

Argyll Lochaber, Skye and Small Isles Ferry Stakeholder Group

Monday 1st June 2020 MS Teams Meeting

Present:

ClIr Mary Jean Devon, Argyll and Bute Council (Chair)

ClIr Allan Henderson, Highland Council (Vice Chair)

ClIr Elaine Robertson, Argyll and Bute Council

ClIr Denis Rixson, Highland Council

ClIr Donald Manford, CNES

ClIr Iain MacNeil, CNES

Joe Reade, Mull Ferry Committee

Billy Neilson, Crofting Commission

Caroline Connelly, Transport Scotland

Richard Hadfield, Transport Scotland

Juste Kalnauskaite, Transport Scotland

Kevin Hobbs, CMAL

Stewart Clark, Argyll and Bute Council

Andrew McNair, Calmac Ferries Limited (CFL)

Don McKillop, Calmac Ferries Limited (CFL)

Finlay MacRae, Calmac Ferries Limited (CFL)

Demi Wylie, Calmac Ferries Limited (CFL)

Robert Morrison, Calmac Ferries Limited (CFL)

Rob Ware, Sleat Transport Forum

Ian Gillies, Tiree Community Council

Camille Dressler, Small Isles Community Council

John Holliday, Tiree Transport Forum

David Hobhouse, Colonsay Community Council

Ker Corbett, Scottish Citylink

Elizabeth Ferguson, CalMac Communities Board

Nicky Sobey, HIE

Lucinda Gray, HIE

Scott Dingwall, HIE

David Summers, Highland Council

Ranald Robertson, HITRANS

Neil MacRae, HITRANS

Sarah Compton-Bishop, HITRANS

Apologies:

Murray Bain, Highland Council

1. Minute of 2 December 2019

Minute approved as an accurate note of discussion.

2. Matters Arising

Ranald Robertson noted that the Action Tracker included in papers under item 5 detailed actions taken from the previous cycle of meetings and while there were no items for action from the last Argyll, Lochaber, Skye and Small Isles meeting the action update from other meetings would be of interest to Members.

3. Covid-19 Transport Transition Plan

Ranald Robertson introduced this item making reference to the new guidance published on 26th May by Scottish Government for passengers and operators in Scotland to help prepare for the lifting of some lockdown restrictions. This travel guidance is published as part of the [Transport Transition Plan](#)

It follows the publication of a detailed route map by the Scottish Government regarding next steps last week: [COVID-19: Scotland's route map for transitioning through and out of the crisis](#) [The guidance advises passengers](#) about when and how to safely access public transport through good hand hygiene, respecting physical distancing, using face coverings and avoiding busier times.

The plan is clear that continuing to work from home should be the default position where possible, flexible start and finish times and making more active travel choices will be vital in easing the number of people accessing public transport.

RR explained that there will be a Transport Transition Plan National Advisory Group and Transport Scotland would be undertaking mode specific work including for Ferry Services.

Richard Hadfield outlined the steps taken by Transport Scotland and CalMac in earlier stages of the Pandemic and the forward planning that has been a feature of the response throughout the crisis and now as we move to changes in the level of movement that people can make. The essential emergency timetable will remain in place and will be expanded in time as we move to new phases of travel that is permitted.

Current modelling suggests that vessel passenger capacity could reduce to as little as 17 or 18 per cent of normal passenger capacity.

4. Transport Scotland Update

Richard Hadfield presented the Transport Scotland update that covered the following topics:

- COVID – 19 Response and Support to Essential Ferry Services.
- RET Evaluation
- Timetables
- Fares
- Major Infrastructure Projects
- VRDP
- OH STAG

In addition to the above Richard provided an update on the Islands Connectivity Plan which will aim to update on the previous work of the Ferries Plan and provide more context on a wider range of island connectivity scope.

5. Caledonian MacBrayne Operational and Performance Presentation

Robert Morrison introduced the item which would have input from colleagues.

Don McKillop provided an overview of the performance and operational reporting which was set out in detail in his report.

The discussion covered a range of topics including:

- Castlebay berthing
- Vessel Capacity with Physical Distancing in Place
- Passenger Booking System – Small Isles and prioritisation of islander booking. This will have a network wide role as a tool for managing restricted passenger accommodation on ferries.
- Police involvement in FSG should there be a role for the Groups in COVID-19 Transition Planning for ferry services was supported by the Group.

Action – The Secretariat will investigate the feasibility of Police representation on the FSG should the group be utilised as a sounding board by Transport Scotland on COVID-19 Transition Planning.

Andrew McNair provided the Commercial and Marketing update. This presentation referred to the detailed report prepared by CFL for the meeting.

- Andrew underlined that promotional activities and encouragement to travel will not take place until it is clear that island communities are open again for visitors and actively seeking to open up to more visitors.

Blair Moglia provided a Stakeholder and Engagement update which referred to the detailed report prepared for the meeting and covered the following key topics:

- FSG Survey Monkey Results
- Socio-economic Report

6. Infrastructure Update

a. CMAL

Kevin Hobbs presented the CMAL update report which covered the following items:

- 3 Year Corporate Plan
- Vessels – 801 / 802
- Islay Ferry SoR / Feasibility
- Tiree Linkspan Replacement

- Tiree marshalling area and land purchase from Argyll and Bute Council
- Small Vessels Replacement Plan
- Clyde Ferry Replacement Plan
- Future Vessels
- Port Infrastructure
 1. Current Projects
 2. Future Projects

b. Argyll and Bute Council

Stewart Clark provided the Argyll and Bute Council update which covered:

- Craignure replacement of Linkspan cylinder was carried out the previous weekend and successfully completed.
- Second Linkspan Cylinder at Craignure will be programmed in due course.
- Interim options for Craignure followign initial STAG exercise continues with Mott MacDonald contracted by Argyll and Bute Council. An update is expected in Summer 2020.
- Survey of north berth fenders at Craignure has been completed and this has provided a list of remedial works.
- Rock armour berthing structures has been looked at for both Fionnphort and Iona with very welcome input from the local community. The plan is to move to the design house with the work to be taken forward in house by the Council's design team. The plan would be to start construction on the Fionnphort side before moving on to the Iona side.

7. Communities Board Update

Elizaeth Ferguson provided an update on behalf of the CalMac Communities Board (CB). This covered:

- CB refresh has been completed with new members – including Elizabeth – joining the CB.
- Sub group activity continues including the establishment of a social media presence for the CB.
- Unmet / unmeasured demand remains a concern and it looks as if Ar Turas will not be the answer to this.
- CB continues to lobby for a reduction in the cost of school travel.
- CB continues to lobby for vessel and infrastructure investment.

Elizabeth finished with a note of thanks to Calmac for the work of all the staff during these most difficult of times.

8. Scottish Islands Passport

Sarah Compton-Bishop presented on the Scottish Islands Passport project. Sarah is one of the 2 Project Managers appointed by HITRANS on a job share basis. Kirsten Gow and Sarah Compton-Bishop are based in Jura Service Point.

Action – The Secretariat will circulate the Presentation to Members.

9. Confirm Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 1 December 2020.