



## HEBRIDES FERRY STAKEHOLDER GROUP

(Barra, the Uists, Lewis and Harris)

Minute of Meeting held at the Caladh Hotel, Stornoway, on 15 January 2020 at 11.30am

<p>IN ATTENDANCE</p>	<p><b>COMHAIRLE NAN EILAN SIAR</b>  Cllr Uisdean Robertson (Chairman)  Cllr Iain A MacNeil  Cllr Iain M Macleod  Cllr John Mackay  Mr Kenny Morrison  Mr Steven Ferguson</p> <p><b>TRANSPORT SCOTLAND</b>  Mr Alan McCabe  Ms Caroline Connelly  Mr Michael Kean</p> <p><b>CALEDONIAN MACBRAYNE LTD (CALMAC)</b>  Mr Robert Morrison  Ms Demi Wylie  Mr Finlay Macrae  Mr Andrew McNair</p> <p><b>CALEDONIAN MARITIME ASSETS LTD. (CMAL)</b>  Mr Kevin Hobbs  Mr Richie Morgan</p> <p><b>HITRANS</b>  Mr Neil MacRae</p> <p><b>HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS ENTERPRISE (HIE)</b>  Ms Joanna Peteranna</p> <p><b>OUTER HEBRIDES TOURISM</b>  Mr Robert McKinnon</p> <p><b>RHA</b>  Mr DR Macleod</p>
<p>APOLOGIES</p>	<p>Cllr Kenny Macleod (Vice-Chairman)  Cllr Donald Manford (CnES)  Mr Kevin Peach (Ullapool Harbour Trust)  Mr David Summers (The Highland Council)  Mr Ker Corbett (CPT)  Mr Rob Mackinnon (Outer Hebrides Tourism)  Mr Iain Mackinnon (CnES)  Cllr Iain Cockburn (The Highland Council)  Cllr Paul Finnegan (CnES)  Mr Neil Halket (AECOM)  Mr Angus Murray (CnES)  Mr Angus Campbell (CALMAC Community Board)  Mr Robbie Drummond (CALMAC)  Mr David Gibson (CALMAC)  Mr Brian Gordon (Transport Scotland)  Ms Gail Robertson (Outer Hebrides Commerce Group)  Mr Alan Graham (Outer Hebrides Tourism)</p>

1	Minute of Meeting held on 6 June 2019	The Minute of Meeting of 6 June 2019 was <b>approved</b> .
2	Matters Arising	<p>In respect of Item 5 (Regional VRDP Update) from the minute of 13 December 2018, the action that Mr Bill Main, Caledonian MacBrayne, and Mr Richard Hadfield, Transport Scotland, would respond directly to the Chairperson in relation to questions presented at the meeting remained outstanding.</p> <p><b>Action – Ms Caroline Connelly, Transport Scotland, would discuss the outstanding action with Mr Hadfield, Transport Scotland, and report back to the Chairperson.</b></p> <p>In respect of Item 3 (Caledonian MacBrayne Operational and Performance Update) from the minute of 13 December 2018, an additional column had been added to the Operational Performance Report in relation to the total number of services on time in the period.</p>
3	VRDP Update (TS)	<p>Ms Caroline Connelly, Transport Scotland, provided an update on the Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan. Extensive stakeholder engagement events had been held with partner agencies. The Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan Report had now been finalised, and would be submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval. The Report would be published in March/ April 2020.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the update.</b></p>
4	NTS2 / STPR Updates	<p>Ms Caroline Connelly, Transport Scotland, provided an update on the National Transport Strategy. The National Transport Strategy consultation had now concluded. It was indicated that a series of workshops in relation to the Strategy had been carried out. Ms Connelly indicated that responses to the consultation would be published online on 30 January 2020.</p> <p>Ms Connelly indicated that a Delivery Plan, informed by consultation responses, would be published later this year, and take cognisance of the National Islands Plan and national strategies.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the update.</b></p> <p>Ms Caroline Connelly, Transport Scotland, provided an update on the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR). Ms Connelly indicated that the Strategic Transport Project Review closely linked to the National Transport Strategy. It was indicated that a series of workshops and engagement events, including an online survey, had been held in relation to the Review. Ms Connelly indicated that the development of interventions would commence this month. An appraisal of the Review would be held in Spring/ Summer 2020, and initial technical reporting would commence in 2021.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the update.</b></p>
5	Ferries Plan 2	<p>Ms Caroline Connelly, Transport Scotland, provided an update on the Ferries Plan. The current Ferries Plan is active until 2022. Ms Connelly indicated that appraisals had been carried out with representatives from Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides in relation to the current plan, ahead of the development of the Ferries Plan 2 for 2022 plus. Ms Connelly indicated that the National Islands Plan, VRDP, NTS2, STPR and relevant strategies will be recognised within the Ferries Plan 2. It was indicated that the Ferries Plan 2 would be submitted to Scottish Government Ministers ahead of publication in 2022. Mr Neil Macrae, HITRANS, asked that road, rail and air traffic connectivity be considered as part of the Plan.</p> <p>Mr D.R. Macleod, Road Hauliers Association, sought clarification in relation to the availability of the Traders Rebate Scheme for commercial vehicles in the Outer Hebrides. Mr Macleod indicated that this scheme was available across all other Scottish Islands, apart from the Outer Hebrides and Tiree. Mr Macleod indicated that it was these two island communities who had suffered as a result of increased costs in transportation, particularly in the Outer Hebrides where larger commercial vehicles are required.</p>

		<p>Mr Macleod indicated that the introduction of the Traders Rebate Scheme could bring value of £600,000 per annum to the Outer Hebrides community. Cllr. Uisdean Robertson, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, indicated that this matter had been raised at a recent national Evaluation of the Road Equivalent Tariff meeting. Mr Alan McCabe indicated that discussions were being held in relation to this matter, and papers are being shared with Scottish Government Ministers.</p> <p><b>Action – Ms Caroline Connelly, Transport Scotland, would raise the issue of introducing the Traders Rebate Scheme for the Outer Hebrides and Tiree with colleagues in Transport Scotland and the Scottish Government.</b></p>
6	Caledonian MacBrayne Operational and Performance Presentation covering (CFL)	<p>Mr Finlay Macrae, Caledonian MacBrayne, provided an overview of the operational performance update in respect of Caledonian MacBrayne vessels across the Outer Hebrides for the period 29 March 2019 to 20 October 2019. The issues highlighted under discussion related to a reduction in the number of operated sailings between Ardmhor (Barra) and Eriskay. Mr Marae indicated that this was as a result of both technical and weather based issues. Performance data is updated on a daily basis and published on the Caledonian MacBrayne website. Mr Macrae indicated that following a successful pilot in Islay, a postcode analysis of passenger footfall would be rolled-out across the network. Mr Macrae indicated that the performance data highlighted that people are altering initial plans where there are capacity issues, and accessing the islands through alternative ferry routes.</p> <p>Cllr. Uisdean Robertson sought clarification in relation to restrictions in place on the sharing of information surrounding recent performance issues affecting the Loch Seaforth.</p> <p>Cllr. Uisdean Robertson, on behalf of the Hebrides Ferry Stakeholders Group, commended Mr Macrae for his commitment and engagement when dealing with challenging situations.</p> <p><b>Action – Mr Robert Mackinnon, Outer Hebrides Tourism, and Mr Finlay Macrae, Caledonian MacBrayne, using available data, would analyse the positive impact the introduction of Isle of Lewis has had on passenger numbers travelling to Barra, and consider how best this can be promoted.</b></p> <p><b>Action – Mr Robert Morrison, Caledonian MacBrayne, would seek clarification as to restrictions on the sharing of information in relation to recent performance issues affecting the Loch Seaforth, and share available information ahead of the next meeting.</b></p> <p>Ms Demi Wylie, Caledonian MacBrayne, provided an update on timetable integration and consultation and indicated that ferry connectivity with the public bus service network would continue to be reviewed and monitored. There had been no community requests made in relation to the Winter timetable. Community requests for the past four years had been revisited.</p> <p>Ms Wylie indicated that any increase in the number of journeys made on the Sound of Barra route would require a full time additional second crew.</p> <p><b>Action – Ms Joanna Peteranna, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, would identify forecast figures, as part of a community business plan which would highlight the benefits of a more enhanced timetable on the Sound of Barra route.</b></p> <p>Mr Andrew McNair delivered a presentation in relation to Caledonian MacBrayne marketing. The Service Update team won team of the year at the Contact Centre Association (CCA) awards. The disruption reporting tool 'Beacon' had now been launched. Mr McNair indicated that there had been large scale increased bookings made following changes across the network and the online booking system. A successful nationwide campaign was run in 2019 to promote services. It is proposed to run a similar campaign ahead of the Summer season. Work is ongoing in relation to the establishment of a revised ticking system.</p> <p><b>Action – Members would consider and notify Mr McNair, in relation to any community based projects which may benefit from the Caledonian MacBrayne Community Fund.</b></p>

7a	Infrastructure Update CMAL Update (CMAL)	<p>Mr Kevin Hobbs, CMAL, provided an update with regards to CMAL. Mr Hobbs indicated that upcoming infrastructure works, had been planned on a sequential basis, in recognition that there is a small community of specialist contractors available to complete required works.</p> <p>Mr Hobbs provided an update on the construction and delivery of vessels 801 and 802. A Programme Review Board was established and a Report on the condition of vessels 801 and 802 was published in December 2019. A Parliamentary Inquiry had been launched in relation to the ferry contract for 801 and 802. Mr Hobbs indicated that alternative ships available for sale through the open market had been considered, and that this exploratory work would continue. Consideration is ongoing in relation to replacement vessels for a number of routes.</p> <p><b>Action – CMAL representatives would provide regular and timeous updates to Mr Uisdean Robertson, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, in relation to developments surrounding vessels 801 and 802 in recognition of the high level of media enquiries made surrounding this issue.</b></p>
7b	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Update	<p>Mr Kenny Morrison, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, provided an update in relation to work currently being carried out, and upcoming work to ports and harbours across the Outer Hebrides.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the update.</b></p>
8	CalMac Communities Board Update	<p><b>It was agreed to defer discussion in relation to the CalMac Communities Board to the next meeting.</b></p>
9	Scottish Island Passport (HITRANS)	<p>Mr Neil MacRae, HITRANS, provided an update in relation to the development of a Scottish Islands Passport. Applicants for the position of Project Manager were encouraged from Island based individuals. The process concluded with the successful appointment of Ms Kirsten Gow and Ms Sarah Compton-Bishop to the role on a job share basis.</p> <p><b>Action – Mr Neil Macrae would provide an update in relation to the Scottish Island Passport project at the next meeting.</b></p>
10	Programme for Government/ Net Zero Vision	<p>Mr Neil MacRae, HITRANS, provided an update in relation the Programme for Government. Mr Macrae explained that the Climate Change Bill commits Scotland to a target of net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045. Mr Kevin Hobbs, CMAL, indicated that consideration and exploratory work was being carried out in relation to alternative fuel provisions for new build vessels.</p> <p><b>It was agreed to note the update.</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 held on Thursday, 4 June 2019, in Castlebay, Isle of Barra.</p>