

**HEBRIDES FERRY STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

(Barra, the Uists, Lewis and Harris)

Minute of Meeting held at the Dark Island Hotel, Balivanich, on 6 June 2019 at 11.00am

<p>IN ATTENDANCE</p>	<p><b>COMHAIRLE NAN EILAN SIAR</b>          Cllr Uisdean Robertson (Chairman)          Cllr Kenny Macleod (Vice-Chairman)          Cllr Iain A MacNeil          Cllr Iain M Macleod          Cllr John Mackay          Cllr Donald Manford (Skype)          Mr Iain Buchanan          Mr Derek Mackay (teleconference)          Mrs Yvonne Maciver (teleconference)</p> <p><b>TRANSPORT SCOTLAND</b>          Mr Brian Gordon          Mr Alan McCabe</p> <p><b>CALEDONIAN MACBRAYNE LTD (CALMAC)</b>          Mr David Gibson          Mr Robert Morrison          Ms Demi Wylie          Mr Robbie Drummond          Mr Finlay Macrae          Mr Andrew McNair</p> <p><b>CALMAC COMMUNITY BOARD</b>          Mr Angus Campbell</p> <p><b>CALEDONIAN MARITIME ASSETS LTD. (CMAL)</b>          Mr Kevin Hobbs</p> <p><b>HITRANS</b>          Mr Neil MacRae</p> <p><b>HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS ENTERPRISE (HIE)</b>          Joanna Peteranna</p> <p><b>OUTER HEBRIDES COMMERCE GROUP</b>          Ms Gail Robertson</p> <p><b>OUTER HEBRIDES TOURISM</b>          Mr Alan Graham</p> <p><b>AECOM</b>          Mr Neil Halket</p> <p><b>FSB</b>          David Richardson (Skype)</p>
<p>APOLOGIES</p>	<p>DR Macleod (FSB)          Mr Kevin Peach (Ullapool Harbour Trust)          Mr David Summers (The Highland Council)          Mr Ker Corbett (CPT)</p>

	Mr Rob Mackinnon (Outer Hebrides Tourism) Mr Iain Mackinnon (CnES) Cllr Iain Cockburn (The Highland Council) Cllr Paul Finnegan (CnES)
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1	Minute of Meeting held on 13 December 2019	The Minute of Meeting of 13 December 2018 was <b>approved</b> .
2	Matters Arising	<p>Under item 5 (Regional VRDP Update) from the minute of 13 December 2018.</p> <p>The Chairman put forward the questions. Question 1-3 for Calmac and question 4 to Transport Scotland:</p> <p>(1) There was clearly some presumption that MV Isle of Arran will be removed from regular service after 801 and 802 enter service. Why not absorb the increased capacity the MV Glen Sannox provides to Arran with MV Isle of Arran retained as second ship? What would the Ardrrossan/Brodick route forecast capacity constraint look like if Glen Sannox and Isle of Arran provide the service and how does that compare with the forecasts presented for Western Isles routes?</p> <p>(2) Why waste the Caledonian Isles on the tiny traffic volume travelling to Campbeltown? If MV Caledonian Isles was deployed to Mull what would that do for traffic forecasts?</p> <p>(3) The increased fleet with short term life extension of admittedly elderly vessels could enable a redeployment of vessels to provide the clearly merited 2 RoPax solution for Stornoway and dedicated vessels on both routes across the Little Minch. This could bring huge benefits in tourism growth, service resilience and capacity to meet unmet demand. This must be recognised and work together to realise this ambition.</p> <p>(4) I would ask why are local authorities not provided with a platform to engage with and scrutinise the VRDP and the recommendations of the Network Strategy Group at an early stage so consensual dialogue can deliver solutions that communities could support? The Islands Transport Forum or a sub Group of the ITF should be utilised for this purpose?</p> <p>Mr Richard Hadfield responded briefly to question 4 and stated he was open to the suggestions and keen to engage further.</p> <p><b>Outstanding Action from previous FSG – It was agreed that Bill Main, CalMac and Mr Richard Hadfield, Transport Scotland would respond directly to the Chairman on questions presented at the Meeting and this response would be circulated to the wider Membership through the Secretariat.</b></p> <p>In respect of item 3, Mr Robert Morrison indicated that it would be possible to incorporate an additional column to the Performance Management Reports detailing performance of individual routes against timetables. Performance would continue to be reported to communities. Mr Morrison indicated that the Integrated Operations System would assist in improving communications to passengers in the event of weather disruptions.</p> <p><b>Action – update the Reports to detail the performance of individual routes against timetables.</b></p>
3	VRDP Update (TS)	Mr Brian Gordon, Transport Scotland, provided an update on the Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan. The Draft Annual Report 2018, which included the 2017 update, was circulated. Peak time capacity utilisation (forecasted and actual) for 2017 and 2018 and the forecasted figures for 2019-2024 were detailed for each route which was based on vehicle deck figures and not foot passengers. The

		<p>forecasts focused on the most popular nine weeks of the year for each route which was generally during peak summer. It was highlighted that the effect of reduced fares, the strength of Scottish tourism and the growing popularity of the islands had combined to produce significant growth in passenger and vehicle traffic on the CHFS network.</p> <p>The Key Points from the draft Report included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal for an Argyll STAG covering Islay, Colonsay, Oban, Coll and Tiree to follow on from the Outer Hebrides STAG and to feed into the next Ferries Plan;</li> <li>• There was clear evidence of the need for replacement programmes for both major and non-major vessels providing the opportunity for standardisation in design and a rolling delivery programme; the development of the major vessel programme will be informed by consideration of the opportunity for a larger number of smaller vessels on certain routes;</li> <li>• Based on an initial consideration of STAG outputs, the draft report included high-level conclusions regarding future vessel and port investment for Mallaig- Armadale and Mallaig-Lochboisdale.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action – Members were invited to submit comments on the draft Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan Report to Mr Richard Hadfield by 24 June 2019.</b></p>
4	Outer Hebrides STAG Update (TS)	<p>Mr Brian Gordon, Transport Scotland, gave a presentation providing an update on the Outer Hebrides STAG Draft Network Plan. The presentation highlighted that the Draft Network Plan considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term measures (to 2023)</li> <li>• Medium-term measures (to 2032, which covered the period of the next <i>Ferries Plan</i>)</li> <li>• Long-term considerations beyond 2032 which would need to be planned for between now and then</li> </ul> <p>It was indicated that the Draft Network Plan, if approved, would remain subject to funding availability.</p> <p>It was indicated that that public consultation exercises had been carried out in May 2019 and while there was good engagement with local authorities and key stakeholders the consultation events were not well attended by the general public. Mr Angus Campbell indicated that a common concern expressed by the public to the Communities Board was that comments were not acted upon. It would have to be demonstrated that the general public were being listened to in order to improve public confidence.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the presentation.</b></p>
5	Caledonian MacBrayne Operational and Performance Presentation covering (CFL)	<p>Mr Andrew McNair provided an update in relation to Calmac marketing work. Calmac were looking to promote local products and attractions online and on board vessels. An advertising campaign in the Daily Record and Metro had been undertaken and Calmac would look to extend their reach nationally including a planned promotion throughout June 2019 on STV. In partnership with the Outer Hebrides Tourism Association a campaign to promote the Uists would be run over summer 2019 and would look to develop Gaelic tourism and a series of winter events across the Hebrides.</p> <p>Ms Demi Wylie provided an update on the Transport Integration Strategy and indicated that ferry connectivity with the public bus service network would continue to be monitored. Mr Finlay Macrae,</p>

		<p>provided an overview of the operational performance update in respect of the Hebrides group for the period 221 October 2018 – 28 March 2019.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the updates.</b></p>
6	CMAL Update (CMAL)	<p>Mr Kevin Hobbs provided an update with regards to CMAL. Mr Hobbs indicated that an additional decision making body had been established to progress the infrastructure works on the Uig-Tarbert-Lochmaddy triangular route. Discussions were being held with Calmac in order to avoid peak time closures of piers while infrastructure was being undertaken. It was hoped that the Mull-Armadale STAG appraisal would be completed by the end of June 2019.</p> <p>Mr Hobbs provided an update on the construction and delivery of vessels 801 and 802. CMAL would continue to work with all parties to resolve matters and ensure delivery of the vessels. Mr Uisdean Robertson expressed concerns at the delays in the construction of the new vessels and indicated that there had to be long term solution to the ferry replacement programme as the age of the fleet would mean a number of vessels would require to be replaced over the next few years.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the update.</b></p>
7	Ports/ Harbours Update (Council and Port Authority)	<p>Mr Iain Buchannan provided an update in relation to progress with the tender for the Lochmaddy Pier Improvement Project.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the update.</b></p>
8	Masters Decision Making – Presentation (CFL)	<p>Mr Robbie Drummond gave a presentation which provided information on Masters Decision Making. It was stated in the presentation that CalMac operated in a challenging environment and were heavily influenced by marine and safety legislation. Calmac Masters and Crews were highly skilled and experienced and were trained to operate safely in conditions which were subject to dynamic change. It was stated that Masters were accountable for all decisions made on board to ensure the safety of crew, passengers and the vessel.</p> <p>Mr Drummond indicated that the number of winter scheduled sailings delivered across the CalMac network had increased in the past 10 years by 16% for the major vessel routes. Information was provided detailing that cancellations from adverse weather had remained relatively consistent over the past 10 years. It was indicated that there was a significant increase in winter cancellations in the 3 years from 2013/14 to 2015/16 due to particularly tumultuous weather experience in those years. It was highlighted that the Ullapool-Stornoway route showed a reducing winter trend in relation to cancellations from 13% in 2007/08 to 7% in 2017/18 following to the introduction of the MV Loch Seaforth.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the presentation.</b></p>
9	Communities Board Update	<p>Mr Angus Campbell, CalMac Communities Board, provided an update on the work of the Board. Mr Campbell stated that the CalMac Communities Board had only been operational for 18 months. The Board aimed to maximise economic impact on the islands served by CalMac and sought to improve communication between CalMac and the Island communities. Mr Campbell indicated that 3 Sub-Groups had been formed to ensure the efficient running of the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Sub-Group</li> <li>• Customer Service Sub-Group; and</li> <li>• Fleet Deployment and Resilience Sub-Group</li> </ul>

		<p>The Board had written to Scottish Ministers to request increased investment in the ferry network and would submit a formal response to the National Islands Plan. Mr Campbell thanked those organisations and individuals who had engaged with the Calmac Communities Board and also highlighted that he would be happy to report back to the Hebrides Ferry Stakeholder Group on a regular basis.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the update.</b></p>
10	Strategic Transport Projects Review Stakeholder Engagement Presentation (TS/ Aecom)	<p>Mr Neil Halket, AECOM, gave a presentation in relation to the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) and the Ferries Plan II. Mr Halket stated that the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) had the following visions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote Equality</li> <li>• Help our Economy Prosper</li> <li>• Tackle Climate Action</li> <li>• Improve our Health and Wellbeing</li> </ul> <p>The aim of STPR2 was to review the performance of the strategic transport network across all transport modes, while supporting Scotland's Economic Strategy, including inclusive growth. It was highlighted that outcomes and priorities would be defined in the emerging NTS2 and to make recommendation for potential transport investments for Scottish Ministers to consider as national investment priorities in an updated 20 year (2022-2042) Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the presentation.</b></p>
11	Confirm Pre-agreed Date of Next Meeting	<p>It was <b>agreed</b> that the next Meeting of the Hebrides Ferry Stakeholder Group would be on Thursday 12 December 2019 in Stornoway.</p>