



**Minute of Clyde Ferry Users Group Meeting (FUG)  
(Arran, Bute, Cumbrae, Cowal, Dunoon)**

**Held at SPT Office, Consort House, Glasgow  
11:00 6 April 2009**

**IN ATTENDANCE**

**STRATHCLYDE PARTNERSHIP FOR TRANSPORT (SPT)**  
Mr Mike Hayes

**HITRANS**  
Mr Ranaid Robertson

**INVERCLYDE COUNCIL**  
Councillor George White (Chair)

**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**  
Councillor Margie Currie

**ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL**  
Councillor Len Scoullar  
Councillor Bruce Marshall  
Ms Moya Ingram

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT (FERRIES DIVISION)**  
Mrs Judith Ainsley

**CALEDONIAN MACBRAYNE (CalMac)**  
Mr David Cannon  
Mr Phil Preston  
Mr Brian Fulton

**CALEDONIAN MARITIME ASSETS LTD (CMAL)**  
Mr Guy Platten

**FREIGHT TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION**  
Mr Ninian McAllister

**FIRST SCOTRAIL**  
Mr Des Bradley

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Duncan MacIntyre  
Councillor Davie McLachlan,  
Councillor Alistair Watson  
Councillor Alex Gallagher  
Councillor Ronnie Ahlfeld  
Mr Dave Duthie  
Mr Lawrie Sinclair  
Mr Robbie Brown  
Mrs Fay Harris  
Mr Mike Dean  
Mr Alistair Dobson

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### **WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

George White welcomed members to the meeting advising in the absence of regular chair Davie McLachlan, he had been invited to Chair this meeting

#### **ITEM 1: Minute of Meeting**

The minute of the previous meeting was approved with a single amendment at item 6 where the following should be added "it is not certain that MV Saturn is to return to Brodick service"

#### **ITEM 2: Matters Arising**

No Items raised

#### **ITEM 3: Scottish Government Ferry Review**

Judith Ainsley introduced herself to the group advising she is heading up the Scottish Government's Scottish Ferries Review. Judith provided the group with a handout. Judith outlined objectives of review and that the Government is looking to support economic development of island and peninsular communities. Ferry links are vital to these communities both in economic and social term.

All publicly funded ferries are being considered in the review and no potential domestic routes will be excluded.

Judith advised the group that the proposed timetable of the Review has been delayed as a result of the EC investigation. Results are now expected to be produced after the conclusion of this investigation in September. The draft strategy is now expected to be produced towards the end of this year with the final strategy completed by next spring.

**Action:** Judith would arrange for an update to be provided at the next meeting detailing how the SFR is progressing.

Judith provided an update on work to date, advising consultants have been appointed and things are progressing well with interim reports expected on some topics in April/May. Household/business

questionnaires and telephone interviews are being conducted. Round one consultation is now complete and stakeholders' sessions are progressing. The workshops that have been held as part of each stakeholder session have proved a useful method of obtaining helpful feedback.

Judith advised it would be good to have feedback from this group into the review and individual members can also request to be included in the Ferry Review stakeholder group by sending an email to [Scottishferriesreview@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Scottishferriesreview@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

Margie Currie expressed an interest in being added to the stakeholder group

Judith then invited questions from members.

George White raised the possibility of introducing a Gourock-Rothesay service as an option for development. This would be in addition to the existing Weymss Bay service not as a replacement for it.

**Action:** Judith agreed this is the type of proposal the Scottish Ferry Review can consider.

Ninian Mc Allister advised temperatures regulations for livestock need to be taken into consideration.

Margie Currie supported Ninian's comments and suggested this is an important consideration in the replacement of ferries. Currently the carriage of hazardous goods is an issue as the MVCaledonian Isles has a closed hull and perhaps the future needs of Arran would be better served if the main ship serving the island had an open stern area for the carriage of certain goods. Margie added that the local relationship with CalMac is excellent and she was content to raise the issue at this stage with Judith.

Phil Preston responded to explain that he meets regularly with agricultural representatives including the NFU and will take cognizance of the views expressed by Ninian and Margie.

#### **ITEM 4: Caledonian MacBrayne Operational Update**

Brian Fulton advised the group he would also provide operational service updates on behalf of Fay Harris and Robbie Brown who are currently on annual leave. Operational services update covering the period to the end of January 2009. Brian reported that:

**Wemyss Bay - Rothesay**, figures up despite strike action by Argyll and Bute Council pier workers. Commercials and coaches are however down from the equivalent period last year.

**Gourock - Dunoon**, Brian advised that some small timetable changes have been made.

Bruce Marshall would appreciate passenger carryings on this service too, Ranald Robertson supported this request.

**Colintraive - Rhubodach**, all carryings are down on this route. Service changes have been implemented with a view to coincide these with a new bus timetable but unfortunately the new bus timetable does not appear to be operational yet.

Moya Ingram confirmed that it was her understanding that some of the proposed enhancements to the bus service did not go ahead when the bus contracts were finalised.

**Action:** Moya to take this issue back to Douglas Blades.

**Tarbert – Portavadie**, all carryings are down apart from commercial vehicles. There were a number of weather related cancellations.

**Claonaig – Locharanza**, all carryings are down, with less forestry vehicles on this service this year.

Margie Currie asked whether it would be possible for this service to be enhanced and if not possible in the short term could this be considered through the Ferry Review?

Brian advised all carryings were down in region covered by Robbie Brown.

Brian added that progress on the upgrade of Largs pier is good and it is hoped work will be completed by July.

Phil Preston advised that CalMac will invite trials of the Clyde Clipper when she arrives to assess her suitability for service between Gourock and Dunoon. If these are successful tenders will be invited otherwise the company will continue with the Alleycat on the service.

**ITEM 5: Public Transport Operational Update**

In response to issues raised at the last meeting and subsequent investigation by First ScotRail Des Bradley advised the group:

Additional trains will operate from Ardrossan with an hourly service from 6.45 with no change to Sunday service

SPT are funding CCTV and monitors at Gourock and possibly a covered walkway to the ferry terminal. Works Site later this year and finished next year.

Ranald Robertson asked if FSR proposed to extend the enhanced Ardrossan service to the Harbour to improve ferry connections.

Des confirmed most services will now continue on to the Harbour Station subject to approval of risk assessments related to level crossing use increasing.

Bruce Marshal responded that signage is very poor in Gourock with no signs for ferry and asked that this be considered as an improvement.

**ITEM 6: AOCB**

George White suggested that to avoid problems with agreeing dates for future meetings it would be a good idea to set these a number of meetings ahead. George also suggested the programme of meetings should be quarterly rather than bi annually.

Margie Currie raised the issue of investment in the port infrastructure at Brodick which Margie felt is needed.

Guy indicated that it was hoped the Scottish Ferry Review would help bring about a ports and harbours investment strategy that took account fully of the condition of all the existing infrastructure so that a clear strategy can be developed whereby investment can be prioritised in accordance with need.

In parallel with this CMAL will work to have projects 'shovel ready' should funding become available to ensure they are ready to go and this will apply to Brodick.

Len Scoullar asked Guy Platten if CMAL have any plans to convert vessels to improve environmental friendliness.

Guy responded that there is little that can be done to existing vessels but new technologies are emerging that could be applied to new vessels.

Phil Preston supported Guy's comments confirming they had used heavier fuel with some benefits.

Phil Preston advised the group on the recent CalMac press release advising that Lawrie Sinclair has moved to the position of Group Chief Executive of David MacBrayne Limited and that Phil has been appointed as Managing Director of Caledonian MacBrayne.

**On behalf of the group the Chair asked that congratulations to both Lawrie and Phil be recorded from the Group.**

**ITEM 7:           Date of Next Meeting**  
21 August, Isle of Bute