

Minutes of Public Meeting/AGM held in Chapel of Garioch Village Hall on Thursday 24 November 2017

Welcome

Bob Smith chaired the meeting. He indicated the meeting was being filmed as part of a documentary.

Finance Report

See attached Treasurer's Report. Funds in the account £11. Donations/help with fundraising/fundraising ideas are needed.

Progress Report

- SB continued to expand Alliance.
- Gave talks to groups.
- 3 letters sent to Keith Brown, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work by Mike Rumbles MSP, Lewis Macdonald MSP and Gillian Martin MSP.
- On 18 May Stewart Stevenson MSP asked a question about Bennachie and the impact of the A96 at First Minister's Question Time. This was answered by Keith Brown, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work.
- Amey Arup were appointed as consultants for Stage 2 in July. To coincide Save Bennachie published a statement of support from North East MSPs Bill Bowman, Alexander Burnett, Peter Chapman, Liam Kerr, Lewis Macdonald, Jenny Marra, Gillian Martin, Tom Mason and Mike Rumbles, and MP Colin Clarke, and member of the House of Lords Lord Bruce of Bennachie. There was a report on STV news at 6pm and 10pm, local newspapers and radio.
- On 11 January Gillian Martin has invited the core team to First Minister's Question Time followed by a reception. Supporting North East MSPs will be invited. Amey Arup and Transport Scotland will also be invited. Save Bennachie's "One Year On" Report will be handed over.
- Publicity - flyers, car stickers, banner and pop ups have been bought.
- Web site - crucial for the campaign. Almost 1,000 signed up members and over 2,500 Facebook followers. Web site has had 32,813 page views since January 2017 with 19,460 users, 81.04% of these are new users.

Where is the Eastern Section in the process?

The Eastern Section from the Glens of Foudland to the AWPR commenced Stage 2 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) with the appointment of Amey-Arup JV (AAJV) in July. 'Meet the Team' meetings attended by over 1,000 people have taken place in Inverurie, Huntly and Blackburn. In the next 12 months AAJV will take the simple Routes 'B' Inverurie North, Inner & South, Routes 'C' and 'D' and prepare a comprehensive range of options. Details of the Western

Section which is one year ahead in the process were displayed showing how the simple arrows north and south of Forres and Elgin are now five routes with approximately 35 different combinations.

AAJV have now assembled a team of over 70 consultants who are split between four teams: Engineering, Traffic, Environment & Economic. Work will commence with corridors being established where roads can be potentially built. The corridors will then be assessed by each team in parallel and the final options going forward will be presented to the public in approximately 12 months. There will then be a consultation period after which the final route option will be chosen in Summer 2019.

Bennachie falls mainly into the remit of the Environmental Team and it is vital that all who care about the hill express their feelings to AAJV and Transport Scotland. All enquiries will be logged against the appropriate corridor and a response will be given. Save Bennachie will also be providing information and asking questions. The Environmental Team will not be carrying out detailed surveys during Stage 2 therefore it is essential that supporters of Save Bennachie provide extensive information on all aspects of Bennachie.

Contacting AA and TS

2 forums of community councils have been made up by AA and invitations have gone out for 6 and 7 December. Individuals are also urged to comment through their community councils.

Individuals are invited to contact AA and TS using the details provided on the handout from Meet the Team events.

Open session

Discussion

- AA seem to be unaware of the flora and fauna on and around Bennachie. Members were directed towards using nesbrec.org.uk to report sightings. The Bailies of Bennachie have 15 wildlife cameras on the hill.
- Disappointment that AA did not have sheets on which questions could be written down/comment sheets. Individuals should send questions/comments into AA and TS.
- Concern that taxpayers will have to pay for 2 roads - A96 and A947 -if TS and Aberdeenshire Council worked together one road could be engineered, saving money.
- Concern that there will be insufficient consultation with community councils as meeting is at short notice and some CCs don't seem to know about it. Councillor Leslie offered to send out letter to his contacts in CCs.
- Concern that Bailies of Bennachie will not be consulted.

Traffic

The benefit of one route as opposed to another will include consideration of cost per mile per vehicle. Inverurie is a junction rather than a destination. The relief road has altered traffic flows but two thirds of traffic is still turning off the A96 into Inverurie, more down Burghmuir Drive than previously. Accident records will be considered but a new dual carriageway could push more traffic onto side roads, creating more accidents there. The new A96 will be open to all forms of transport. 1% of traffic makes the whole journey between Inverness and Aberdeen. Increasing lorry speed limits from 40 to 50 mph can cut accidents.

Planning the way forward

- SB need more help and expertise. Contact SB if you can help in any way. The next 6 months is crucial.
- Encourage more groups to join the Alliance.
- Encourage more people to sign up.
- Feedback is wanted on what SB can do better.
- Banner and signs at Bennachie Centre - refused when we asked.
- Stall at Inverurie Christmas lights switch on.
- Legal representation - at a later stage.

Donations £35.00 & Tea/Coffee £9.25

Total £44.25