Approved Minutes

Braemar Community Council

Meeting held at St Margaret’s Monday 16 August 1930 hours

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

Attendees - CC – Brian Wood, Allison Walker, Molly McIntosh, John Torrance

 Aberdeenshire Councillors – Geva Blackett, Paul Gibb

 Representatives – Simon Blackett (BCL)

 8 members of the public

Apologies - CC – David Sherrard ( on leave of absence), Alistair Simpson

 Representatives – David Frew (Mar Lodge Estate)

1. **Minutes from June 2021 meeting** – Proposed – Allison Walker

 Seconded – Molly McIntosh

1. **Matters arising from June Minutes**

**Paul Gibb** – gave update on 201 Sunday Bus service, funding has been secured to guarantee the service for the next 2 years.

**BRHS** - having been asked to do more to encourage people to use the car parking within the Games Park have done so by putting up banners in the village, also new signage has been erected directing traffic to the games park. CC thanked BRHS and Aberdeenshire Council for work carried out.

**Delvorar Fence** – is being looked into, to see if the new fence constitutes an access issue by blocking of a track or if it’s a planning issue.

1. **Reports from Aberdeenshire Councillors**

**Paul Gibb**

**Aboyne Hospital**

Paul reported about the upcoming Strategic Needs Assessment which could see the closure of Aboyne Hospital, and that it is not too late for those who are newly aware of this to make their views known. There has been internal discussion about what will happen but thus far there has been a lack of clarity.

When he has further information Paul will share it with us. At this point we know for certain that there will be a survey carried out and that responses to this survey will be very important. There is a clear need for as many groups and individuals as possible to participate to make the full strength of opinion regarding the hospital known.

**Recycling**

At the June meeting Paul reported that he had asked if Clair Loney would be able to facilitate discussions with BCC and B&CCC regarding the provision of a local recycling service to replace the Saturday waste lorry in Ballater. As Claire has been away Paul contacted her colleague and received an update from Ian Milne, who advised that some analysis on options for containers in Ballater and Braemar had been prepared.

Paul has requested the analysis and reviewed it, and thinks that discussion would be worth having. The options available are still expensive, but less so than the Saturday waste lorry. There is a capital outlay for a crane which needs consideration which may not make financial sense but further discussion and local input could help with the design and implementation of the model.

**Geva Blackett**

**Aboyne Hospital**

Geva also reported on the upcoming Strategic Needs Assessment to decide on the future of Aboyne and Glen o Dee hospitals.

Last week Geva, Paul and Alexander Burnett MSP agreed and jointly signed a letter with the Friends of Aboyne Hospital, to officials highlighting questions about the process of the survey and consultation that had not been answered during their meetings.

Geva also expressed her concerns, after speaking with Dr Cruickshank, about the future provision of services after he retires.

There were also concerns about the National Care Service consultation, which seeks to remove Adult and possibly Children’s Services from local authorities and place them directly under control of Scottish ministers.

The bridge over the Clunie opposite the Invercauld Arms Hotel has been repaired.

There are 2 upcoming road closures to be aware of.

Cairn O`Mount is closed for 2 days from 16th August for repairs.

A939 over the Lecht is to be closed for bridge repairs for the whole week commencing 30th August.

Applications are now being taken for the latest round of the Aberdeenshire Community Resilience Fund.

1. **Update on Ambulance**

Geva Blackett reported that she has a meeting with SAS week commencing 23rd August and has invited Alexander Burnett MSP to attend so that they can discuss any political steps that might be taken thereafter.

Doug Anderson sent correspondence to update the CC that he and his family have been invited to a meeting at SAS HQ on Monday 23rd to discuss the outcome of the SAS report. He expects to have a copy of this report a couple of days prior to the meeting.

1. **Car Parking and Village Signage**

Geva Blackett reported that she had been inundated with complaints relating to parking, from local residents, as well as seeing the issues concerned for herself in recent weeks.

Some signs have been erected through the village directing traffic to the Games Park where there is ample free parking, but clearly more needs to be done.

There is a concern about installing double yellow line in the village as they many push the problem away from the main roads and onto the narrower side streets.

Council officers have agreed to work with us to determine the best solutions to the problems faced by the community.

Brian Wood and Geva have had a meeting with the Fife Arms Hotel and are also to have one with the Wirths to discuss solutions and priorities. Geva also has a meeting with council officers on the 3rd September which she hopes representatives of the CC can also attend.

Brian Wood suggested that before the meeting with council officers, it would be good to call a meeting of the main local organisations that represent the community, BCC, BCL, BTG, BRHS and the Fife Arms Hotel, to get a better idea of what and how the various sectors of the community see the issues of parking being resolved.

BCC will call a meeting of the mentioned organisations within the next couple of weeks to discuss the issues and possible solutions to the parking problems.

1. **Planning**

Planning application open for comment

Erection of Dwelling house on Chapel Brae opposite Coldrach Lodge

https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QX2AYWCAMII00&activeTab=summary

BCC listened to concerns raised by members of the public regarding the above development, concerns raised were about the loss of amenity to the local area and the loss of habitat to local wildlife as well as the impact the development would have on nearby mature trees.

There was also concern raised that the H4 site in the Local Development Plan is earmarked for up to 6 houses and that this development while taking up a large proportion of the site is not in keeping with the intention of the Local Development Plan.

While BCC found they could not support the issues raised about the loss of amenity and habitat loss, as the site has been scheduled for development in the Local Development Plan, they did agree to raise concern about so much of the site being given to a single development. Comment will be sent to the AC Planning Department .

Installation of 2 electric charging points outside fife arms hotel

https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QX1V4ECAMF200&activeTab=summary

While there was no direct objection to this application it was felt that the installation of electric charging point could be in a better location and could be part of the wider plans to improve car parking facility in the village.

Letter voicing concerns over location and space to be sent to the Planning Department

There were no comments given for the following Applications

APP/2021/1879 | Erection of 8 Commercial Units (Class 4 - Business) Associated Infrastructure and Formation of Access | Lions Face Quarry Depot Braemar Aberdeenshire

https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QXF447CAFIH00&activeTab=summary

APP/2021/1931 | Demolition of Dwellinghouse | Ancromlon Braemar Aberdeenshire AB35 5YP

https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QXX632CAGE800&activeTab=summary

 The below applications are outwith the time period for making comment

Alterations and replacement of refrigeration plant at coop - Awaiting decision

https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QVIQYOCAJH500&activeTab=summary

Erection of Agricultural building at Auchallater - Decided - Planning not required

https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QV5H64CAIST00&activeTab=summary

Erection of notice boards at St Margarets - Awaiting decision

https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QUFRVKCA2QA00&activeTab=summary

Braemar Community Housing – Planning application is likely to come up at the September meeting of the CNPA planning authority

1. **Police Report**

No police report has been received for this month

1. **Village Police Presence**

Brian wood has asked if we currently have a police presence in the village, Geva reported that our local police officer is currently signed off and that she had emailed a copy of the agenda to the Chief Inspector highlighting this item and is awaiting a response.

1. **Community Action Plan**

The Community Action Plan was last refreshed 5 years ago and was led by Trevor Garlick.

Trevor has been approached about updating the plan and has said that he is happy to help but not to take the lead.

Alistair Simpson has said that he will take on the role to update the Community Action Plan.

1. **Reports from other organisations**

**CNPA –** Geva Blackett

The consultation on the next Park Partnership Plan is now live and a draft plan to be consulted on will be drawn up next month. So far points being raised include,

* More affordable housing
* A louder voice for residents and workers
* More signposted walks and cycle routes
* Debate on both sides about the values of rewilding
* Provision of public electric charging points
* Better facilities for disabled visitors

The Authority recently put out the following statement:

“The Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) are aware of a recent report from Rewilding Britain, which claims – incorrectly – that 44% of the Cairngorms National Park comprises driven grouse moors. The figure quoted is for heather moorland *as a whole*, not the area used for driven grouse shooting. This 44% of the Cairngorms is used for a variety of land uses including upland farming, deer stalking, driven grouse, walked up grouse, conservation management, as well as regenerating woodland and montane scrub.

Moorland is – and will continue to be – an important land use in the Cairngorms National Park and, even with our ambitious woodland expansion targets, large areas of the Park will continue to be open ground.”

Community Housing planning application will likely come up at the September meeting to which Geva will declare an interest and not take part in the discussion.

**BCL –** Simon Blackett

Braemar Castle – is having a difficult season, having coped with the social distancing requirements. Now that Balmoral is closed and social distancing rule have been relaxed, they are now able to offer more guided tours and numbers are picking up.

The Castle will close at the end of August until Summer 2023 to allow work to be carried out under the Raising the Standard project. The project still needs to raise £200,000 of the £1,600,000 needed but fundraising is ongoing.

Community Housing – are awaiting the outcome of the planning application. It is hoped that the sheds will be demolished later in the year pending a building warrant. Building work is not expected to commence this year due to the ongoing uncertainty regarding material costs.

Community Woodland- remains well visited and surveys are ongoing to help with future plans for management.

Auchtavan – Is receiving a number of visits from a mixture of groups including guests from the Fife Arms Hotel. £12,000 has been awarded National Park grants to improve furniture, tracks and for repairs, heating and fencing.

Bridges – BCL own 2 bridges in the community which are regularly monitored for deterioration.

BCL is currently looking for one or two new directors.

**Mar Lodge Estate**

The Victoria Bridge that crosses the River Dee at Mar Lodge is currently closed for repair and refurbishment until 21st December 2021.

1. **Correspondence**

**Cairngorm Capercaillie Project**

Letter received requesting participation in survey being conducted to identify the values, attitudes and beliefs held in the Deeside area about capercaillie conservation.

Simon Blackett took part in the survey.

**Braemar Primary School Cleaning Vacancy**

Wendy Clark from Cleaning services sent a letter asking for our assistance to publicise and advertise the cleaning post at Braemar School.

**Banners at the Car Park.**

Letter received from Pete Mulvey regarding a request from BRHS to put banners promoting free parking at the Games Park on the railings at Kindrochit Castle. He also attached the response from Aberdeenshire Council to his letter.

1. **Braemar CC meeting schedule**

Brian Wood raised the issue of the number of meetings that the CC hold each year and their regularity. He felt that meetings should be held monthly instead of bimonthly.

After a vote it was decided that there should be 10 regular meetings per annum instead of the current 6.

We will seek to change the constitution accordingly.

1. **Braemar CC membership**

After the last elections the membership of the CC has come down to 6 members, although we can proceed with this number it would be great to increase the number. Anyone who wishes to join the CC can still be co-opted and then stand for election next year.

1. **AOCB**

None to report

1. **Date of next meeting** - Monday 20th September 2021