

## Clyde Ferry User Group Meeting

Venue - SPT, St Vincent Street, Glasgow

Date - Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Present – Calum Bryce, CalMac Ferries Limited  
Ross Moran, CalMac Ferries Limited  
David Taylor, CalMac Ferries Limited  
Demi Wyllie, CalMac Ferries Limited  
Blair Moglia, CalMac Ferries Limited  
Brian Fulton, CalMac Ferries Limited  
Douglas Ellis, Transport Scotland  
Graham Laidlaw, Transport Scotland  
Bill Steele, Cumbrae Ferry Group  
Bill Calderwood, Arran Community Council / Arran FC  
Alistair Dobson, Tourism Representative  
Stephen Kerr, Scottish Citylink  
Des Bradley, ScotRail  
Cllr Bruce Marshall, Argyll and Bute Council  
Cllr John Armour, Argyll and Bute Council  
Kevin Hobbs, CMAL  
Allan Comrie, SPT  
Neil Sturrock, SPT  
Ranald Robertson, HITRANS

Apologies – Cllr Chris McEleny, Inverclyde Council  
Cllr Robert E McIntyre, Argyll and Bute Council  
Moy Ingram, Argyll and Bute Council

In the absence of the regular Chair, Cllr McEleny, the meeting was Chaired by Ranald Robertson.

**1. Minute of previous meeting**

Minute approved as an accurate reflection of the discussion.

**2. Matters Arising**

Cllr Armour highlighted that at the previous meeting he had an action highlighted under item 6 that he would welcome an update on this action.

Ross Moran presented that dry dock had addressed several issues that affected MV Isle of Arran performance last year and CFL are confident of better performance in 2017. It was suggested a PR piece on this improvement would be useful.

**3. Performance Audit**

Ranald Robertson presented information on the Audit on behalf of AS. The presentation covered the following areas:

- Aims and Objectives
- Audit Questions
- Audit Evidence
- Stakeholder Engagement

- Next Steps
- Offer from Audit Scotland to present the final report to the next round of ferry user group meetings

Items raised in the subsequent discussion were:

- limited engagement with the small island communities from AS and need to
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Action – RR to flag up the concern in smaller islands at a lack of engagement and perhaps suggest AS arrange interviews with representatives of communities including Coll, Tiree, Colonsay in the Argyll FUG area.

**Action – HITRANS to flag up the concern in smaller islands at a lack of engagement and perhaps suggest AS arrange interviews with representatives of communities including Bute.**

**Action – Audit Scotland to be invited to present the findings of the Performance Audit at the next round of ferry user group meetings.**

#### 4. **Ferry Procurement Review**

Ranald Robertson presented a report to update Members on the announcement of a review to be undertaken into procurement processes and state aid requirements for the future funding of Scottish Government ferry services.

Brian Fulton confirmed that Argyll Ferries have been asked to continue the operation of the Town Centres service until the Review concludes and a decision is taken on procurement of that Operating Contract.

Other issues identified included Brexit.

**Members noted the report.**

#### 5. **Caledonian MacBrayne Operational and Performance Update**

Statistical information was shared in advance of the meeting on the Clyde routes.

Ross Moran presented the Operational and Performance Update setting out the daily update of timetable performance by route and route by route comparison that is now published on the CalMac website and is made available historically.

Community specific packs that are designed to be more meaningful and transparent have now been prepared. The Arran report pack was circulated as an example of this which is at an early stage and is still being refined. These will be prepared monthly.

Timescale is to embed for Islay and Arran by end of May 2017 and extended network wide within 2 to 3 months.

Issues raised from consideration under the work in progress nature of this were:

- The Performance Report looks good for the bookable services but may not work so well or be valid for the non reserveable services.
- The need to separate weather related events and mechanical / technical events.

- The information should be made available via the CalMac Ferries Limited website once a space has been created for it on the website. In the meantime, it should be circulated to ferry committees and ferry user group members.
- Group welcomed this as a lever for change in more intelligence led planning.

**Action – The Performance Report Packs will be circulated to Ferry Committees and Ferry User Groups and in due course they will be available for download on the CalMac website for anyone.**

Captain Calum Bryce attended the meeting to discuss Masters' decision making and the tools that are available to help with these key decisions. Weather forecasting while not always reliable represent the main tool available to support the process. Wind direction and speed can be variable and depending on the wind direction some ports are susceptible to a direction. At other terminals, tidal conditions or wave swell are a significant factor. Currently Captain Bryce feels the forecasting data becomes useful 3 days in advance. There are times that Masters feel they receive criticism unfairly. The comfort levels of ships often masks the conditions in which they are operating. Cancellation decisions are not taken lightly. Forecast uncertainty can sometimes mean departures are delayed for the onset of daylight.

Ross Moran added that consideration is being given to utilizing more experienced Masters to mentor new Master to support the decision-making process

**Members thanked Captain Bryce for sharing this useful insight and suggested it would be useful if the information Captain Bryce shared was available to the wider public and there was better awareness in communities on this subject.**

#### **6. Ferry Availability Study**

Ranald presented the report on the Ferry Availability Study with attention given to the tables / charts included within the report. He then drew members attention to the paper circulated at the meeting showing data for Brodick – Ardrossan and invited Bill Calderwood to present on the findings of his research which is relevant to the only bookable route in the Clyde Ferry User Group area.

With progress being seen through VRDP and by the operator towards a new bookings and reservation system HITRANS have decided not to continue with the work for 2017 but should it become evident that the work needs to be restarted that could be feasible in future years.

#### **7. Summer 2018 Timetable**

Demi Wyllie presented the process and steps required to be met by CFL on timetable consultation.

Key points of the presentation included:

- Winter Deadline
- Summer Deadline
- Feedback forms now distributed by future planning.
- Proposed timetables will be based on previous years. Change requests will only be if they are cost neutral or can demonstrate savings elsewhere to facilitate cost neutrality.

- Process Steps

Other issues raised were:

- Should Arran FC / CC assume current fleet deployment for the full Summer 2018 with no new tonnage before winter 18/19 and it was explained that this should be the approach.
- How do CFL define cost neutrality? It was explained that this would imply minor change and timetable changes could be made but not extensions to operating hours etc.
- Should there be sharing of information on the costs that are produced for change requests and is there scope for dialogue on this with those making the request?

Brian Fulton confirmed that the exceptional nature of having to time these meetings to enable continuous attendance from elected members ahead of the LG elections on 4<sup>th</sup> May meant that the FUG role in consultation could not be included physically for Summer 2018 so instead the stage 1 proposals would be circulated for a soft consultation with FUG members at the end of May.

**Action – FUG role in consultation for Summer 2018 would be via circulated a soft consultation at the end of May.**

## 8. VRDP

Graham Laidlaw presented the report.

Key points from the presentation were:

- Background to VRDP and Publication of 2015 Report
- Approach
- Key Assumptions
- Benefits
- Methodology
- Update on actions from VRDP 2014
- Major Route Model Outputs
- Medium / Minor Route Outputs
- Conclusions and next steps on the 4 identified priorities
- VRDP 2016 Report progress

Subsequent discussion included discussion on the following themes:

- Underinvestment in fleet and assets has been a feature that has created a backlog that now needs to be addressed.
- Is consideration being given to dry dock period to manage when main vessels are lost to service sensitively.
- Dunoon – Gourock lifeline service remains a significant issue to Cowal and the introduction of RET on the routes to Cowal would be a very welcome step and would deliver real economic benefit to that community as fares have reduced to benefit other communities but Cowal continues to suffer in economic terms.
- Need to look at ways of managing unmet demand and promoting foot passenger travel where there is capacity rather than people taking cars over too.

**Members noted the report.**

## 9. Integrated / Public Transport Update

Des Bradley reported that there were planned engineering works on the Ardrossan line in the winter and meetings have been held to improve management of these events in the future.

Cllr Marshall asked if ScotRail have undertaken any work in relation to the desire for a tunnel or fixed link from Cowal to the mainland with rail options included in the proposal.

Ranald asked Des for an update on the concern in Inverclyde that the Class 314s have been introduced on Gourock services with a loss of some new Class 380s. Des confirmed that the Class 314s would be

Bill Calderwood raised the desire of Arran to have better public transport options introduced for visitors perhaps on a demand responsive basis.

**Action – Neil Sturrock to take back the opportunity to bus service colleagues and consideration will be given to a multi-party meeting to discuss how public transport services in Arran could be optimized to improve service quality, provision and frequency.**

#### **10. CMAL New Ferry Update / Harbour Upgrade**

Kevin Hobbs provided an update on the new vessel build programme and Brodick Harbour upgrade. Key points covered included:

- New passenger walkway / access system is the remaining element.
- New terminal to open in August – hopefully with PAS operational.
- PAS will be introduced as soon as it can be.
- Vessels are due for
- 801 at % completion. End May is contractual end date.
- 802 at 57% completion. End July is contractual end date.
- Within the contract there has always been 120 days' flexibility for potential delays. CMAL understand this is at 80 days now and while FML feel on time completion is feasible CMAL are prepared for some delay.
- Both ships are expected to enter service in the Winter 18/19 timetable period.
- CMAL have profiled Harbour investment needs over a 30-year horizon and at today's prices this will require a £600M investment.
- CMAL have profiled vessel investment needs over a 30-year horizon and at today's prices this will require an annual investment in the order of £30M.
- Vessel and Harbour investment needs therefore amount to an average of £50M per annum.
- It was noted that in recent years Transport Scotland have made an investment in piers, harbours and vessels in line with the future investment profile detailed above.

#### **11. Consultation Terms of Reference**

Ranald presented the report on Consultation Terms of reference and invited Members to feed any comments / thoughts they have. The aim of revising the terms of reference is to find a way of ensuring that the FUG groups are fit for purpose and we would welcome thoughts on how Members see us achieving this objective. Key elements to the revisions proposed within the Draft terms of reference are:

- Greater clarity of the roles and relationships that allow FUGs to coexist alongside without confusing the role of the ferry committees and other first point of engagement fora.
- A suggestion that an Independent Chair be appointed to provide a consistent Chair for all 4 Ferry User Group meetings. This individual would provide a link to the CalMac Communities Board.

Brian added information on the round of local discussion he has had and some opinion that the FUGs may not always be fit for purpose.

Points discussed included:

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- Rebranding the FUG to Ferry Stakeholder Group.
- Consideration should be given to a quarterly meeting frequency.
- Could a larger collective meeting covering all four groups be considered.
- Better use to be made of video conferencing no sharing information across all Groups via electronic information sharing.
- The principle of an Independent Chair was sound.

**Action - CalMac Ferries and HITRANS to meet in May to further refine the Terms of Reference. They will reflect the feedback from the meetings in finalising the Terms of Reference.**

## **12. Date of Future Meeting**

**Action – It was agreed that FUG members be contacted once local authorities have completed their appointment process with meeting dates with a view to these taking place early in November 2017.**

## **13. AOCB**

Graham Laidlaw confirmed that progress is being made towards achieving publication of the contract documents for the CHFS contract. This is currently sitting with the legal advisors but publication is expected within weeks.