

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

**Draft Minutes** of the Ordinary Meeting  
**Monday 11th December 2023** in Boat of Garten Community Hall

**1. Record of Attendees and Apologies Received:**

**Community Council Members:** Kathryn Gillings (KG), Chair; Alan Bennet (AB), Treasurer; Alison Morris (AM); Donald Walker (DW); Lesley Taylor (LT), Secretary.

**Ex Officio:** Muriel Cockburn (MC), Member, Highland Council

**Police Scotland:** Neil Maciver (NM)

**Members of the Public:** David Goodall

**Apologies:** None

**2. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 9th October 2023:**

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

**3. Matters Arising**

**3a. Playpark update**

LT visited the school on 8 November where the P7 pupils presented a report of the project they had done with the P1 to 3 classes about our local park. The aim was to look at how the park could be upgraded and made more fun for young people.

Pupils had built models of 'our dream park' and carried out surveys asking the following;

- What is in our park?
- What condition is it in?
- What is our favourite piece of equipment?
- What do we want in our park in future?

The results of the surveys showed that the most popular equipment was the monkey bars with 23.9% and the lowest was the baby swings with 2.8%. The survey for what pupils would like in future showed that a Wooden Obstacle Castle was most popular with 13.5% of votes and the lowest with 8.8% of votes was a Seesaw Swing.

LT has contacted M Brown, VABS. They will discuss accessibility to the park next week.

- *LT to report back at next meeting*

**3b. Forest Fire Dangers**

LT reported back on replies from CNPA & Seafield Estate.

Murray Ferguson, Director of Planning and Place, CNPA informed us that the CNPA Board have been discussing the risk of fires in the National Park. He provided details of the press release about what they decided, and a copy of the CNPA background paper:

- Board paper - <https://cairnngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/24112023/231124BdPaper3FireManagementByelaws.pdf>
- Press release - <https://cairnngorms.co.uk/park-authority-to-consult-on-introduction-of-fire-byelaws/>

CNPA are also planning to develop an Integrated Wildfire Management Plan for the whole of the National Park over the next year. There will be a consultation starting in January about the potential for fire related bylaws.

- *BOGCC to input to this consultation as appropriate*

Caitlin Erskine (CE), Forest Manager, Seafield and Strathspey Estates informed us that the vicinity of Boat of Garten is considered at low risk of fire and a fire spreading for the following reasons: -

- The vegetation within the woodland is not considered to be a high fuel load therefore the risk of rapid spread is low.
- The topography and shelter limit the risk of rapid spread.
- The potential for a fire to start, other than through wilful fire raising, is low. We have, thankfully, not had incidents of wilful fire raising in Boat of Garten woods for a number of years.
- The location means response times to a reported fire are short and access is good to enable a fire to be tackled.
- The regular use of the woodland by the residents and visitors and the proximity of houses mean that any fire would be spotted before it became of significant size – and this is borne out by historical experience.
- With modern communications any fire spotted can immediately be notified to the Fire and Rescue Service.
- The Strathspey Steam Railway has spotters in periods of high fire risk.

CE said the incidence of crown fire is almost so low as to be non-existent in UK forestry and therefore not an issue on the forest road (not firebreak) from the Hall to the Yard.

### **3c. Valerie Fairweather**

The council agreed that a card of thanks should be sent to Valerie acknowledging her sterling service to the Community Council over a number of years.

- *KG to send card on behalf of BoGCC*

## **4. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 5. Finance:

AB reported that since the October meeting the only expenditure was £18 for hall hire. There are small items of expenditure coming and costs for the festive street lights.

In terms of income

- We are currently awaiting the admin grant from Highland Council.
- We have issued the invoices for the BoG Standard Winter edition. This should bring in £690.
- We received a donation of £600 from the Reidhaven Trust. It was agreed that this should be used towards the festive lighting costs.

BoGCC wishes to formally record our thanks to the trust for this kind donation.

Bank statement balance - £1,480.33 in the Treasurers account and £4,000 in the Environmental account.

## 6. Planning Matters

There were no recent planning matters requiring comment from BoGCC.

MC reported that a ruling on short term lets in Edinburgh is still awaited. The Highland Council have proposals for a pilot scheme in Ward 20 which will be put to the full council next week.

## 7. Reports - Police

Incidents from 12 November 2023 - 11 December 2023

|                    |   |                               |   |
|--------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Court Bail Enquiry | 1 | Road Traffic Vehicle Recovery | 1 |
| Alarm Activation   | 1 | Concern for Person            | 1 |
| Medical Matters    | 1 |                               |   |
| Total 5 Incidents  |   |                               |   |

Following on from the last meeting it was noted that, from 11 December 2023, the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 has prohibited pavement parking, double parking, and parking at dropped kerbs and anyone caught can face a £100 fine.

The planned rollout of enforcement by The Highland Council parking enforcement team can be found at the link below:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20006/parking\\_and\\_car\\_parks/711/decriminalised\\_parking\\_enforcement/6](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20006/parking_and_car_parks/711/decriminalised_parking_enforcement/6)

## 8. Correspondence

### 8a. Highland Council Budget Challenge 2024/25

AB returned a response on behalf of BoGCC

## **8b. Badenoch & Strathspey Community Partnership Plan and Badenoch & Strathspey Food Hub request for possible recipients**

It was agreed that, while BoGCC should keep abreast of the work of these organisations, it is probably more appropriate for other bodies to contribute.

## **8c. Highland Council Pavement Gritting Schedule**

S Goodall, member of the public, contacted BoGCC to express concerns about the gritting of paths in the snow and cold weather. MC was also contacted and has responded.

MC clarified The Highland Council Winter Service Policy is on the 'Winter Roads' page. [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads\\_and\\_pavements/107/winter\\_road\\_maintenance](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/107/winter_road_maintenance)

AB highlighted that the 'Winter Resilience assistance to communities' section of the 'Winter Roads' page could be helpful to any area of the community wishing to enhance the provision in their locality.

- *AB to put the info in Feb 2024 edition of BoG Standard*

## **8d. Cairngorms Capercaillie Project**

Correspondence was received from C Robertson, Cairngorms Capercaillie Project, asking for the opportunity to discuss aspects of a proposed project with the dog walking community.

- *AB to contact C Robertson*

## **9. BoG Standard Update**

The BoG Standard (Community Council Newsletter) has had a post production session in follow up to the relaunch in Winter 2023.

The following questions were posed for BoGCC:

1. Should the magazine remain free?
2. How many copies should be printed?
3. Should there be additional copies for hotel, shop, etc?

It was agreed that leaving the cost off the heading of the magazine would leave the potential to offer spare copies in the hotel/shop 'for a donation'.

It was agreed that details of all addresses in the BoGCC area would be very helpful to inform deliveries

- *MC contact L Hannah to get this info*

AB said that 450 copies had been printed on the first run. Printing 500 would allow for additional copies to go to hotel/shop, etc.

- *KG to feed this info back to next BoG Standard meeting*

AB raised the issue of how to reach permanent residents in the caravan site.  
It was not clear how this could be addressed.

## **10. AOCB**

### **10a. Inaugural meeting**

LT confirmed that details of chair, secretary and treasurer sent to Highland Council

### **10b. Street lights out**

AM expressed concern that approx 4 street lights are out in the village and that this is a long term/recurring problem.

- *AM to report to Highland Council 'Report a Fault' site on behalf of BoGCC*

## **11. Questions and Contributions from the Public**

### **Sale of The Manse, Boat of Garten**

D Goodall (DG), member of the public, attended the meeting to highlight that the Church of Scotland Manse will be put up for sale soon. The sale will be handled centrally.

DG wondered if it may be possible to retain some of the community resource by proposing a scheme based on community needs. It may be that the Kirk Session will make such a request.

MC said there had been some projects of this nature in Highland previously.

- *DG will keep BoGCC updated on details as the sale goes ahead*

**12. The next ordinary meeting** of the Community Council is scheduled for Monday 12th February 2024 at 7.00pm in the Boat of Garten Community Hall.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

### **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](mailto:boatofgartencc@gmail.com).*