



**Argyll, Lochaber, Skye and Small Isles Ferry Stakeholder Group
(Oban, Colonsay, Mull, Iona, Lismore, Kerrera, South Uist, Barra, Skye, Small Isles, Raasay, Coll & Tiree)**

Minute of Meeting held through Microsoft Teams, on 7 December 2021 at 13:00.

<p>IN ATTENDANCE</p>	<p>ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL Cllr Mary Jean-Devon Cllr Elaine Robertson Cllr Anne Horn Mr Scott Reid Mr Robert Paton</p> <p>THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL Cllr Allan Henderson Mr David Summers Cllr Denis Rixon</p> <p>TRANSPORT SCOTLAND Mr Laurence Kenney Mr Richard Hadfield Ms Caroline Connelly Mr Brian Gordon Ms Athena Avratidis Mr Liam Seaton Ms Jaqueline Trousdale Mr Graham Patrick</p> <p>COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR Cllr Donald Manford Cllr Iain MacNeil</p> <p>CALEDONIAN MACBRAYNE LTD (CALMAC) Mr Finlay MacRae Mr Robert Morrison Mr Andrew MacNair Mr Neil Hunter Ms Fiona Galbraith</p> <p>FERRIES COMMUNITIES BOARD Ms Kirsty MacFarlane Mr Angus Campbell</p>
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	<p>CALEDONIAN MARITIME ASSETS LTD. (CMAL) Mr Kevin Hobbs Mr Brian Fulton Ms Morven Bridges</p> <p>HITRANS Mr Neil MacRae Mr Ranald Robertson Miss Rebecca Purvis</p> <p>HIE Mr Scott Dingwall Mr Nicholas Sobey</p> <p>SLEAT TRANSPORT FORUM Mr Rob Ware</p> <p>SMALL ISLES COMMUNITY COUNCIL Ms Camille Dressler</p> <p>MULL AND IONA FERRY COMMITTEE Mr Joe Reade</p> <p>TIREE COMMUNITY COUNCIL Mr Gerard McGoogan</p> <p>OTHER ATTENDEES: Ms Margaret McGunnigal Ms Fiona Lucas Ms Alison Wills</p>
APOLOGIES	Billy Neilson, Crofting Commission Murray Bain, Highland Council (Corran Ferry) Don McKillop, CalMac

1	Minute of Meeting held on 1 st June 2021	The Minute of Meeting of 1 st June 2021 was approved
2	Matters Arising – Action Tracker	Neil MacRae Actions 11-18: Cal Mac Socio-economic studies - work in now underway

		<p>Cancellation data has been supplied in the papers and dry dock schedules there is a link within the action tracker on the CalMac website where members can see this list.</p> <p>Action 11 - timetable consultation list is provided but Neil MacRae requested that meeting with other public transport stakeholders still outstanding and HITRANS still not included on list of consultees for timetables.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>Finlay MacRae to address outstanding elements of Action 11 .</p>
3	<p>Caledonian MacBrayne Operational and Performance Presentation covering (CFL)</p>	<p>The CalMac operational and performance report circulated prior to the meeting covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CalMac Regional Performance Update • CalMac Commercial Team Update • CalMac Community Fund • Youth and Philanthropy initiative • CHFS (Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services) Contract Commitments • Timetable Integration and Consultation Update • CFL Socio Economic Report <p>Andrew MacNair highlighted there has been a review of roles and responsibilities within the commercial team. Neil Hunter is now lead on relationships with key business customers to better understand their needs.</p> <p>Andrew aware of frustrations towards operators who haven't been able to confirm their itineraries for next summer. Has become clear communications back to communities needs to be improved.</p> <p>Kirsty MacFarlane – Isle of Coll had a community council meeting and reported no consultation from CalMac on the summer 2022 timetable. The way communities are contacted needs to be improved. When cancellations take place in this community where there is a single ferry per day, one cancellation can impact medical services and the supply of goods. Need to improve communications with CalMac and these need to be more instantaneous and focused. Are there ways of doing this?</p> <p>In responding Finlay MacRae stated that Cal Mac Covid had impacted on timetable consultation with communities. Prior to that there was a more regular process. Currently trying to get back to this framework but happy to review and understand what worked well and what could be done better as this issue was also raised at other Ferry Stakeholder Groups.</p> <p>Ranald Robertson - Scotrail consulting on summer 2022 timetables had an online option where everybody can comment, meaning instead of getting criticised for missing communication with a particular body there is a backup plan for anybody to comment on timetables.</p>

		<p>Neil Hunter – plan is to engage as extensively as possible across the community with stakeholders. Host of businesses to engage with and aim is to build up level of trust and communication so people feel able to engage.</p> <p>Joe Reade - Community are desperate to know next summers timetables. Table of stats for Mull routes highlights that it has this year has been more difficult to get a booking than previous years. When looking at numbers they are relative to 2019, and number of sailings departing full are down. Sailing being marked as sold out or full when they are not, seems sailings are selling out and travelling well short of capacity. Camille Dressler agreed that this had been the experience for the Small Isles as well.</p> <p>Joe Reade also highlighted that where a timetable request for change had been made the local community weren't informed if it had been successful or not and requested that this should be reported on at FSG's.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Finlay MacRae to check consultation process with Coll ferry community councils and review reporting process on outcomes of consultation. 2) Cal Mac to advise on what if any changes have been made to availability of deck space to book in advance.
4	Fair Fares Appraisal	<p>Neil MacRae presented a report on work which HITRANS have agreed to undertake on a Fair Fares Appraisal which would help provide an evidence base of the key issues affecting passenger fares for public transport in Highland and Islands.</p> <p>The outputs of the report would be fed into the wider work which the Scottish Government has committed to undertaking in relation to Fair Fares within 2021/22 Programme for Government.</p>
5	Transport Scotland Update	<p>Laurence Kenney</p> <p>Fares:</p> <p>2022 fares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - +2.1% on all fares, except those currently frozen on NIFS - Additional 1% on cars (and derived) fares - 50% discount for school minibuses - +1% increase in multiplier for motorhomes/caravans <p>ICP Fares review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look to bring together range of strands across fares issues and outstanding requests and pieces of work to set fares going forward. - Objectives will be drawn from NTS and NIP - Fair Fares Review

- RET Evaluations
- CFL service improvement options and how to make better deck space use through fare options.
- Manifesto commitment

Scope :

- Looking across range of fare types

Engagement:

- Meeting regularly with community board which will be a key part of engagement to develop policy options
- Possible workshop
- Draft timeline – Key point is final step in process will be a formal 12 week consultation Dec 2022. May be opportunities in advance of timescale, keen to look at longer term.

Kirsty McFarlane asked about reliance of incentives to travel off-peak.

Cllr Donald Manford enquired how they would create flexibility on routes where there was only one sailing per day? Laurence Kenney noted this and agreed to give the matter further consideration within the review.

Dennis Rixson – dramatic increase in number of motorhomes. Have we looked at the implications of this - wondering are we going to see motorhome owners going over bridge to Skye rather than ferry from Mallaig and / or motorhome staying on the mainland and not visiting the islands?

Lawrence Kenney stated that review was not about demand management and difficult to assess how motorhome users may respond to this. Approach here was to take a small step towards fairness in terms on size of vehicle and that they were not estimating that a fall of motorhome demand but its an area to keep in close review.

Richard Hadfield Investment programme

Investment Programme Summary – Vessels

Scottish Gov announced £580million investment in vessels and harbours over next 5 years. Part of longer term programme looking ahead 10-12 years. Projects underway and most harbour projects are underway too.

Updates since last FSG's:

- MV Pentalina time charter – withdrawn from charter.
- MV Arrow time charters – charters secured
- New Islay vessels
- MV Utne – purchased

		<p>10-12 year programme:</p> <p>Securing funding for the programme for Vessels and harbours will require robust and compelling business cases.</p> <p>To keep momentum during this period Transport Scotland are keen to initiate 2 more programmes in 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Second phase of the small vessel replacement programme <p>Potential impacts of redeployments but in scope vessels and current routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MV Caledonian Isles - MV Isle of Lewis - MV Clansman - MV Hebrides <p>Joe Reade – Stated that that while improvements to the winter service to Mull through the introduction of the MV Utne will be welcomed, the summer will get worse as the vessel is smaller and slower compared to ro pax. Situation in summer Oban-Craignure is at crisis level where there is no immediate prospect of improvement.</p> <p>Cllr Mary-Jean Devon disagreed with this forecast, stating that vast majority of people are delighted with the vessel and proposed service.</p>
6	Infrastructure Update	<p><u>6. (a) CMAL Update</u></p> <p>Brian Fulton introduced the CMAL update report which was attached within the meeting papers and included details on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Zero • MV Utne • Ferry Replacement Programme • Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow • Port Infrastructure Development and Maintenance • Update on work at each CMAL port • CMAL work at Non CMAL Ports <p>Ranald Robertson enquired if the reclassification of Tobermory – Kilchoan would apply all year round or just winter? Brian Fulton confirmed Euro B was just for the winter.</p> <p>Elaine Robertson enquired as to which part of the pier is being referred to in the report as the ‘north end’ and when will the report be completed.</p> <p>Morven Bridges replied that the area referred to is the railway pier, and the area to be improved was from the terminal building past the other buildings and the Station car park.</p>

		<p><u>6. (b) Argyll and Bute Council Update</u></p> <p>Scott Reid and Robert Paton</p> <p>Robert – Problems with Jura ferries but repaired now. Focus now on replacing Lismore service, hopefully she will be done before Christmas.</p> <p>Scott Reid – sent a written update out.</p> <p>Joe Reade – detail about Iona and how imminent is work starting?</p> <p>Scott Reid - work starting next year, environmental review carried along both coast lines and found there is protected seagrass in dredging and breakwater areas. Nature Scotland are viewing this as a showstopper, however it is not their decision. Marine Scotland will hopefully see larger picture regarding crew safety and that this is a lifeline ferry service for Iona. Expecting to have some mitigation and compensation measures to take place e.g planting grass elsewhere but decision sits with MS.</p> <p>Scott Reid– become apparent the service needs modified in more than one location. Idea will be that we look at this with a blank sheet of paper form crews, vessels and timetables and take it from there. We have a green light to go ahead with this, must refine questions to use and tender from consultants to carry out a gap analysis for the review and use that information to arm ourselves with the facts. Finances are not infinite so correct places must be prioritised and lifeline services are fit for purpose.</p> <p>Update – Craignure for the long term - have had a positive set of meetings with CMIL. We have two proposals which are sitting on desk of CalMac and CMAL. Once feedback is reviewed, plan will be to have meeting with stakeholders.</p> <p>Joe Reade – passenger access in Craignure – what is the timescale for this?</p> <p>Scott Reid – Around 2022. Engineering proposal about ready to go out to tender, have engaged with CMAL and CalMac with vessel.</p>
7	Ferries Community Board Update	<p>Kirsty McFarlane introduced the update from the Ferries Community Board including;</p> <p>5 new members appointed. New member for Stornoway, Uist, Lewis and Tiree. Not possible for every island to be represented but the Chair Angus Campbell has offered to liaise with communities not directly represented.</p> <p>Positive news about reduced fares for youth groups, where Board has been pushing for cheaper fares scheme for younger people</p> <p>At last Board meeting members had general concern about progress on new ferry builds.</p>

		<p>Socio-economic study being carried out but concern that it may not bring out the potential long term damage to the viability of some of our islands.</p> <p>Joe Reade highlighted there to give islanders equality of access rather than it being about priority access but the current booking system discriminates against people who don't have the ability to book in advance.</p> <p>Kirsty MacFarlane stated we are going to reach point where people will ask how much longer they can compromise the life they are living.</p> <p>Cllr Mary-jean Devon was aware of work to get young ambassadors to sit on the Board and enquired if this had been progressed?</p> <p>Camille Dressler – Socio-Economic study will be very welcome because it will bring this point home and there will be have to be considerations in terms of spending and this sits with the national plan. Communities need to work with CalMac to see new generation of ferries.</p> <p>Joe Reade stated that a broader point was that there was a real onus on CalMac to run service more cost efficiently, and this isn't looked at enough.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the Ferries Community Board update.</p>
8	Scottish Islands Passport	<p>Neil MacRae, HITRANS submitted a Report providing an update on the Scottish Islands Passport Project including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st version of the Passport App now available for Android and iOS devices • Soft launch through autumn with main focus to be promotion from Spring 2022 • Promotional campaigns with public transport operators including Northlink, Citylink and HIAL • Ongoing Community and Stakeholder engagement • Marketing and brand building • Funding and resource
9	Confirm Pre-agreed Date of Next Meeting	<p>It was agreed that the next meeting of the Argyll, Lochaber, Skye and Small Isles Ferry Stakeholder Group would take place at 12 noon on 7th June 2022.</p>