

Minutes of the Braemar Community Council meeting held on Monday 19th February 2018 at Braemar Primary School at 7.00pm.

SEDERUNT: Councillors: Alasdair Colquhoun, Trevor Garlick, Joanne Morris, Aimi Blueman, Caroline Hadley Smith, Jayne Watson, Sue Sherrard, Samantha Tait and Shaila Daniels. Also Cllr Blackett and Cllr Gibb.

In attendance: Brian Wood (CNPA), Angus McNicol (Invercauld Estate), Sarah Hubbard (BTG), Liz Henderson (CNPA), Federica Bertolini (Highlands Hospitality) and seven members of the public.

APOLOGIES: None

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD 18th DECEMBER 2017:

The minutes were approved. Proposed: Jayne Watson Seconded: Aimi Blueman.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 18th DECEMBER 2017:

Dog Mess Signage: This is still ongoing. **ACTION: Cllr. Blackett to liaise with Jayne Watson.**

Cruise Ships Aberdeen Harbour: Sarah Hubbard from BTG advised that Julian Fenema (BTG) was taking this forward along with David Govan from Ballater Business Association.

Village Clean Up: Aimi Blueman advised that she had been in touch with George Niblock at Aberdeenshire Council who had given her the name of another contact. So far she has not had a response back. She will email the contact again and if no response she suggested BCC will sort out the clean-up ourselves.

Village Signage: Joanne Morris read out an email from Ian Peacock at Aberdeenshire Council. The car park and duck signs should be up by early March and the large signs on the A93 should be in place by the end of March.

Replacing the Union Jack used at the Remembrance Parade: John Macpherson will order a new one at the same time as he gets the other flags cleaned. He anticipates the cost will be around £100. Shaila Rao confirmed that we have sufficient funds to cover this cost and the BCC members agreed we should go ahead and ask John Macpherson to do this. **ACTION: Joanne Morris will email John Macpherson.** Brian Wood mentioned that Derrick Stewart is keen to preserve the old flag. Alastair Colquhoun suggested he gets a quote for this and BCC will then decide if they can support this.

POLICE:

PC Hall was not present at the meeting. Alasdair advised that a police officer will no longer be attending CC meetings and instead we will get reports emailed to ourselves.

REPORT FROM ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCILLORS:

Cllr Blackett reported that all 3 Councillors met with the bridges engineer, Donald MacPherson about Gairnshiel bridge. The problem is not just with vehicles hitting the bridge but also the vehicles using the bridge that are in excess of the weight limit. Cllr Blackett is hoping the Police will be able to spend more time at the bridge to catch the offenders. Cllr Gibb suggested that if anyone sees a coach/lorry crossing the bridge then take a photo and send it to Donald MacPherson who will then contact the coach/haulage company concerned.

Cllr Blackett also advised that the Invercauld Bridge is suffering from wear and tear and will be restricted to 30mph on 22 Feb 2018 to enable bridge survey works to be carried out.

Cllr Blackett advised that Janelle Clark and Rob Simpson (Housing) had written to Gavin Miles at CNPA expressing support for a housing project on the Kindrochit site to include community (BCL) involvement. **ACTION: Cllr Blackett could update BCC on any progress at the next meeting.**

Cllr Gibb asked about whether it would be worth moving the 30mph speed limit closer to the garage instead of all the way to the Castle. Cllr Blackett advised that the 30mph to the Castle was implemented to protect anyone using the footpath to the Castle. Joanne Morris pointed out that repeater 30mph signs would be useful to remind drivers of the limit. **ACTION: Cllr Gibb will speak to the new senior roads engineer, Ralph Newlands.**

Cllr Gibb advised that Mark Skilling (Strategy Manager) is taking two years leave and Martin Hall will be taking his place. Cllr Gibb is happy to raise any parking signage with him.

REPORT FROM CNPA:

Cllr Blackett advised that the public meeting held in Braemar for the Main Issues Report was very well attended and in fact was the best attended across the Park. Aimi Blueman pointed out that it was concerning that she was the youngest person to attend the public meeting and said maybe the Park needed to look at ways to engage younger people. Brian Wood and Liz Henderson both confirmed that this statistic had been repeated in other meetings.

Cllr Blackett advised that Tomintoul are looking into applying for “dark sky” status and BCL are looking into this for Braemar too.

Liz Henderson introduced herself as the new CNPA Community Support Officer, replacing Lee Haxton. She urged everyone to make comments on the Main Issue Report and reminded the meeting that the consultation period closes on 2nd March. Liz advised that the Deeside Way section to Invercauld Bridge was making progress. Also the CNP Forest strategy consultation was now live and is open until end March. The draft strategy can be accessed at <http://cairngorms.co.uk/consultation/foreststrategy>.

CHANGE TO GP CONTRACTS:

Dr. Cruickshank came to speak at the meeting after advising BCC of the changes to GP contracts with effect from the 1st April. Dr Cruickshank advised that as a result of the new contracts the funding for the Braemar practice will fall by 54% and also all the practices along Deeside will lose funding, even the less rural ones. Dr Cruickshank feels that the urban practices will be the ones to benefit from the changes. Effectively Braemar practice will be on “income support” from the Scottish Government wef 1st April.

Under the new contact proposals NHS 24 will be the first point of contact for out of hours and also other core services, currently provided by our GP, will be provided by another contracted service. For example vaccinations, blood tests, ear syringing, minor injuries will no longer be provided by the GP. Prescriptions will be dealt with by a pharmacist, and not our local one. Also home visits will be provided by a paramedic. Dr Cruickshank said that whilst these changes might work in an urban/city practice he cannot see how it will work for rural practices such as Braemar, where are all the people to do these jobs? Dr Cruickshank’s concern is that when he retires Braemar could be without a GP.

Trevor Garlick asked how BCC can help and who do we need to write to? Dr Cruickshank advised that we need to raise it at a political level. Cllr Gibb advised he has already raised it with our local MSP Alex Burnett. Cllr Blackett has taken the matter to Shona Robison (Health Secretary) and has been advised that the emails are receiving attention and the government will respond in due course.

ACTION: BCC to write to Alexander Burnett MSP and cc the letter to Shona Robison MSP.

HIGHLAND HOSPITALITY LTD - STAFF GUIDELINES

Federica Bertolini handed out draft guidelines for the staff living in the staff accommodation. HH Ltd had always planned to produce a set of guidelines but this has been brought forward in response to concerns from village residents, particularly in respect of noise and parking. Federica wanted to stress that although some members of staff will only be here for one season she hoped that many of them would stay longer and make Braemar their home. She also stressed that these guidelines would be enforced by the management of the hotel.

HIGHLAND HOSPITALITY LTD – STAFF ACCOMMODATION

Federica advised the meeting that following neighbours’ concerns HH Ltd had looked at scaling down the new staff accommodation on Fife Brae. The revised plans show the building sunk into the ground, thereby losing a metre from the height and moving the entrance to Fife Brae. As a result of these changes they will lose 2 bedrooms. As the original plans have already been passed HH Ltd will only scale down the build if they do not have to apply for planning permission again. BCC have sent a letter to HH Ltd supporting the scaled down building and HH Ltd will present this to the planners.

HH Ltd are also looking for community support for their 2 current planning applications; Schiellion and Mayfield. The applications are for these two former guest houses to be HMO’s, each sleeping up to 15 staff members.

Trevor Garlick asked Federica to confirm that all 3 accommodations are separate applications. Federica confirmed they are and she also confirmed that the residents that objected to the new accommodation block on Fife Brae were happier with the revised plans. Trevor Garlick asked about parking for the new accommodation block and Federica confirmed that there was just one disabled space next to the accommodation. She said any other staff with cars would be asked to park at the Invercauld Arms Hotel. Federica said when allocating the accommodation she will try to put the staff with cars in the accommodation with parking spaces, e.g.; Schiellion and Mayfield.

A member of the public (Mrs Cross) asked about the parking in the village in particular in relation to workmen from the Fife blocking the driveway to the Pharmacy and making deliveries difficult. Alasdair Colquhoun confirmed that it had been agreed to look at the parking problems in the village once the Fife Arms Hotel and the Highland Visitor centre were open.

A member of the public (Richard Baker) asked Federica to confirm that during the construction phase of the new staff accommodation block HH Ltd would put up screening to protect the privacy of Dalmore House. Federica confirmed screening would be put up by HH Ltd and she also confirmed that HH Ltd would build a wall on the boundary once the accommodation block was complete.

CPR/DEMENTIA AWARENESS

Sam Tait confirmed that she has arranged for the following evenings to take place:

CPR: Tuesday 20th March at 7pm at Fire Station with Nicolle

Dementia Awareness: Monday 12th March at 7pm at school with Karen Wood.

Sam will attend the one on 12th March but needs someone from BCC to go to the CPR evening.

Sam will ensure both events are advertised around the village and on social media.

MAIN ISSUES REPORT

BCC advised they have produced a response to send to CNPA. Alasdair Colquhoun urged as many people as possible to respond.

BRAEMAR HYDRO SCHEME

The Hydro Scheme has transferred £7000.00 into a Community Fund held by BCL. A five member panel has been formed to decide how the Community Fund is distributed. Samantha Tait is the representative on the panel from BCC. She advised that the closing date for application forms for the current round is 15th April 2018. Applications are available online at www.braemarhydro.co.uk and paper copies are available from the visitor centre. Local groups are encouraged to apply.

PLANNING:

APP/2017/3009: Applicant Highland Hospitality Ltd. Mayfield, 11 Chapel Brae, Braemar. Full planning permission for change of use from guest house to HMO. BCC lodged the following objection:

Braemar Community has raised several objections to this application and consequently the Braemar Community Council as a consultee is objecting to the application.

There are two main issues:

One of which has already been highlighted by "Roads" department is the "Off Street" Parking where we do not think the area allocated is large enough nor is 5 spaces sufficient. Ref CNPA Pol 1 Sec 7(c) and Pol 3 sec 4(b).

The second is that the change of use will change the character of the building and its surroundings, having a detrimental effect on the neighbouring properties. Ref: CNPA Pol 9.

Braemar Community Council is increasingly concerned that the loss of so many large guest houses in the village (three over the last year and prior to that a fourth) will have a significant effect on the demographics of the village and therefore we would ask both Planners and Councillors to take this into consideration when viewing such planning applications.

APP/2017/3010: Applicant Highland Hospitality Ltd. Schiellion, 10 Glenshee Road, Braemar. Full planning permission for change of use from Guest House to HMO and installation of replacement windows and door. No objections raised.

APP/2018/0006: Applicant Mr & Mrs I Robertson. Lilybank, Linn of Dee Road, Braemar. Full planning permission for the erection of a shed. No objections raised.

APP/2017/3142: Applicant Aberdeenshire Council. Full planning permission for installation of electric vehicle charging station at Balnellan Road Car Park. No objections raised.

APP/2018/0110: Applicant Invercauld Estate. Roxburgh Cottage, School Road Braemar. Full planning permission for installation of external oil boiler (retrospective). No objections raised.

TRE/2018/0004: Applicant Mr Robert Bain. Broom Cottage, 8 Broombank Terrace Braemar. Permission to remove trees (retrospective). No objections raised.

APP/2018/0182: Applicant Mrs Sandra Stewart. 2 School Road, Braemar. Full planning permissions for installation of replacement windows and door (retrospective). No objections raised.

APP/2018/0184: Applicant Mr & Mrs Cross. Land to the South of Craigview, Cluniebank Road, Braemar. Full planning permission for erection of dwelling house and garage. Not all of the Community Council members had had chance to fully look at this yet. Two members expressed concern that this land would be better used for several houses instead of just one as Braemar needs more affordable housing.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter dated 8/2/18 received from Greg Cross asking BCC to find out where the Fife Arms envisage their staff parking if they drive to work. Frederica Bertolini advised Mr Cross that the staff who drive to work will be instructed to park in the Hotel Car Park.

Email received from Cllr Blackett advising about a series of open events regarding the Minor Injury Units Review. The one for Deeside is on 19th March at the Victory Hall, Aboyne, 3pm – 6.30pm. Cllr Blackett stressed the importance of attending in light of the changes to the GP contracts. **ACTION: Can anyone from BCC attend?**

Joanne Morris had received some application forms for the Braemar Care Initiative if anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer.

AOCB

Angus McNicol from Invercauld Estate wanted to update the meeting with the following:

- Strachan's – The lease is now under offer which is great news. The prospective tenant is already involved in the licensing trade.
- Invercauld are conducting a flood management survey to look at what can be done to reduce the risk of flooding in the future.
- More of the telephone companies are now adding 4G to this area.
- The Estate are currently upgrading Gowanlea and Choinnich.
- Angus is now the Chair of the Upper Deeside and Donside management group. There will be a public meeting on 17th April and an invitation will be extended to BCC.

Trevor Garlick advised that the Guide Association was planning on redeveloping the Sheiling. There will be an Open Day on 24th and 25th March. Trevor had concerns that there are several buildings already in the village looking for funding to redevelop.

Alasdair Colquhoun advised about a Community Resilience meeting on 21st March in Edinburgh. **ACTION: Joanne Morris will forward the details to Jim Wood who is on the Community Resilience Group.**

Alasdair Colquhoun advised that as per the email of 30th January 2018 which was sent by him to Cllr Blackett and all the BCC members, the Council guidelines, as stated in paragraph 7.14 of the letter from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life, have now been made clear. Cllr Blackett asked if all the Community Council members had been involved in the email which was forwarded to Cllr Blackett by the secretary in the Chair's name. It was confirmed that the other Community Councillors were unaware of this email. Cllr Blackett raised her concern about this.

Joanne Morris advised that at the AGM in April she will be stepping down as a Community Council member.

Date of next meeting: Monday 16th April 2018 starting at 7pm. This will also be the AGM.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

