

AVIEMORE AND VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting on Thursday 9th September 2021

7pm at The Hub

1. Present

Peter Long (Chair), AVCC
Al Dargie (Vice Chair), AVCC
Elspeth Byrne (Secretary), AVCC

Bill Lobban, Highland Council
Jeni Pacitti, AVCC
Beth Hay, AVCC

2. Apologies for absence

Kathleen Cameron (Treasurer), AVCC
Joe Kirby, AVCC

Willie McKenna, CNPA
Johnnie Grant, Rothiemurchus

3. **Welcome and introductions** - Peter Long welcomed everyone to the meeting.

4. Covid precautions

Covid precautions included hand sanitiser, social distancing and scanning in. In the event of fire, the assembly point was outside Boots.

5. **Declarations of interest** - none

6. Minutes of August meeting

Al Dargie proposed acceptance of the minutes. Seconded by Beth Hay.

7. Matters arising from August meeting

Bill Lobban referred to the problem with weeds on the roundabouts at Blacks and the south end of Aviemore. The Community Council could clear the weeds and plant seeds.

The meeting agreed to weed now and plant wild flower seeds in the spring.

Action: Jeni Pacitti will arrange the weeding and use high visibility vests.

Peter Long had written to Highland Council and CNPA about the Coylumbridge Hotel using caravan accommodation for staff but he has not heard back about this yet.

8. Treasurer's report

Elspeth Byrne proposed acceptance and Jeni Pacitti seconded.

9. Business

a. **BT Openreach/masts (PL/EB)**

Peter Long said that the telegraph poles had started appearing in Strathspey Avenue mid August meeting. He had not been able to obtain any information about these from BT Openreach, CNPA or Highland Council. Bill Lobban said that BT Openreach had not informed Highland Council or CNPA about the poles. The poles are part of BT Openreach installation of high-speed cable across Aviemore.

Affected residents contacted the BT Openreach Poles Department objecting to the poles and, as a result, BT Openreach have agreed that the cable for that area will be underground. Al Dargie said that underground cable would be more robust. Peter Long had written to Kate Forbes to suggest that there should have been information and consultation before the poles were erected, rather than objecting after they were in place.

Peter Long said that local residents are encouraged to contact the BT Openreach Poles Department (address on individual poles) to object if a pole is erected outside their home.

Action: Elspeth Byrne to arrange for this to be put on Facebook.

b. Play parks

Bill Lobban said that 23 playparks in Aviemore and Strathspey had been inspected and Aviemore was the worst. A multi-gym in Burnside playpark had had to be removed as it was dangerous and not repairable. It would cost £20,000 to replace this. A see-saw had also been removed but was being repaired and would be replaced.

Bill Lobban said that every other community in Strathspey was fundraising for their play parks. The old equipment is usually wooden and rots whereas new equipment is more robust. Peter Long asked if communities raise funds and provide new equipment, does Highland Council provide maintenance. Bill Lobban said yes. Jeni Pacitti suggested that some equipment should be accessible to disabled children.

The meeting agreed that the school Parent Council would be the appropriate body to arrange fundraising of £20,000 for the Burnside Place playpark multi-gym replacement.

Action: Elspeth Byrne to write to Parent Council.

c. Scotrail timetable changes

The proposed changes would mean that Aviemore was unmanned. This is important as it allows people to obtain travel card discounts and book seats. It is the first point of contact for visitors, many of whom are disabled, and provides a couple of well-paid jobs.

Jeni Pacitti proposed that the Community Council should write to Scotrail saying that Aviemore station should remain staffed. Beth seconded this.

Action: Elspeth Byrne to write to Scotrail/British Rail.

d. Cairngorm Advisory Group/funicular delay

The meeting had discussed the impact of delay to the funicular reopening to Autumn 2022 and its effect on businesses in the area. There was an interactive discussion on positive and negative aspects of Cairngorm ski area in past years. Bill Lobban said that the tubing had made an amazing difference to Cairngorm Mountain Limited funds including on catering. He said that in future the summer trade should be based on mountain biking but aimed at the family market. He said that we need a change to visitor management.

Aviemore & Vicinity Community Council are frustrated by the delay to reopening of the funicular to Autumn 2022 but strongly support the repair program.

e. Planning

- **Coire Cas car park 21/03808/S42**

Al Dargie said that this planning application was for extension to the temporary permission for location of the snow factory pending full application for a new

location. It is not yet possible to install the snow factory at an appropriate location. Difficulties include power supply problems and the work cannot be progressed during the winter.

Al Dargie proposed no comment to the application, seconded by Jeni Pacitti.

- **Outdoor classroom 21/03953/FUL**

Plans for the outdoor classroom had been withdrawn and resubmitted. It is now a hexagonal shape rather than oblong.

Al Dargie proposed support to the application, seconded by Jeni Pacitti.

f. Shift – funding application (SD)

Sally Devlin submitted a detailed proposal. A small grant of £750 has been approved to encourage people who are not confident using a bike. Sally Devlin will publicise this via the Community Council in the Autumn.

Elsbeth Byrne proposed thanks to Sally Devlin from the Community Council. Seconded by Beth Hay.

g. VABs meeting - carried forward to next meeting

h. Replacement notice board

The old post had been removed. The meeting agreed that a new notice board should not be provided but that the notice board at HighLife Highland should remain.

Action: Elspeth Byrne and Beth Hay to visit HighLife Highland to determine best location for the Community Council notice board and to request this in writing.

i. Hitrans Rural Spaces funding

The meeting agreed that this funding could be used for traffic calming and access at the north end of Aviemore.

Action: Elspeth Byrne to find out the process and provide information to AVCC.

j. Painted stones on Village Green

The meeting agreed that it had been nice to see the stones on display at the opening of the Village Green. Peter Long said that the Community Council had previously decided to put them into a permanent display – ‘the Heart of the Community’.

Action: Al Dargie to specify the work required and ask June Armstrong to design the placement. They would find a contractor and meet with them on-site to obtain an estimate for the work.

k. Charity bikeathon 2022 – carried forward to next meeting

l. Highland Slice in the Square

Highland Slice had requested a regular presence on the Village Green. The meeting appreciated their novel ideas but agreed that there needed to be a distinction drawn between commercial activity and community events.

Action: Peter Long to write to Highland Slice.

10. Reports from other organisations

a. **CNPA report** - none

b. **Highland Council report**

Short term lets consultation

Bill Lobban said that Highland Council had agreed the proposal on Short Term Lets today. This would help many people badly affected by short term lets. In future if you owned a property which had been used for rental to a local family, and you now wanted to use the property for short term lets, then you would have to get planning permission. He encouraged the Community Council to debate and comment on the consultation.

Action: Al Dargie and Jeni Pacitti to progress follow up work on the consultation.

Funding

Bill Lobban said that there is £130K /year, for the next 5 years, for Grantown, Aviemore, Kingussie and Newtonmore. The funding is not earmarked for anything – it is up to us. The funding has to be of benefit to the whole community eg not play parks.

The meeting decided:

- To pursue community ownership or lease of the Myrtlefield site
- To develop a project for Town Centre Funding, and consult with the Community on ideas

Action: Peter Long to email Malcolm Macleod, Head of Development and Infrastructure at Highland Council, to say that the Community Council wish to pursue work at Myrtlefield and seeking assistance.

c. **ACE board member report**

Hanging baskets

Beth Hay said that the hanging baskets looked nice but that they had had to reduce the number. Funding for next year would have to be looked at.

Winter lights

ACE had tried to order the winning design but the manufacturer had been unable to deliver on their promise of a bespoke Christmas light this year. Peter Long said that the winning design would be made next year and the design winner would receive a gift this year.

Christmas

Action: Christmas tree, carol service, Christmas Eve procession, etc, to be on the agenda for the next meeting.

d. **AGCT report** - none

11. **AOCB**

Action: Elspeth Byrne change Data Protection details.

Action: Elspeth Byrne follow up funding for speaker.

Action: Al Dargie said that the Village Green boundary plans (re Village Green ownership) were not clear and he would check measurements.

12. **Date of next meeting – Thursday 14th October 7pm at The Hub**

13. **Meeting closed 9.20pm.**