

Boat of Garten & Vicinity Community Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 28 November 2022

In Boat of Garten Community Hall

1. Record of Attendees and Apologies Received:

Community Council Members: Kathryn Gillings, Alan Bennet, Valerie Fairweather, Alison Morris, John Dickson.

Ex Officio: Muriel Cockburn

Members of the Public: Malcolm Clark, John O'Donnell

Apologies: Neil Maciver

2. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 17 October 2022:

The minutes were proposed as an accurate record of the meeting by John Dickson and seconded by Alan Bennet.

3. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising that were not on the agenda.

4. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Finance:

Alan Bennet presented the Treasurer's Report.

The balance in the account is £1,429.17, up from £979. Money is still due from advertisers in the BoG Standard.

Meanwhile, the Reidhaven Trust has sent a cheque in the sum of £600 which is a donation to the community. Alan Bennet will send a note of thanks.

6. Planning Matters:

- a. There have been a number of applications for short-term letting recently which seem to go through without consultation. The Council requested guidance from Highland Council on the consultation rules regarding the issue of short-term lets and second homes. Alan Bennet pointed out that there was a very informative new section on the Highland Council website which explained the current situation. It was agreed that the Community Council policy should be to consider each application on its individual merits.

7. Reports:

a. Police:

Neil Maciver was unable to attend but provided the Police Report. 16 calls had been recorded from 17 October up to the present, broken down as follows:

Concern for person:	2
Loud Music:	1
Fraud:	1

Theft by Housebreaking:	1
Miscellaneous Matters:	2
Abandoned 999 calls:	1
Civil Matters:	1
Thefts:	1
Medical matters:	1
Road Traffic Complaints:	1
Drunk Person:	1
Communication Offences:	1
Animals on Roadway:	1
Assault:	1

b. NHS:

No report had been received from the NHS

c. CNPA:

No report had been received from the Cairngorm National Park Authority. Some disquiet was expressed that the CNPA had not participated in recent meetings.

Muriel Cockburn explained that Willie McKenna had been affected by health issues and therefore unable to attend.

8. Winter Resilience Planning

Sadly, neither Karen Derrick nor Alan Gristwood were able to attend the meeting as invited. Alan Gristwood had provided an email response referring to plans to acquire one or more stand-by generators for the Hall.

Meanwhile, John Dickson observed that the Community Hall was being made available as a “Warm Space” and that the Church had committed to providing volunteers to help supervise.

9. Any Other Competent Business

- a. John Dickson, with some regret, tendered his resignation as Secretary, Council Member and Advertising Manager of the BoG Standard, financial issues having forced him to sell up and move. Formal written resignation will be tendered in writing to Lewis Hannah (Ward Manager) copy to Muriel Cockburn.
- b. The appointment of Alison Morris as Secretary of the Council was proposed by Valerie Fairweather and seconded by Alan Bennet.
- c. Alison Morris reported that a resident of Birch Grove had complained about the disturbance (noise and mess) created by the crows, ravens and jackdaws inhabiting the area around Milton Loch in great numbers. This matter has been raised and discussed several times in the past and on all occasions the conclusion has been that there is nothing that can be done.
- d. Muriel Cockburn conveyed a message from the Badenoch & Strathspey Food Hub: if there is anyone in the community who is in need of a food bag or parcel, please pass

their name and details discretely to Muriel or to Jackie Douglas (Chair of the Foodbank).

- e. Valerie Fairweather raised the issue of the proposed changes to Parliamentary constituency boundaries. The Community Council has been invited to engage in consultation. Boundary changes are driven by changes in population distribution and are intended to keep the population of each constituency roughly the same, but Valerie felt that this was being achieved by ignoring obvious geographic challenges. Muriel Cockburn advised the Council to engage in the consultation process because local views are definitely listened to.
- f. John Dickson raised the issue of the site of the Sawmill and asked Muriel Cockburn what plans the Highland Council might have for the site. It was agreed that the situation calls for consultation to ensure that whatever happens with the site meets the needs and desires of the village community.
- g. Alan Bennet requested an update on the forthcoming meeting of the Association of Cairngorms Communities and was informed that the meeting has been cancelled.
- h. Alan Bennet referred to a communication from a resident about a speeding vehicle regularly travelling on the road from Drumuillie. Muriel Cockburn advised that contact be made with Craig Irvine at Highland Council for a speed recording device, and that the Council can request that the Police provide an unmarked car to observe.
- i. Kathryn Gillings referred to correspondence from a graphic designer relating to sand-blasted signs in the village offering to inspect them and quote for their refurbishment. However, the Community Council is not responsible for the signs.

10. Questions and Contributions from the Public

Malcolm Clark raised several matters:

- Minutes circulated should be in final form and open to questions from the public.
- Planning Decisions: the Council should insist on being informed of planning decisions. It was pointed out that this is not in the purview of the Council.
- Signs in the woods, which are in poor condition; but these are the responsibility of the CNPA.
- Finance: the Highland Council Ward Grant £400 is not reflected in the finance report; Alan Bennet replied that the grant has not been received.
- There are no mentions in the financial report to the payment of expenses or honoraria to the Secretary or other members of the Council. Alan Bennet replied that this was because none of the Council members had claimed any such allowances.

- 11.** Valerie Fairweather proposed, and Alan Bennet seconded, a vote of thanks to John Dickson who had stood into the role of Secretary of the Council following the resignation of Caroline Holroyd.

- 12.** The next ordinary meeting of the Community Council is scheduled for Monday 13 February 2023 at 7.00pm in the Boat of Garten Community Hall.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Text of email from Seafield Estate:

Dear Community Members,

Seafield Estate last thinned the woodland just to the south of the village in 2012/13 and it is now time for it to be thinned again. The work will take place over autumn and winter 2022/23 with the start date depending on availability of contractors. Woodland thinning is an important silvicultural practice which involves removing a percentage of the trees to improve the quality and form of the remainder, as well as providing employment and timber income for the estate. It also improves the woodland habitat which is important for species including Red Squirrel and Capercaillie.

To ensure safe working during the thinning operation it will be necessary to close or limit access on sections of the paths while machinery is working. Every effort will be taken to prevent damage to the trails and they will be reinstated and re-opened once the operation has finished and the site is safe.

Warning and no entry signs will be placed at the boundary of the active part of the harvesting site. These signs are in place for everyone's safety and we would ask you to follow all instructions on them. Ignoring the signs means the operators have to stop working and this makes the operation take longer with more inconvenience for the users of the paths in the woodland.

If you have any questions or would like more information about the planned operation then please do not hesitate to get in touch with the forest manager, Caitlin Erskine via email: caitlin.erskin@seafield-estate.co.uk.