

Braemar Community Council

~~Approved~~^{Draft} Minutes

Meeting held on Monday 15th February at 19.30 via Zoom

Attendees

Community Councillors – Alasdair Colquhoun, Aimi Blueman, Shaila Daniels, David Sherrard, Jackie Maclean, Elliot Perkins, John Torrance

Aberdeenshire Councillors – Geva Blackett, Paul Gibb

Representatives from other organisations and members of the public – Rod Garvie, Eve Bolton, Sarah Hubbard, Brian Wood, Doreen Wood, David Frew, Angus McNicol,

Apologies – Rachel Henely (Fife Arms Hotel)

Minutes from December 2020 meeting - Approved – Aimi Blueman
Seconded – Shaila Daniels

Matters Arising from December 2020

Further to the ongoing conversation about the ambulance service in the community there is to be a meeting held on February 22nd with various representatives to discuss possible solutions. More details to follow after meeting.

Reports from Aberdeenshire Councillors

Councillor Geva Blackett

Reported that the Council has been working as hard as they can to get the snow cleared up.

Council Tax is to be frozen for the next year.

Ambulance meeting to take place on the 22nd with Racheal Henely and Adam Dyke from the Fife Arms Hotel to be in attendance.

Geva worked hard, and at short notice, with Racheal Henely to create a resilience plan for the recent bad weather, and supports efforts to look at finalising a plan for the community, and noted that the plan needs to look at more than just the village.

Working with the Council and Mar Lodge to try and get a road clearing and gritting contract sorted.

Councillor Paul Gibb

Also reported on the efforts of the council in snow clearing, but also working effectively with local farmers and land owners to maintain clear roads in the communities and rural areas.

Has opened a discussion with Philip McKay about the potential for local communities to have control over some small scale snow clearing equipment, especially for clearing pavements, this will be looked at in the longer term April/May.

Councillor Gibb also mentioned the Horizon Heritage Fund which the CNPA has applied for, he stated that he has opposed the CNPA's request that the Council help fund the application [initially £30k plus Officer to time]the application due to a lack of clarity in the application.

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Reports from other Organisations

CNPA – Geva Blackett

Geva reported that the interviews for the new Rangers had been held after the Board approved the recruitment.

The Heritage Horizons lottery bid was approved by the Board in a private session on Friday 12th, the meeting was held in private as the bidding process is highly competitive and they didn't want to give anything away before it was approved.

Geva noted that herself and others still had some concerns with some aspects, but will need to try and mitigate those as we go along if the bid is successful.

The new Partnership plan is being worked on but not much to report yet.

New LDP still not approved and is currently with the Ministers

Cairngorms Together meetings have been organised for Monday 1st March, this is a follow on from meetings held last year in preparation for reopening the park. Geva is to attend the community wide meeting at 2pm and hopes that the Community Council will be represented at the evening meeting at 7pm

Braemar Community Limited – Simon Blackett

BCL welcomed new Directors Christine Watts and Andrew Martin.

Braemar Castle – Preparations are under way to hopefully open up for tours at the beginning of May, subject to current rules and controls in place.

The grounds remain open, although nobody has managed to get in in recent days due to the snow, at the moment there are no visitors to the area but locals are most welcome.

Raising the standard project is progressing, the application to the lottery heritage fund was successful, but still need to raise the balance of £600 000 to enable work to start at the end of the year.

The funding team has had some success but there is still a way to go.

Housing Project – Aim to submit a planning application at the end of February, all going to plan the community will take ownership of the site by the end of March.

Tree felling remains an emotive point and it is not planned to fell any trees until they have to be, probably towards the end of the year, detailed planning and reasons for felling will be publicised before anything happens.

The remaining sheds on the sight will also have to come down, but again probably not until the end of the year.

Tomrichton Woods – It is also hoped that that the woods will be under community ownership by the end of March. It is hoped that there will be nature trails, benches and bird boxes in the wood shortly but nothing dramatic is yet planned. There will be fallen branches to be cleared once the snow has gone, which will be left on site as habitat.

BCL and new community websites – BCL are working on these and are hoping to go live over the next few months. The community focused website will compliment the new braemarscotland website.

Auchtavan – Although is currently snow bound, those with cross country skis are hoping to get there again soon.

Deeside Way Extension – No progress to report but remain hopeful.

Footpaths around the village – These have suffered badly due to the damp ground and lots of visitors in the summer, so there is a need to make plans to repair the paths so they are fit for purpose.

Invercauld Estate – Angus McNicole

There has been no change to the current closure of the caravan park due to Covid, this will be reviewed when Scottish Government rules on tourism and travel are permitted.

The estate has been feeding deer in the woods on the north side of the Dee at Braemar, but have held back on feeding to the south of the village due to the difficulty of accessing an area that is of suitable distance back from the A93. Deer are also likely to keep returning to an area after feeding has started.

There are still plans for the Beating up of the new woodland in the CreagClunie plantation to the southeast of Braemar in spring 2021, subject to the snow clearing. The new deer fences around the felled areas of woodland to the north of Invercauld house and at Corroul have now been completed and it is proposed to restock the coupe ([an area designated for logging](#)) to the north of Invercauld House with scots pine in spring 2021 as well.

The planning application for the new mast next to the A93 at the Inver will go to committee on Tuesday 16th. The estate is to appear at this meeting having objected to the application on landscaping grounds. They have said to the developer, that they would welcome discussion with them on alternative sites in the north side of the A93 where it would be far less obtrusive.

The Keiloch car park remains open, but the toilet facility is closed at this time due to Covid.

Mar Lodge – David Frew

Mar Lodge itself remains closed at this time due to the current Covid restrictions and all the lodge staff have been furloughed.

The rest of the estate is still operating as normal and there are no jobs at risk during this lockdown period.

Work is to be carried out at the Linn of Dee car park to increase the size of the parking spaces.

It is expected that there will be a similar response to the easing of lock down measure this year as there was last year, with preparation's for a large volume of visitors to the area.

Local History Group – Brian Wood

Local History Group AGM is upcoming, anyone who wishes to join should contact the history group.

After the success of the last 2 book Maureen Kelly is currently producing a 3rd book on the local Jacobites.

Braemar Tourism Group – Sarah Hubbard

Sarah has now taken on the role of chair person for the BTG.
BTG are producing an updated village guide map, and the new website is under way
It is hoped to be able to host another village engagement meeting before the main season starts.

Community Resilience Group

John Torrance raised the topic of the Community Resilience Plan being finalised.
With the recent bout of bad weather Councillor Blackett had been asked to set up some sort of resilience plan in case the community had been left without power for a prolonged period of time.

After Storm Frank the starting of a Community Resilience plan was created but never finalised.

Working on the back of what has been recently produced and with the old model the CC is to bring together a new group to look at finalising the Resilience plan.

CC to call a meeting together to discuss further.

Community Housing Scheme

The Community Housing Scheme is now at the point where it is ready to move towards putting in a planning application in early March.

The schematics of the current plans for the proposal have been circulated to the members of the Community Council and there has been a couple of changes made since the public consultation held in December.

The questions raised by the Housing scheme and Braemar Community Limited were whether or not the BCC would be willing to put their name to the planning application as a community project, thus saving the housing scheme 50% on the planning application (the full fee in this case is £6000).

The second question was whether or not the BCC would be willing to put an application into the Community Hydro fund for the remaining balance of £3000 to pay for the application, otherwise it will be funded by the Project.

It was asked why the Housing Scheme and BCL could not apply for the Hydro fund themselves – answer was that they had already placed an application on behalf of the Castle and did not want to place 2 applications.

After short discussion and vote the Braemar Community Council voted in favour of both requests.

The planning application for the Community Housing Scheme can be put in the Community Councils name,

The Community Council will put in an application to the Hydro fund for the remaining balance of the planning application.

Outdoor Learning Shelter

Eve Bolton gave a short description of the project which is raising funds for the provision of an outdoor learning shelter at the Braemar Primary school.

Although the initial request was for funding the group accepted that the Community Council was not in a position to provide funding but requested, they assist with publicising the project.

The group has already applied to the community Hydro fund and approached the Mar area Partnership.

Alasdair Colquhoun said that the CC would fully support the project in any way that it could and suggested speaking with Joanne Morris ,who was successful in raising fund for a new play park a couple of years ago, for advice on funding.

Planning Updates.

Carried forward:

- 2020/0254/DET Glenshee Zipwire, called in by the CNPA. To be discussed in committee on 26th Feb. BCC submitted letter of support.

- APP/2020/2294 Telecom mast at Keiloch, BBC objected asking that reuse of the existing masts was considered. The applicant has prepared a response and the Planners are recommending approval citing the emergency service need, the woodland location, and the visual mitigations that will be employed, amongst other reasons. [They also state that tAs I read it](#) this mast is higher so using one of the existing masts is not an option, and getting one of the other mast owners to use this one "is not in the control of the applicant or planning service" at this time.

New:

- APP/2021/0064 Repainting of Airlie House (Taste) to navy blue.

- APP/2021/0149 Old Highland Society Office, change of use to community hub. Application submitted through BCC.

- APP/2021/0159 9 Cluniebank Gardens. Larch clad extension.

None of the Community Councillors had any objections to the planning applications, although there was some disappointment noted at the response to the Telecoms mast.

Police Report

Antisocial Behaviour

An incident of vandalism against a motor vehicle in Braemar was reported to the police in January and enquires are ongoing.

Members of the public are encouraged to report incidents as soon as possible as it give the police greater chance to respond.

Acquisitive Crime

Crimes such as house breaking and theft remain very low in the Deeside area. There were a couple of cases reported in Aboyne area in December which have been dealt with. Communities are reminded to be vigilant against such crimes.

Road Safety

The police are continually working with the council and other partners to keep the high level roads across the shire open.

They are doing their absolute best to keep roads open, and when updates by the council that roads have been cleared officers are dispatched to assess and open roads. However due to geographical size of area policed this can at time take a while.

Complaints had been received by Police Scotland about the length of time the A93 was closed at the start of the year.

However the police report states that this has been due to conditions further along the A93 being far worse than they appear to be on the images given by the Snowgate Cameras. They wanted to reassure the public that roads were only closed for the greater good of those using them.

BCC Membership

John Torrance raised the issues of the current membership of the Community Council being low and the need to gain new members in the coming elections in June.

The CC requires a minimum membership of 5 Councillors
And a Maximum membership of 10 Councillors.

At present the CC has 7 members but 3 of these have indicated that they are to stand down at the next elections.

There will be a total of 9 positions up for election in June this year.
It was highlighted that there was a need to promote the CC to the wider community and to try and carry out a publicity campaign around April to encourage new members to stand for election in June.

Correspondence

Invitation from Grant Moir from CNPA for representation of BCC at meeting in March for preparing to open after the current lockdown is over.

Letter from Zurich Insurance confirming the renewal of the BCC insurance policy.

AOCB

Shaila – asked if the information on the Rural Broadband had been passed onto Alexander Burnett, Alasdair confirmed that it had and that we are awaiting a reply.

John – Informed that he had been asked by the admins of the new Community Facebook if he would be willing to act as and admin for the page as a representative of BCC, he asked if anyone else wished to take on the role. As no one wished to he will carry on in the role.

Alasdair – Asked if there had be any notification sent to the CC from stage coach about the busses that were cancelled due to snow and ice.

As no notification had been given he will write to Stage coach to express our disappointment that thee community had not been informed of the decision.

Date of the Next meeting – Monday 19th April