

Braemar Community Council

Monday 26th October (held via Zoom due to Covid-19 Restrictions)

- **Attendees/Apologies.**

In attendance: Alasdair Colquhoun (Chair), John Torrance, Shaila Rao, David Sherrard, Aimi Blueman, Cllr Paul Gibb, Cllr Geva Blackett

Apologies: Iain Fowler, Elliott Perkins Jackie MacLean

Members of the public in attendance: Doug Anderson, Sarah Hubbard, Jennifer Greenshields, Sarah Christie, Cath Macpherson, Simon Blackett, Doreen Wood, Sgt Keith Greig, Dr Donald Cruickshank

- **Minutes from the August 2020 BCC meeting**

The minutes of the August 2020 meeting were approved. Proposed Aimi Blueman, Seconded Shaila Rao.

- **Matters arising from the August 2020 minutes**

- Fiona Lawrence had highlighted the need for a replacement cleaner for the public toilets, this vacancy still has not been filled.
- Glenshee Ski Centre is talking directly to BT regarding the potential removal of the public telephone from the ski centre.
- The pads on the defibrillator have been replaced

- **Report from Aberdeenshire Councillors / CNPA update**

Cllr Geva Blackett

- COSLA is working with councils on the new Tier system to be introduced re Covid. It has been highlighted that the number of cases in the west of the shire is low and yet our tourism industry – hospitality in particular – has been hit hard.
- Community housing progressing, BCL will form a new vehicle to deliver as they did with the hydro scheme and a board is currently being put together. Dave Sherrard, Simon Blackett and Geva Blackett will be on it and we are looking at other names and to find a chair. Hope to have an exhibition in St Margaret's in December for community consultation.
- Wildflower verges, currently there is no budget to support work, there may be developments following a Greenspace Project Steering Group meeting.

- Invercauld Bridge: The council are waiting for a quote to install permanent lights on the bridge and have the figures for the permanent electrical connections.

Cllr Paul Gibb

Nothing additional to report from the above.

CNPA

- The CNPA Board received an update at a recent informal session activity of the activity in the park over the summer. Members (and officers) are keen to see an increased ranger service on the ground.
- Simple and consistent messaging regarding littering, fires etc is now being looked into. The CNPA Board also need to look at how to reach those who are not our usual audience, those who might not understand that there IS an Outdoor Access Code that should be adhered to.
- Deer management is up for discussion and policy review.
- The CNPA's Partnership Plan is up for renewal and later in the year the board will be looking at what the priorities should be. [The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan](#) is the overarching management plan for the Cairngorms National Park and sets out how all those with a responsibility for the Park will coordinate their work to tackle the most important issues over the next five years.
- Thirteen local projects in the Cairngorms National Park have been awarded money totalling £130,000 by the Cairngorms Recovery Fund. Braemar Community Ltd for the Tomrichton Community Wood was awarded monies.
- The Gairnshiel Bridge planning application should be coming to the Park's December meeting. There appear to have been complications with the Roads Department and also archaeology issues which appear to have been resolved.
- **Update on Mews and Balnellan Carparks**
 - The consultation had 71 responses with a wide range of views.
 - The work at Balnellan car park was largely agreed and will hopefully commence in Spring.
 - The work at the Mews car park will not go ahead and further work will be undertaken in light of the range of views in the consultation.
- **Update on funding applications**
 - Funding for the Community Council Zoom account had been successful
 - The Phoenix Fund had approved funds for the new community website

- £450 Funding had been granted for WebCam work.
- **Police input on Car Parking in Braemar (Sgt Keith Greig)**
 - Sgt Greig confirmed that it was illegal to park on a junction 10m from a junction or on a bend. Enforcement police could police this but would not tow offending vehicles away.
 - Those parking on any yellow lines would receive a ticket and be moved on.
 - Overnight parking in car parks was Council Responsibility
 - Decision making for yellow lines is Council responsibility, but Police can have an input and make suggestions.
 - Should Illegal or irresponsible on street parking be witnessed the police can be notified on 101
 - Speeding on the A93 into the village can be dealt with, working with other divisions over Glenshee and with the Council.
 - Sgt Greig felt dealing with motorcycles congregating and parking at the entrance into the village by the Hungry Highlander, may be counter productive to tourism businesses in the village.
 - Dave Sherrard clarified with Sgt Greig that parking on the bridge was illegal
 - Yellow lines could potentially be put on strategic points rather than the whole village

- **Reports from other organisations**

BCL

- Braemar Castle; The castle is closed but plans to reopen for 2021, the grounds have had over 1000 visitors on at least 10 different days. The grounds hosted the Martin Creed neon artwork, even though it has found the Braemar climatic conditions challenging. A huge amount of work continues to be put into the Lottery application and a new professional fund raiser has recently been appointed. Copies of the 2021 Castle calendar are available from Simon Blackett or local shops.
- Housing project: The design team architects have been appointed and they are looking at safe ways to engage with the community. This might take the form of a walk in exhibition in St Margaret's with zoom discussions and phone calls to follow up

with interested folk from the village. There will be articles in the Buzzard and possibly another delivered flyer. Legal work is progressing to transfer ownership of the land, once all funding and consents are in place. Work is being done to set up a new local body to own and manage the houses. A local allocation policy is being developed, which the community will be consulted on. It is hoped that all going to plan, work will start on site in around 12 months time.

- Tomrington Community Wood: Funding has been offered and legal work is ongoing to transfer the wood into community hands. It is hoped to consult with interested locals at the same time as the housing consultation. A small number of trees will need to be felled to allow the house building to take place and it is hoped that this might happen early next year.
- Auchtavan: We were unable to host our normal open days, but visitors have still been able to visit under their own steam. Discussions are ongoing with the Fife Arms about possible use by their guests without destroying the fragile local access track.
- Bridges and footpaths: BCL owns 2 bridges and a watching brief is maintained to ensure they are safe for users. Many of the local paths are showing signs of in some cases serious erosion (mud!) due to the wet weather and huge numbers of recent visitors. It is difficult to know what can be done to improve the situation as funding and expertise is seriously limited.
- Braemar Local History Group: No public meetings/talks are planned over the winter, but an excellent local guidebook has recently been published and is for sale in a number of good local shops. The Society archive is now safely stored in a room in the Golf Clubhouse.
- St Margarets It has not been possible to host any public events, but a very popular local walk in exhibition continues to be open daily. The building has also been used very successfully as a wedding venue recently with another booked for early December.
- Mountain Festival: Plans are afoot for a 2021 Festival.
- Village website: BCL and other local groups are working with CNPA/Growbiz to develop a community facing website to compliment the Braemarscotland visitor website. The Community Council are represented on the group but unfortunately the secretary has been unable to attend recent meetings due to work commitments
- BCL AGM; Thursday 3rd December 2020 by Zoom.

Braemar Tourism Group

- Sarah Hubbard said the new Visitor Hub would be in place soon
- There was a discussion around the community facebook page and it was felt that a new page may have to be set up as admins could not be traced
- The Tourism group would take on the Christmas lights again and funding for lights would be transferred to them.

- **Planning Update**

- Three current planning applications were raised for discussion; the replacement toilet block at Glenshee, the zipwire at Glenshee, and the new dwelling at the top of Chapel Brae, APP/2020/1949, 2089 and 1888 respectively. Following discussion the community council agreed to advise the planners of our support for these three applications.

- **Wild Flower Verges**

- The Item was not discussed as the Council currently have no budget.

- **Police Report**

- Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Disorder, few incidents in the area, none in Braemar
- Acquisitive Crime, low levels in the area, there was an attempted housebreak within Ballater, however the security was not overcome and no entry gained. Enquiries in relation to this are ongoing.
- Communities should remain vigilant, ensuring their properties are secure at all times, including shed, garages, outbuildings and any other areas that could be a target for criminals.
- Road Safety and Road Crime - During September 2020, Officers have dealt with a number of road related crimes and offences. Various individuals have been charged in respect of varying offences, including Careless Driving, using a mobile phone whilst driving, expired driving licence offence, construction and use matters and also no insurance. A male was also arrested in Braemar for an alleged contravention of S5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 (Drink Driving) and has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal.
- 1 male has also been reported for speeding in the Aboyne area. The large roads network across the Deeside area is being patrolled, with assistance from Road Policing colleagues. Should incidents of inappropriate or anti-social use of vehicles be seen, I would actively encourage members of the public to report this to the Police.
- Wildlife Crime – no reported incidents
- As we continue to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic, please keep up to date with the Government rules as there has been a number of changes over

recent weeks. It is important that we all play our part in trying to stop the continued spread of the virus.

- **Ambulance Response**

- John Torrance read the correspondence from the Anderson family outlining the dispatch of an inappropriately staffed Ambulance, the wait for a second Ambulance, that an appropriately staffed Ambulance on standby at Ballater for the Royal Family was not dispatched to Pam Anderson and her subsequent death on route to ARI.
- Dr Cruickshank outlined the history of the removal of the Ambulance from Braemar and the promise that a double crewed ambulance would be available from Ballater for Braemar. He had heard from the Ambulance crew that a double crewed ambulance was on standby at Ballater, however the Court was no longer in residence at Balmoral.
- Cllr Geva Blackett had emailed the Cabinet Secretary Jean Freeman and would inform the Anderson family and Community Council of the response.
- The Anderson Family were taking advice on their options to get answers and assurances from the Ambulance Service.
- The Community Council agreed to write letters to the Scottish Government, Scottish Ambulance Service and NHS Grampian. Consideration would also be given, with the family's approval, to involving the community in signing or writing letters to these bodies (or approved template provided). It was felt there was a high level of concern regarding the incident and its potential reoccurrence across the village.

- **BCC Correspondence**

- Angus McNichol Invercauld Estate had written to say they were introducing a service at the caravan park to allow non-resident campers and caravans to use their waste disposal facility at a small fee, and for it to be advertised in laybys and car parks. BCC to ask the Council to help with signage to support this excellent initiative.
- Carole Patterson asked if they could use the BCC name on the planning application for the Community Hub, all Community Councillors were in favour.

- Simon Blackett wrote to ask if BCC could look into getting the River Clunie Lights up and running again. Request sent to David Geddes for info on who funded, installed the lights and how they work. He wrote back to say that he would be happy to show someone how they work and how to access the lights.
- There were several emails with regard to the fireworks display held by the Fife last weekend, these complaints were passed onto Cllr Blackett, and also a request for information and assistance was sent to the council for advice. Lorna Hogg who deals with Carparks contacted the Fife as they didn't have permission to use the carpark. Subsequently they moved the display to their own carpark.
- **A.O.C.B**
 - Shaila had been approached regarding dogs in the playpark, the sign has come off the gate again. Cllr Blackett to ask the Council to reinstate.
 - The residents of the Roaring Stag house at Corriemulzie has requested a speed restriction on the straight. It was felt by all Community Councillors that this should not be pursued and efforts to combat speeding should be concentrated on the village and A93.
 - Dave Sherrard said he would lay the Community Council wreath on Remembrance Sunday.
- **Date of next BCC meeting 21st December 2020**