

Boat of Garten and Vicinity Community Council

Draft Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 February 2022 at Boat Community Hall.

1. Record of attendees and Apologies received.

Community Council Members: Caroline Holroyd, Alan Bennet, John Dickson, Kathryn Gillings.

Ex Officio: Muriel Cockburn

Apologies: Willie McKenna

Members of the public: n/a

2. Minutes of Meeting of 11 October 2021

The minutes were proposed as an accurate record of the meeting by John Dickson and seconded by Alan Bennet. The community council met informally on 15 November 2021 and minutes were reviewed.

3. Matter arising from the Minutes

None

4. Declarations of Interest

None

5. Treasurers Report – Alan Bennet

Our balance in the Treasurers account has increased from £1745.40 to £2270.60 and the balance in the Environmental account remains at £3829.82 with no transactions during the period.

With regards to the Treasurers account income: We had £475 from advertisers in the BoG Standard, with a few outstanding payments to come.

We also received a donation of £600 from the Reidhaven Trust who asked that we use this for the benefit of as many members of the community as possible. I have thanked the Trust but the Community Council would formally like to thank the trust for their support.

With regards to the Treasurers account expenditure: We paid £10 as our contribution for the BoG website and paid £30.80 to purchase our poppy wreath for the annual Remembrance ceremony.

We also paid £509 for the printing costs of the BoG standard. Although Groverprint held their prices for us they have warned they face substantial cost increases for the next print run. The council discussed that in future we may have to consider either reducing the number of pages of the BOG Standard or perhaps look at advertising prices or even both. We now print 3 editions of the magazine a year now and everyone seemed happy that this had been well received.

On the face of it, our balance of £2270.60 appears healthy. However, we do have an outstanding bill to pay Highland Council for the festive lights, we need to use funds to cash flow the BoG Standard print runs and we have to consider the best use of the Trusts donation - at present it is going towards the cost of the festive tree and streetlights. Our position is therefore tighter than first appears.

Treasurers Account

Balance at 03/10/21	£1745.40	
Balance at 10/02/22	£2270.60	
Credits this period:	£ 475.00	Advertisers in BOG Standard
	£ 600.00	Reidhaven Trust Donation
Debits this period:	£ 30.80	Poppy wreath
	£ 509.00	Groverprint – BOG Standard
	£ 10.00	Website – Community Company

Environmental Account

Balance at 03/10/21	£3829.82
Balance at 10/02/22	£3829.82
Credits this period:	£0
Debits this period:	£0

6. Planning Matters

No issues to discuss

7. Reports

Police - A report was requested from the Police but nothing received as yet. Caroline will chase this up and circulate.

Councillors commented that the new yellow lines near the Boat Hotel and post office are good but there have been several observations of people ignoring them.

Muriel said that the main police issue that she was aware of recently has been the vandalism of the public toilets in Kingussie, Aviemore and Carrbridge particularly. In Kingussie alone the damage has cost approx. £20k

NHS – Muriel informed Councillors that everything was going very well with the new hospital but there are a lot of staff off in health and social care in the area. GP practices are also struggling to get locum cover due to housing shortages.

9. AOCB

Aviemore Station Opening Hours – Kathryn let Councillors know what she had found about the proposed changes and basically the station waiting room will be open 8am to 5pm but no tickets will be able to be purchased here. The same is being proposed for Kingussie station.

Councillors raised concerns about the loss of human contact and the ability to seek advice on ticket purchases. They also raised concerns about safety as some trains can be busy with cyclists trying to get bikes onto trains and often people needing assistance for access.

Communities Housing Trust Update – David Goodall circulated an update to all Councillors before the meeting and has asked us to circulate details to as many community groups as possible. The content of the update is as follows:

“Communities Housing Trust (CHT) and Boat of Garten Community groups are working in partnership to provide two accessible homes for affordable rent.

The homes will be let in perpetuity at social rent equivalent, and an allocations policy will mean that local people are prioritised.

We were delighted that Planning in Principle for the homes was granted in October 2021 by the Cairngorms National Park, and we are now preparing a contractor’s design and build brief that will go out for tender in March.

The need to support older people to stay in the community was identified in a survey and Community Action Plan in 2018. The Boat of Garten Housing Group was then set up, led by Alison Fielding.

The bungalows will be wheelchair accessible and close to the shops and post office. The land, just off Deshar Road, is being made available by the Reidhaven Estate, who will also be providing two self-build plots on the site.

We are extremely pleased to see this project's progress in prioritising the local community.

The next steps are to employ a contractor and then obtain full planning permission before work can start on site.

CHT are an Inverness-based charity who work with communities in northern Scotland to provide genuinely affordable housing and other needed facilities. They have worked on other community housing projects in the area, such as Ardgeal in Kincaig, and the recent self-builds at Rothiemurchus."

Councillors recollected that the issue of community housing was one of the top issues raised during the "Big Conversation" some 4-6 years ago. Councillors also discussed that it may be useful to request that this type of survey may be good to do again if it can be organised as it yields useful feedback that provides focus for the council.

Short Term Lets – Muriel spoke about how Badenoch and Strathspey are part of a pilot project looking at the control of short term lets. The pilot is looking at holiday lets requiring planning permission to be a holiday let. This pilot is not to be confused with licensing which relates to due diligence and standards that landlords are required to meet for a property to be let. There is a view that the approach to short term lets needs to be balanced to allow small businesses to survive. So that they can attract employees who can find housing. At this present time 66% of Nethy is holiday lets and in Boat its approaching 50%.

The problem is that no one can really enforce houses being converted into holiday lets – only the developer has the power and there is no incentive for them to do this. There is a consultation currently live on the Highland Council Website for people to make comment on the issue if they wish. The link is <http://www.highland.gov.uk/stlcontrolarea>

Tree thinning in Boat wood – This autumn/winter the Seafield Estate are planning to undertake work to thin out the Boat woods. It is nearly 10 years since the main section of the wood was thinned so it is now due again. The estate manager is currently considering further communication on this. Last time he contributed an article to the BoG Standard and did a presentation in the Hall. This may be considered again.

20 is Plenty – Alan said that a member of the community had queried what the Highland Council were doing about implementing the 20mph speed limit in the village. Muriel informed Councillors that it was going to be communicated as a consistent message across the Highlands that all villages/ town centres would have a speed limit of 20mph.

Path along the Spey – Alan had been approached by a member of the community asking about the possibility of looking into formalising the path along the Spey so that it could be followed all the way to Aviemore. Muriel suggested contacting CNPA to see if anyone had any plans to develop it.

10. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 14 March 2022

The meeting closed at 20.10