

**BOAT OF GARTEN AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
(BoGCC)**

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
Monday 8th July 2024 in Boat of Garten Community Hall

1. Record of Attendees and Apologies Received:

Community Council Members: Kathryn Gillings (KG), Chair; Alan Bennet (AB), Treasurer; Lesley Taylor (LT), Secretary; Don Walker (DW)

Ex Officio: n/a

Police: Neil Maciver (NM), Police Scotland

Members of the Public: n/a

Apologies: Muriel Cockburn (MC), Member, Highland Council

2. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 13th May 2024:

The minutes were proposed as an accurate record of the meeting by DW, seconded by AB.

3. Matters Arising

3a. Planned affordable homes and associated infrastructure at the Old Sawmill site, granted planning permission in February 2020

As agreed at the May meeting, LT emailed Seafeld Estates to ask for an update. A response was received from David Greer, Property Director, Seafeld & Strathspey Estates informing us that the planned housing development had fallen into abeyance due to a combination of factors.

- The first issue was financial and that remains as a challenge. Our (the Estate and BSW) intention had been to build the 12 houses, possibly selling 2 or 3 as affordable to subsidise the build cost of the others, and retain the remaining houses within the Estate rental portfolio as affordable lets. Scottish Government support in the form of the Rural Housing Fund had been secured. We took the project to tender stage with 3 building firms but unfortunately, even with Government funding and valuing the land at £0, the project was financially unviable. The problem was that Government funding for affordable housing, and the rental returns were both capped; but build costs were at market level.

Shortly after the tender process, the pandemic hit and, even as that passed, building materials and labour increased in some cases to 50% above pre-pandemic levels.

- The closure of the Sawmill has also influenced the development. The former Mill Manager's bungalow was part of the development and would have been the site for two of the houses. The Estate was working in collaboration with BSW because they own the Manager's House and they saw the value in having local accommodation to attract staff to work in the mill.
- In terms of future prospects, the Park Authority are starting to consult on the next Local Development Plan and the Estate will promote the Drumullie site to be zoned for residential development. Previously it was not zoned, which is why the original development had to be 100% affordable. If it is zoned, the affordable element will be reduced which might alter the economics by enabling some plots/houses to be sold at market value and releasing funds to support the affordable housing.

LT emailed CNPA to enquire about the current status and potential future use of the site. A reply is awaited.

4. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Reports

5a. Police

Incidents from 10th June to 8th July 2024

Complaint of erratic driving	1	Road accidents	3
Animals on roadway	1	Abandoned/silent 999 call	2
Total 7 Incidents			

6. Finance - Treasurer's Report for meeting 08/07/24

Treasurer's Account

Balance at 06/05/24 £2320.47

Balance at 01/07/24 **£1963.47**

Credits this Period

£150.00 Bog Standard advertising
£150.00

Debits this Period

£489.00 Printing BoG Standard
£18.00 Hall hire May
£507.00

We will receive advertising income from the summer BoG Standard in July 24.

Environmental Account

Balance at 06/05/24 £4000.00

Balance at 01/07/24 **£4000.00**

No transactions for this period

7. Planning Matters

BoGCC received a Consultation Request Notification from Highland Council for a planning application regarding a house on Deshar Road. The application is for a proposed use of a property as a short term letting unit.

Our village has a high proportion of properties that are not occupied full time. We feel this can be detrimental to the life of the community.

As a community council we have decided not to object to planning applications on properties that have been holiday lets for several years but to object to new applications.

As such we objected to this application.

There have been a number of 'Certificates of Lawfulness' granted by Highland Council in recent months. BoGCC would like clarification of the criteria for such certificates to be granted.

- ***BoGCC consult Muriel Cockburn, Member, Highland Council at our next meeting***

8. Correspondence

BoGCC would like to extend their thanks to Deshar Primary School for their very kind invitation to the Art Exhibition held in the school in June.

(Unfortunately the invitation arrived while the secretary was on holiday and the event had passed before her return.)

9. BoG Standard Update

AB updated the council about a review carried out by the BoG Standard team and possible changes.

- There has been a proposal to reduce the size of the publication, possibly from 32 to 28 pages.
- Jackie Wilson is now the sole proofreader
- 500 printed copies to be maintained
- Possibly more variety in articles from a greater range of contributors

10. AOCB

KG updated the council on her communications with Amey, who manage the A95 Keith to Aviemore trunk road on behalf of Transport Scotland.

There has been ongoing concern about the brown road sign coming into Boat of Garten which is in a state of disrepair and may be unsafe.

Brown signs help road users find attractions and facilities. The attractions must get Visit Scotland accreditation before they can apply to the local authority roads department for permission to erect the sign.

Amey agreed with KG that the sign should come down but said they could not remove it as they were not clear who owns/paid for the sign.

- **AB will email Colin Simpson, CNPA for advice**

11. Questions and Contributions from the Public

None

The next ordinary meeting of the Community Council is scheduled for **Monday 9th September 2024** at 7.00pm in the Boat of Garten Community Hall.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Community Councils are comprised of people who care about their community and want to make it a better place to live. If this sounds like you, we would love you to join us! For more details please contact boatofgartencc@gmail.com

COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK WELCOME

The Community Council exists to see that the opinions of local residents are properly taken into account by official bodies and generally to foster local interests. Your opinions matter and we would like to hear any comments you have on what the Community Council does or does not do.

Residents are welcome at all our meetings and, subject to the guidance of the Chair, may contribute to all discussion.

The Community Council is registered with the Information Commissioner in terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Copies of agendas and minutes, besides those circulated to members, Highland Councillors & officials etc.; can also be sent to residents who have expressed an interest in the work of the Council. If you would like to be included in this e-mail circulation, please contact the Secretary at boatofgartencc@gmail.com.