colquhoun felt it would be better to send the letter to SNH and CNPA. Cllr.Blackett suggested we first speak to someone from the Scottish Gamekeepers Association. Sue Sherrard felt it was only fair that we also speak to someone involved in regeneration, such as someone at Mar Lodge in order to hear their side of the argument. It was agreed that we would look at this in the New Year.

POLICE:

PC Jeff Hall advised the meeting that there had been a number of incidents of break ins and attempted break ins in the village of late. He could put people in touch with the Crime Prevention Officer if they needed advice on how to keep their business/home safe. Alasdair Colquhoun asked PC Hall if he thought CCTV on the two entrances to the village would help. PC Hall confirmed they would help. **ACTION: Alasdair Colquhoun to look into this and report back to BCC.**

Cllr. Blackett advised that the Gairnshiel Bridge was going to have an 18ton weight restriction placed on it. She asked PC Hall if he was aware that if a lorry, for example, ignored the signs and used the bridge, would they be insured in the event of an accident. PC Hall was not sure. Alasdair Colquhoun suggested Cllr. Blackett contacted the Road Haulage Association.

REPORT FROM BRAEMAR COMMUNITY LTD:

Report received from Simon Blackett:

BRAEMAR CASTLE ended season with just over 12,000 paying visitors (a record under 9 years of community management.) 2017 is our 10th Anniversary so idea please? In addition approx. 30,000+ visit the grounds (we now have a counter on the gate) plus many who stop to take photos these are all potential payees! The challenge is collecting the money. New manager Georgina Errington appointed and starts end of Jan. A resident of Crathie she is currently in VIC, previously coordinating volunteers in Aberdeen. We are currently recruiting a project officer to manage future phases of work e.g. harling, flat refurb, conservation measures, parking and new entrance road (flooding makes this more challenging) New website being developed

BRAEMAR OUTDOOR GROUP (a BCL subgroup) organising winter Festival 3-5 March, tennis courts, path repairs, Deeside Way (Braemar to Brig of Dee)

AUCHTAVAN a good place for a Christmas walk (ask Simon Blackett if you want to borrow a key)

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER GROUPS:

Braemar Tourism Group: Sue Harper advised the meeting of the following projects being undertaken by BTG:

Village map: This is in the process of being updated and BTG are working with the History Group on this.

Snow Road Tourist Destination Fund: BTG are still waiting to hear about funding for this project, however Alasdair Colquhoun advised he had heard that funding had been granted. Cllr. Blackett expressed her concern that no-one appears to have liaised with Aberdeenshire Council regarding the Snow Road project. The infrastructure isn't in place for the potential increase in traffic and this project will have a big impact on the condition of the roads. Cllr. Blackett urged those involved to go back to their groups and consider the impact of this project.

Nature Trail: BTG have given the Nature Trail Group £500 towards the formation of a nature trail in the village.

Braemar Mountain Festival: This will take place 3rd – 5th March 2017. Posters are on display and people will be able to book activities on the website. The festival will feature walking/skiing activities together with talks, an exhibition and a ceilidh.

Playpark: Joanne Morris confirmed that all the funding was now in place for the new park and the equipment had been ordered. The drainage works are starting at the beginning of January and hopefully the equipment will be installed sometime in February, weather permitting!

St Margaret's: Pete Mulvey advised that a part time manager had been appointed for St Margaret's.

Braemar Care Initiative: Carole Paterson was feeling very positive that this project was moving forward. They had received a £1000.00 from the Deeside Knitwits which has given everyone a huge boost and everyone involved in the project was delighted and humbled by the support given. The project is very near to appointing an administrator/project leader. They have applied to LEADER for funding for a care co-ordinator and will know in May/June if they have been successful. The initiative has got a young volunteer to help for one year as part of their D of E award.

REPORT FROM C.A.P:

Trevor Garlick reported that the refreshed CAP is currently being drafted following on from the various project leads having updated their CAP text. Trevor has found someone to help with the word processing and publishing at an approx. cost of £360.00. Aberdeenshire Council have pledged half of the cost. The BCC members agreed that BCC would make up the shortfall. Trevor advised that the plan is to hand out draft copies to some of the people who had input by the end of January. He is hoping that the refreshed plan will be available electronically and or (limited) hard copies sometime in February. Dale Johnson is updating some of the photographs and is looking at sharing the plan content through a series of film clips in 2017.

REPORTS FROM ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCILLORS:

Cllr. Blackett was sorry to report that Cllr. Farquhar was leaving as Cllr. Blackett had very much enjoyed working with her. There will be no By-Election as there will be elections in May 2017. Cllr. Blackett pointed out that there would now only be 2 councillors covering 800 square miles, however she would continue to do her best to help where ever needed.

There is a new Head of Housing, Rob Simpson. He will be coming out to Braemar on 17th January to meet with Cllr. Blackett, Trevor Garlick and Davy Sherrard in order to discuss housing issues in the village.

Cllr. Blackett has heard that a “Men’s Shed” group may be starting up in Braemar. Aboyne already have a “Men’s Shed” group and they have extended an invitation to speak with anyone interested in setting up one in Braemar.

Cllr. Blackett advised that the “Can Do Country” video has now been produced and there was a meeting today between Ballater Business Association and Braemar Tourism Group. Other parts of Upper Deeside are involved and together they will be looking for funding to take this forward.

CNPA UPDATE:

No-one was present from CNPA.

PLANNING:

APP/2016/2957: Invercauld Bridge. Applicant – Aberdeenshire Council. Consent for placement of commemorative plaque. No objections raised.

APP/2016/2995: Cnoc Na Mearlach, Broombank Terrace. Applicant – Mr Neil Caple. Consent for demolition of dwelling house. No objections raised.

APP/2016/3023: Cnoc Na Mearloch, Broombank Terrace. Applicant – Mr Neil Caple. Full planning permission for erection of replacement house, boundary wall and 8m flag pole. No objections raised. Cllr. Blackett advised that this application has now been removed.

APP/2016/3004: Derrywood. Applicant – Mrs Marie Helfrich. Change of use from dwelling house to holiday let. No objections raised although several BCC members felt it was a pity that yet again a residential house had been changed to a holiday let.

APP/2016/2985: Braemar Mountain Sports Shop. Applicant – Braemar Mountain Sports Ltd. Full planning permission for alterations and extension to existing shop. No objections raised.

APP/2016/3037: Clann A Cheo, Fife Brae. Applicant – Mrs Mary McNaught. Full planning permission for alterations and extension to dwelling house and erection of decking. No objections raised. However it was brought to BCC's attention at the beginning of December that the owners of both the neighbouring properties had objected to the plans. Alasdair Colquhoun wrote to the planning department to register the full support of BCC for this planning application. When asked to clarify this further Alasdair highlighted that the design and layout were more appropriate for the living standards of the occupants and that the plans have no detrimental effects on their neighbours.

APP/2016/3239: Junction at St Andrew's Terrace and Mar Road. Applicant – Mr Gordon Pirie. Full planning permission for road junction alignment and associated works. The Roads dept. requested more information before they could make a decision and Alasdair Colquhoun agreed with this so at present he was objecting to the application. Carole Paterson felt it would make the junction safer. **ACTION: Alasdair Colquhoun agreed to write to planning to advise them we would like to look at this again once the Roads dept. have made their comments.**

APP/2016/3288: Glenshee Ski Centre. Full planning permission for the installation of a four person chair to replace the Cairnwell T Bar. This has been called in by CNPA. No objects raised by BCC. **ACTION: Alasdair Colquhoun to send a letter of support for this application.**

VILLAGE CENTRE LIGHTING:

A member of the public, Pete Mulvey, had asked to speak about this matter.

Lighting at Kindrochit Castle/Balnellan Road - Pete Mulvey felt that the new floodlights put up to light up Kindrochit castle were far too bright and in fact presented a safety issue when driving down Balnellan Road as the lights are glaring into the eyes of the drivers. Earlier in the meeting Pete asked PC Hall if he agreed that the lights could dazzle drivers and PC Hall agreed they were far too bright. Cllr. Blackett has emailed Brian Watt at Aberdeenshire Council about this and Pete informed the meeting that an engineer had been out, but not in the hours of darkness when the lights were working.

Lighting in the village centre – Pete was also concerned when recently street lights on the outskirts of the village centre and side roads are being replaced by white LED lights. His main concern was that the Heritage Lampposts in the village would be replaced too. He felt strongly that the Heritage lampposts which give off an orange light greatly add to the character of the village. Cheryl Roberts from Aberdeenshire Council has advised him that the Roads Dept. would need planning permission in order to replace the Heritage lights. It was agreed that BCC could and would object to this if planning permission was sought. However although the community may be able to control the style of the lampposts we have no control over the colour of the light when the existing bulbs need replacing. David Geddes said that LED bulbs come in other colours, not just brilliant white. **ACTION: Carole Paterson agreed to take this forward.**

EMERGENCY GENERATOR AND RESILIENCE TEAM:

Carole Paterson read out an email sent from Michael Holley thanking the Rotary for their generous donation of £1000.00 to enable Braemar to purchase a Satellite phone. However Michael explained in his email that there were already a number of satellite phones in the village and therefore would the Rotary object if the money was spent instead on a community owned generator which could be used in one of the village halls during an emergency similar to last year's flood. The reply from the Rotary confirmed they were happy for the money to be spent on a generator and if needed more money may be available.

Carole Paterson pointed out that Braemar needed to form a Resilience Team as has been done in the other villages in Upper Deeside. Doug Bruce pointed out that Braemar was lagging behind other villages that had already done this. She suggested asking some people in the community if they would be happy to form a Resilience committee and take this forward. **ACTION: Carole to ask suitable person/s to take this forward.**

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES – OBSERVATIONS:

The BCC members felt that the Christmas switch on went well and was very well attended. Selena Hill pointed out that before next year some fundraising would have to be done to replace/repair some of the lights. **ACTION: Sue Sherrard confirmed that the Christmas lights committee will look at fundraising.**

CORRESPONDENCE:

Letter dated 24th November received from CNPA. The letter explains that the Park are looking for sites and ideas for the 2020 Local Development Plan. Full information can be found at www.cairngorms.co.uk/park-authority/planning. The deadline for submitting ideas is 3^r^d Feb 2017.

Letter received from Doug Bruce dated 5th Dec 2016 advising BCC that he had arranged a meeting on 15th December with someone from the Flood Prevention team at Aberdeenshire Council and asking if BCC would support him. Doug Bruce felt there was a need for this meeting as some of the houses on Balnellan Road were flooded during Storm Frank in Dec 2015.

Joanne Morris went along to the meeting on behalf of BCC. The two men from the Flood Prevention team explained that due to the low numbers of residents affected and also by the fact that the houses affected were not flooded on a regular basis, i.e.; 3 or 4 times in a decade, then this would be considered a very low priority. Also they explained that the problem with building a flood defence is that it would divert the water and the problem elsewhere. They recommended that the residents are encouraged to purchase flood protection equipment such as vent covers, flood gates and inflatable sandbags. These can be purchased from the Council at cost. Doug Bruce was concerned about his insurance premiums rising and was intending to speak to Invercauld Estate about building a ditch in the Balnellan field. Carole Paterson said that if any Community resident would like to ask BCC for support on any issue could they please do so prior to taking action.

Card received from Bill and Mary McNaught thanking BCC for their support for their planning application.

Email received from Cllr. Katrina Farquhar dated 15th December 2016 advising BCC of her resignation as Councillor of Aboyne, Upper Deeside and Donside. Carole Paterson wanted to thank Katrina for all her hard work during her time as a Councillor and that she will be very much missed.

Email received from Michael Holley dated 17th December 2016. Michael is resigning as a Community Council member as he is starting a new job and moving away from the village. Again Carole expressed her thanks to Michael for all his work during his time as a Community Council member and wanted to wish him well for the future.

Letter received from Sarah Hubbard dated 17th December 2016. Sarah is leading a project to install signage to form a Nature Trail in the Creag Choinnich woods. The total project cost is £6000 and to date she has raised £3300.00. She wanted to know if Braemar Community Council were prepared to contribute towards this project. The BCC members agreed to donate £100.00.

A.O.C.B.

Alasdair Colquhoun had heard that there were no buses running to Braemar on Boxing Day and New Year's Day. **ACTION: Carole Paterson will look into this.**

Alasdair Colquhoun wanted to know if we had heard anything further about the pay phones removal consultation. Joanne Morris confirmed that our comments had been received and that the consultation period had been extended.

Date of next meeting: Monday 20th February.

Meeting closed at 21.00 hours.