

**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 22 November 2011**

IN ATTENDANCE

HITRANS

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre (Chairperson)
Mr Dave Duthie
Mr Ranald Robertson
Mr Frank Roach
Mrs Katy Cunningham

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL (A&B)

Councillor Robin Currie
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon
Mr Martin Gorringe
Ms Moya Ingram

COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

Councillor Donald Manford

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND (FERRIES DIVISION)

Mr Douglas Ellis

CALEDONIAN MACBRAYNE (CalMac)

Mrs Fay Harris
Mr Ian Fox
Ms Angela Herd

CALEDONIAN MARITIME ASSETS LTD (CMAL)

Ms Lorna Spencer

CONFEDERATION OF TRANSPORT (CPT)

Mr Mike Dean

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (MID ARGYLL)

Mrs Jane MacLeod

APOLOGIES:

Mr Desmond Bradley
Mr Iain Mackinnon

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr MacIntyre welcomed members to the meeting.

ITEM 1: Minute of Previous Meeting

The minute of the 27 April 2011 meeting was approved with an amendment to item 2: paragraph 2 to reflect the request from Robin Currie that this item be reworded to reflect that he was not tasked with establishing costings for a community van purchase. This should record that the possibility of a community van purchase be investigated with representatives of the Colonsay community.

ITEM 2: Matters Arising

Ian Fox updated the group on the improved service for Colonsay on a Saturday. The group welcomed this improvement and asked that their thanks be recorded and extended to Ian Fox and Fay Harris on developing this significant service enhancement

ITEM 3: Scottish Government Ferries Review Update

Douglas Ellis provided a short update on the Scottish Government Ferries Review advising that the draft plan should be published by Christmas. A 12 week consultation period will follow publications.

Moya Ingram asked where are we with an announcement on future plans for RET.

Douglas responded this is with the Minister and a decision is believed to be imminent.

Donald Manford informed the group that a very useful presentation was given to the Hebrides FUG by the Outer Hebrides Tourist Industry Association regarding the availability to book online with Calmac. Donald recommended the OHTIA information be circulated to other Ferry User Groups.

Ronald Robertson provided background to the OHTIA presentation and agreed that HITRANS would provide a report or presentation of the OHTIA findings to a future meeting.

Mary Jean supported these findings adding a recent Craignure ferry was showing full but boat actually had spaces as all managed to make sailing. Hauliers block book with no penalty, perhaps penalties should be implemented.

Ian confirmed no shows are causing this problem, no penalty incurred for no show

Action: Donald Manford proposed that HITRANS should invite the OHTIA to present to the HITRANS board meeting on their analysis.

Action: It was agreed that in future the Regional Managers would look at including a new column in their monitoring report to provide details of the level of no shows they have on each route.

Ian Fox reported that fares for 2012 have yet to be released. This may be a result of the pending decision on RET. This is delaying the publication of 2012 summer timetables (Explore) and making booking systems available for this period.

Action: It was agreed that the Argyll Ferry User group would write to the Transport Minister asking that the Government arrive at a decision on 2012 fares quickly to allow the operator to produce publicity and open bookings for 2012 without further delay.

ITEM 4: Craignure Passenger Access System

Lorna Spencer reported to the group on the failure of the Passenger Access System at Craignure. Lorna confirmed that the design for a long term solution is not yet complete but that Halcrow have been tasked with developing this. The design will not be completed for another 3 months. Once a design is agreed then discussion can take place on how the new facility can be funded. CMAL are very keen to engage with both Argyll and Bute Council and CalMac on arriving at a solution that will resolve passenger access system issues at Craignure.

Martin Gorrige responded to advise that the council position is the passenger access system is a CMAL facility but that Argyll and Bute Council are happy to work with CMAL to reach a solution.

Ian Fox raised the following points:

- a. Corporate Governance
- b. Fatal Accident Inquiry
- c. Health and Safety Executive
- d. Risk Assessment

Action: CMAL, CalMac and Argyll and Bute Council will meet to seek a long term resolution to the issue of the Craignure Passenger Access System.

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 April-September 2011. Performance reports and statistics were issued prior to meeting.

Fay Harris added:

Port Ellen has been closed and will not re-open until summer next year.

Tayinloan update – work started at the beginning of October and work is scheduled to continue into the summer.

MV Finlaggan entered service in June and has well received on the Islay route.

Ian Fox added:

Cancellations in terms of overall service provision are a reflection of awful weather particular in May.

ITEM 6: Public Transport Update

Mike Dean provided update to the group on public transport operations including the connections available with ferry services. Scottish Citylink are unable to operate to Tayinloan ferry terminal as the new long coaches on the route cannot negotiate the road to the terminal. Options for improving travel options from Tayinloan and Gigha are being investigated with Argyll and Bute Council.

ITEM 7: TransTourism ERDF Project

Frank Roach gave a presentation on the TransTourism project.

TRANSTOURISM-Sustainable Transport in Rural Tourism Areas is a Northern Periphery Programme (NPP) project with partners in Sweden, Iceland, Scotland, Eire and Northern Ireland and has a total value of €1.356M. EU funding is €808k. The project runs from 01 September 2010 until 31 August 2013. HITRANS is to contribute £60000 over 3 years, with HIE funding up to £21360 over the same period. The project delivers two key priorities:

- a) Promoting innovation and competitiveness in remote and peripheral areas.
- b) Sustainable development of natural and community resources.

The project consists of web-based timetables and itineraries to enable the visitor to browse at home and then commit to a public transport based trip in the Highlands and Islands, as part of a multi-national bid. This project is consistent with the recommendations of the Regional Access Scoping Study and helps relieve the constraints of current Highlands and Islands tourism/travel sites being either mode specific or simply very patchy in the information given on the opportunity to travel by public transport for a full multi-modal trip. Comprehensive single mode timetables do not facilitate the creation of individually tailored itineraries taking in attractions/locations of choice, and are often too detailed for the visitors needs. The portal provided as an output from the project would build and exploit existing data resources and introduce the opportunity for user feedback on trips to be generated within the content.

ITEM 8:

AOCB

Donald Manford raised the issue of connectivity problem with ScotRail and would like HITRANS to arrange a seminar for all modes of transport to overcome some of this issue.

Dave Duthie confirmed he is happy to lead on this.

ITEM 9:

Date of Next Meeting

No date set for next meeting.