



**Minute of Argyll Ferry Users Group Meeting (FUG)
(Oban, Colonsay, Iona, Lismore, Coll, Tiree, Barra, South Uist)**

**Held at the Corran Halls, Oban
14:00 27 April 2011**

IN ATTENDANCE

HITRANS

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre (Chairperson)
Mr Ranald Robertson
Mrs Katy Cunningham

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL (A&B)

Councillor Robin Currie
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon

COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

Councillor Donald Manford

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND (FERRIES DIVISION)

Mr Douglas Ellis

CALEDONIAN MACBRAYNE

Mr Phil Preston
Mrs Fay Harris
Mr Ian Fox

CALEDONIAN MARITIME ASSETS LTD (CMAL)

Mr Tony Ford

APOLOGIES:

Mr Andrew Flockhart
Mr Mike Dean
Mr Desmond Bradley
Mr David Canon
Mr David Taylor
Ms Sue Gledhill
Mrs Jane MacLeod

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Duncan MacIntyre welcomed members to the meeting

ITEM 1: Minute of Meeting 27 July 2010

The minute was approved as a correct reflection of the meeting.

ITEM 2: Matters Arising

ITEM 2, 8.3: Robin Currie suggested the possibility of a community van for Colonsay.

Ian Fox responded that the community could form a community van partnership and have full responsibility. The van would attract a ticket tariff in line with the normal size ca, and if run by the community costs would be less. Ian added he is willing to support the community and help to set up but can't run it for them. Ian could not develop a proposal that would be in competition with the existing commercial vehicle services that go to Colonsay.

It was recommended that the possibility of a community van purchase be investigated with representatives of the Colonsay community

ITEM 2: Robin asked for update on format of this group.

Phil responded these meetings set up to replace SSACs and could be developed to cover all transport integration issues involved in transport to these islands.

The Chair responded that CalMac are sorting out issues in local user groups which have been set up. He agreed that these meetings could develop and take on additional responsibilities and that this type of development would be considered within the ferries review and once this process is complete HTRANS would be happy to look at all its recommendations. The Chair added that in scheduling the FUG meetings we are trying to fit in with ferries review announcements, publications, and fundamental that all transport groups are involved.

There followed a general discussion on ferries review and structure of the group.

ITEM 3: Assessment of the Impacts of Road Equivalent Tariff (RET)

Ronald Robertson presented the draft report for the group's information, reporting that the Scottish Government published the Halcrow draft report in March. Ronald outlined the stance taken in the various party manifestos on RET. The Group considered the estimated cost section in the report on how much rolling out RET to new routes will cost.

Robin Currie suggested a scheme similar to Air Discount Scheme (ADS) would be more beneficial to islanders than RET.

Phil Preston added there is no doubt the pilot has increased usage, shorter routes need to be looked at as additional capacity issues may make RET implementation more difficult.

Donald Manford responded it's extremely important to look constructively at issues. Western Isles went forward in recognition of need of more inward investment, that other islands may not need this investment as urgently. RET

ferry fares do work and suit the Western Isles very well. CNES undertook much research with costs and predictions and RET has turned out exactly as predicted.

Mary Jean Devon added those that not included in RET should have been offered something else. Colonsay should have been included as they need inward investment.

The Chair responded we must wait on the outcome of the RET evaluation and the Scottish Parliament election. Argyll & Bute is ready for outcome whether it's RET/ADS, we must be prepared to ensure roads are capable to take extra traffic.

ITEM 4: Passenger Rights – EU Compensation Arrangements

Ranald Robertson introduced the report to provide members with information on the European Parliament Passenger Rights Legislation that will increase passengers' rights when using public transport, and summarised the new consumer protection as it will apply to passengers travelling by maritime and inland waterway transport with 12 or more passengers, very low numbers, and not clear on how this will impact on UK in 2012.

Douglas Ellis responded, there was talk about establishing working group or groups, but hasn't heard anything recently; he will take this back, and get back to Ranald

The group were asked to note the report

ITEM 5: Caledonian MacBrayne Operational Update

Regional Managers Ian Fox and Faye Harris reported on routes within their areas and provided the group with performance reports providing information on reliability and punctuality of routes covered within the group area for the period October-March 2011. Performance reports and statistics were issued prior to meeting.

Fay Harris reported:

Port Ellen closed early summer due to works.

All are looking forward to MV Finlaggan's arrival on the route.

There have been no requests from the community for changes to winter timetable.

Ian Fox reported:

Oban - disruption to inner isles boats affects outer isles boats and this is reflected in stats

Coll / Tiree – prolonged period of weather disruptions in the period reported in the statistics. Ian attended a meeting last night that focussed on how to resolve these issues.

Meeting held recently in Castlebay where Barra voted heavily in favour of Oban as their mainland port but wished Loichboisdale good wishes with developing a Mallaig crossing. The equivalent meeting for South Uist returned a result strongly in favour of Mallaig.

ITEM 6: Public Transport Operational Update

Update as provided by Des Bradley, ScotRail, in email presented by Ranaid as follows:-

- following the successful trial last year, summer Sunday trains will again run between Edinburgh and Oban. They will run every Sunday from 26th June to 28th August. The train will leave Edinburgh Waverley at 0810, calling at Haymarket, Linlithgow, Polmont, Falkirk High, Dalmeir, Helensburgh Upper and all stations to Oban. Return train leaves Oban at 1704 and calls at the same stations to arrive Edinburgh Waverley 2109
- the other usual summer enhancements to services will be provided eg. additional summer Saturday train to Oban
- ScotRail will soon be installing additional finger arms signs and road markings at Oban station to way-mark the route between ferry terminal, rail station and bus stances. Signage has now been received by ScotRail and we will install shortly. We hope to install some of this signage within CMAL land, subject to their agreement

Update as provided by Mike Dean, Citylink, in email presented by Ranaid as follows:-

- the enhanced Campbeltown-Glasgow service effective from 23 May will offer 5 departures per day, every day until 2 October giving an additional ferry/coach connection through Kennacraig whereby the 0700 sailing from Islay will connect with a coach departing Kennacraig at 0930 for Glasgow to arrive at 1240. Currently the earliest arrival from Islay to Glasgow is 1545. In winter the enhanced timetable will operate on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays with 3 departures each way on other days of the week as at present.
- there will be a third Sunday journey departing Oban at 0745 to arrive Glasgow at 1033 with a return journey from Glasgow at 1230 to arrive Oban at 1518 from 23 May until 2 October

ITEM 7: AOCB

Donald Manford informed the group of meeting held recently by the Western Isles Council at Castlebay on the Mallaig-Lochboisdale consultation and proposed ferry service. There was a very large turnout at meeting, giving significance to it, with a resounding rejection to removing the Castlebay-Oban service with any removal of service going against the desire of the Barra community. Donald added the Barra community wishes Lochboisdale all best with the Mallaig connection. Donald also reported that the South Uist community support Barra in retaining the Oban service while at the same time are strongly in favour of establishing a service linking Lochboisdale with Mallaig and this desire must also be respected.

Also, other concerns raised at meeting on connectivity and docking, and believes these issues are being addressed, but this information needs to be circulated to the communities served.

A note of the meetings held by CNES to consider the issue of mainland ports for Barra and South Uist has been passed to the Scottish Government

ITEM 8: Date of Next Meeting

A date will be confirmed in due course.