

**CLYDE, KINTYRE, AND ISLANDS FERRY STAKEHOLDER GROUP
(Arran, Bute, Campbeltown, Cumbrae, Colonsay, Islay, Jura, Gigha and Cowal)**

Minute of Meeting held virtually through Microsoft Teams, on Tuesday 10th June 2025 at 1000.

IN ATTENDANCE	<p>ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL Cllr. John Armour (Chair) Cllr Dougie McFadzean Mr Scott Reid</p> <p>NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL Cllr Charles Currie</p> <p>TRANSPORT SCOTLAND Ms Alison Wills Mr Mark Hoskins Mr Liam Seaton Ms Caitlin Allison Ms Isabella Monteith Mr John Harvey Ms Caroline Conelly</p> <p>CALEDONIAN MACBRAYNE LTD (CALMAC) Mr Finlay Macrae Ms Donna Lockhart Ms Victoria Shaw Ms Elaine Crossan Mr Michael Scobbie</p> <p>CALEDONIAN MARITIME ASSETS LTD. (CMAL) Mr Chris Fisher</p> <p>HITRANS Mr Ranald Robertson Mr Neil MacRae Ms Clare Harper</p> <p>SPT Mr Allan Comrie</p> <p>FERRIES COMMUNITY BOARD Mr Angus Campbell</p> <p>HIE Nicky Sobey</p> <p>SCOTTISH CITYLINK Ker Corbett</p>
---------------	--

	<p>DUNOON COMMUNITY COUNCIL Mr David Clough</p> <p>COWAL TRANSPORT FORUM Ms Kirstie Reid</p> <p>CAMPBELTOWN FERRY COMMITTEE Ewen Macdonald</p> <p>ARRAN FERRY COMMITTEE / FERRIES COMMUNITY BOARD Mr Bill Calderwood</p> <p>BUTE COMMUNITY COUNCIL Jean Moffat</p> <p>CUMBRAE FERRY COMMITTEE / FERRIES COMMUNITY BOARD Mr Angus Campbell</p> <p>KILCREGGAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL Mr John Auld</p> <p>ISLAY FERRY COMMITTEE / FERRIES COMMUNITY BOARD Mr Jim Porteous</p> <p>TARBERT AND SKIPNESS COMMUNITY COUNCIL Tim James</p> <p>SPT Allan Comrie</p> <p>WESTERN FERRIES Mr Gordon Ross</p> <p>HAULAGE Mr Jim Martin</p>
APOLOGIES	<p>Rev Christine Murdoch, Kilcreggan Community Council</p> <p>Des Bradley, ScotRail</p> <p>David Herriot, FCB</p> <p>Jane MacLeod, Business Representative</p> <p>David Herriot, FCB</p> <p>CLlr Sandra Reynolds, Inverclyde Council</p>

1	Minute of Meeting held on 5 th December 2024	The Minute of Meeting of 6 th December 2024 was approved subject to amendment of CLlr Paul Cassidy being recorded as Inverclyde Council rather than North Ayrshire Council.
2	Matters Arising – Action Tracker	<p>With reference to item 2 of the Minute of Meeting of 6th December 2024, HITRANS submitted the Action Tracker detailing updates on the action points for all the Ferry Stakeholder Groups.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the updated Action Tracker.</p>
3	Caledonian MacBrayne Operational,	With reference to item 3 of the Minute of Meeting of 5 th December 2024 CalMac, submitted an operational report which addressed the following:

<p>Commercial and Performance Update covering (CFL)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RADAR and Insight into Action 2. Improving Every Journey 3. Insights Analytics and Data Science 4. Centre of Excellence 5. Block Booking Terms and conditions and utilisation monitoring 6. Route Performance updates (available by weblink provided with papers) 7. Enhanced engagement model (Area Management Appointments) 8. eBooking programme of development and vessel capacity analysis <p>Finlay MacRae introduced the report.</p> <p>It was agreed to begin with a presentation by Elaine Crossan on the Customer Experience Measurement platform (RADAR). RADAR is now live and provides analytics on customer behaviour and route by route updates. The presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening posts for customer feedback • RADAR touchpoints and specific metrics • Driving customer experience improvement through local ownership and actions • Actionable feedback reporting resolving issues <p>Questions from the group on the presentation included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will Calmac distinguish feedback from local residents from that provided by visitors. Elaine confirmed that the analysis distinguishes between island / peninsular residents and visitors. • An update on how prioritisation is developed from the feedback. Elaine responded to say that the insight gathered along with the data science is applied within the Route Prioritisation Matrix. • How do Calmac distinguish and differentiate between foot passenger, passenger in a vehicle, passenger with a bike etc. Elaine confirmed this is a question asked and how onward travel is arranged (is public transport a connection from the ferry). • Jean Moffat asked if monthly performance reporting with RADAR results could be shared with Bute Community Council. Elaine and Victoria agreed to pick this up. • Concerns raised that sailings are showing as full when there is plenty space on the day of sailing. Example of Islay journey when 15 vehicles in the standby lane were carried despite the sailing being shown as full. This is creating frustration for customers that must feed into the customer insight and this is a result of problems that have come through as a result of Ar Turas / eBooking. • David Clough raised a concern that ScotRail on train and Station announcements suggest connections with Calmac at Gourock but in practice only 50% of these do connect. Could this be looked at to reduce frustration of the travelling public by the impression being given that connections are being made more often than they are. <p>Action 1 – Neil MacRae and Elaine Crossan will feedback the concern about on train announcements to ScotRail.</p> <p>Finlay invited questions on the written report in terms of Operational and Service Delivery matters across the regional area.</p> <p>Discussion followed on Operational matters. Items raised include:</p>
---	---

- Jim Martin reiterated the point about the unsatisfactory performance of Ar Turas / eBooking which has seen capacity more poorly managed than was the case with the old system. It is placing enormous pressure on frontline Calmac staff. Issues are amplified by the difficulty in reaching Calmac by telephone.
- Jim Porteous noted that the winter timetable consultation has completed but no feedback has been provided back to communities and the limited response that there has been appears to fall far short of the community ask made by Islay Ferry Committee. The limited deadweight capacity of MV Isle of Arran is a particular issue and the appearance that there is plenty unused deckspace on this vessel creates real problems in the community. Jim requested an urgent high level meeting with Calmac.
- Tim James raised the winter timetable on the Lochranza ferry where demand has increased but service levels are insufficient to meet this demand. There needs to be a decent winter service on the Lochranza route. There are also issues of traffic control on the route to Claonaig.
- Kirstie Reid noted that in the event of service disruption on the Dunoon route the service information provided through the Calmac app puts people off travelling altogether. Clearer communications are needed to explain that when the town centre service is disrupted that an alternative bus service is being provided.
- Kirstie Reid also raised a concern that the gangways is too narrow for prams and potentially wheelchairs. Could this be replaced.
- Kirstie Reid also asked if the Calmac ferries could serve the Gourock stairs in the event that another vessel needs access to the ferry berth.
- Bill Calderwood noted that the issue of timetable changes needing to be economically cost neutral and while the requests to expand the Lochranza service timetable have been shown to be cost effective particularly given disruption on the Brodick route yet little or no progress has been seen.
- Cllr John Armour expressed frustration at the lack of meaningful engagement afforded to Campbeltown Ferry Committee to feed into the timetable consultation process.
- Jim Martin raised a concern at the very late issue of papers for the Ferry Stakeholder Group meeting. Neil MacRae confirmed that the Secretariat share papers as soon as we receive them but that the late issue of papers will be reinforced as a concern to those other bodies who have not supplied papers in timely fashion as the requirement is for a 7 day minimum in advance of meetings.
- Ewan MacDonald noted that the Campbeltown Ferry Committee expectation is that they have some allocation within a shared system with Arran with a view to re-starting the service next year.

Action 2 – Donna Lockhart agreed to take an action to have vessel coordinates looked at for Islay vessels.

Action 3 – Donna Lockhart agreed to take away the request for an urgent high level meeting with Islay FC.

Action 4 – Victoria Shaw agreed to look at the suggestion of access to Gourock stairs.

Action 5 – Victoria Shaw agreed to look at the disruption communications to ensure the message of alternatives be made clear to customers.

Action 6 – Victoria Shaw would investigate the gangway issue on the Dunoon ferries.

Action 7 – Caroline Conelly took an action to ask Strategy and Policy colleagues at Transport Scotland to look at the proposals by both Arran Ferry Committee and Tarbert and Skipness CC for an improved service to Lochranza in the winter and provide a clear response on the position with regard to this timetable request.

Action 8 – Donna Lockhart agreed to escalate the concerns at the lack of meaningful engagement with Campbeltown Ferry Committee on timetables.

Action 9 – HITRANS will raise the concern over late issue of papers with Calmac, CMAL and Transport Scotland.

On behalf of FSG Members the Chair thanked Ms Crossan, Ms Lockhart, Ms Shaw and Mr MacRae for their update to the Ferry Stakeholder Group.

4	Western Ferries Commercial Update	<p>Gordon Ross presented the Western Ferries report that covered:</p> <p>On behalf of FSG Members the Chair thanked Mr Ross for his update to the Ferry Stakeholder Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Performance and Fleet Update – October 2024 to March 2025 - During the period from 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025, Western Ferries operated a total of 15,228 sailings, which included an additional 215 sailings scheduled to accommodate peak-time demand. Throughout this period, 319 sailings were cancelled due to weather-related disruptions, and 20 cancellations were attributed to technical issues. This equates to a service reliability rate of 97.7%, a figure Western Ferries considers satisfactory. Of the weather-related cancellations, approximately 50% occurred during named storms, with 96 cancellations specifically attributed to Storm Eowyn. Passenger and vehicle carryings during this reporting period remained broadly in line with figures recorded between October 2023 and March 2024. • Fleet Development - Western Ferries has just placed an order for two new vessels with Cammell Laird, with delivery and commissioning expected by late summer/early autumn 2026. No firm decision has yet been made regarding the future of the vessels built in 2001 and 2003. However, one option under consideration is the retention of at least one of these vessels to further enhance service resilience and support additional or peak-time demand. This consideration is particularly relevant in light of the potential disruptions to traffic flows associated with the planned improvements to the RABT, the timing of which would serve as a key factor. <p>On behalf of FSG Members the Chair thanked Mr Ross for his update to the Ferry Stakeholder Group.</p>
5	CHFS 3 Update	<p>Mark Hoskins presented an update following confirmation of the direct award of the CHFS3 contract to Calmac Ferries Limited which the Cabinet Secretary confirmed to the Scottish Parliament on 8th May 2025. Mark's presentation noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A direct award brings changes and opportunities to improve the current operations. CalMac will no longer be delivering a commercial contract, it will be delivering a public service. • Whilst CalMac will continue to operate the services, the award will not be "business as usual". We are working to embed the improvements required to deliver a safe, reliable and affordable service, giving due consideration to the responses and requests of the local communities. <p>Key differences noted from CHFS 2 to CHFS 3 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Flexibility • Improved Reporting and monitoring reflecting passenger experience • Enhanced resilience and reliability of the ferry services • Improved KPI's managed through a new Benefits Realisation Plan • Improved Communications – Designated Area Operational Managers for each region working closely with Communities and Stakeholders • Greater Community Voice, Transparency and Accountability, through participation in new designated groups (Technology, Continuous improvement, Innovation). • Annual Business Plan and a five yearly Corporate Plan will be reviewed and approved by Scottish Ministers • Alignment of Contract year and Financial year to drive efficiency.

		<p>There followed a short discussion with questions from Stakeholders. Questions raised related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns that while progress on a new contract is being made there still appears to be little or no progress on the issue of new vessels for Dunoon – Gourock. Instead what has been delivered is a reduction to service levels with no resultant cost saving to justify this. This calls into question statements to a customer orientated model of service delivery. <p>Action 10 – It was agreed that the Secretariat would collate a list of questions that Ferry Stakeholder Group members would like to submit to Scottish Government / Transport Scotland to better understand the detail of CHFS 3 which should be considered before finalisation of the contract to operate CHFS 3. The response would then be shared with FSG members.</p> <p>On behalf of FSG Members the Chair thanked Mr Hoskins for his presentation to the Ferry Stakeholder Group.</p>
--	--	--

6	Ferries Community Board Update	<p>Angus Campbell presented an update on behalf of the Ferries Community Board which covered the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CalMac have appointed Robert Morrison as Community Engagement Director and he is our first line of contact with the operator. The full Board met with Ms Hyslop in the Parliament with the main point of discussion the new contract arrangements. The last board meeting in Tiree on the 7th March. This included the opportunity to meet local groups. The FCB Young Islander Network co-opted member lives on Tiree and he brought a strong young voice to discussions. Our next meeting is on the 6th June. FCB Sub group held several meetings with Transport Scotland regarding CHFS 3 and particularly around reporting and accountability. Island Community needs should be the foundation of future planning in tandem with knowing the true demand for services. FCB were represented at the Cabinet Secretary round table which was very useful and recognised as a productive part of future ways of working. FCB welcomed the further movement towards equality for under 22 travel but continue to request that equality for all our young people. FCB continue to keep up the pressure for the ticketing system to be fully operational and operate as intended. In particular the ability for the system to maximise deck space available for booking and provide the best opportunity for people to book and travel. FCB strongly emphasised this point at a joint meeting with the DML board on 14th May. The announcement of the award of the new contract was not the FCB's preferred option but it now gives certainty going forward. It does however emphasise the need to ensure the community voices are heard more effectively to bring better decision making and transparency in monitoring and accountability. In parallel to this the FCB continue to ask for island representation on boards and the recognition of the knowledge and experience they will bring to decision making. The FCB is presently going through a recruitment process for new members and the outcome will be known by the end of June.
---	--------------------------------	--

		Members noted the update and thanked Mr Campbell for the report.
7	Transport Scotland Updates	<p>Caroline Connelly provided members with an update from Transport Scotland. The report covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Needs Assessments • Ferry Fares Policy • Integration (Onward and Connecting Travel) • Low Carbon and Environmental Impact <p>There followed questions and discussion that covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Clough's early concern raised initially under CHFS 3 was recorded again under the Islands Connectivity Plan. This was the concern that while progress on a new contract is being made there still appears to be little or no progress on the issue of new vessels for Dunoon – Gourock. Instead what has been delivered is a reduction to service levels with no resultant cost saving to justify this. This calls into question statements to a customer orientated model of service delivery. Caroline noted that Transport Scotland have received the response to the consultation on timetables on the route from Mr Clough. In regards to the Gourock – Dunoon project it was suggested that CMAL would be best placed to confirm the status of that project. <p>Action 11 – Caroline Connelly would share an update through the Secretariat on the current status of the new vessels project for the Dunoon Town Centre route.</p> <p>On behalf of FSG Members the Chair thanked Ms Connelly for her update to the Ferry Stakeholder Group.</p>
8	CMAL Update	<p>Chris Fisher introduced the CMAL update which was enclosed within the meeting papers. The report covered updates on infrastructure improvements relevant to ports within the area of the group and, vessel replacements and progress on the small vessel replacement plan. These included:</p> <p>CMAL Update - Vessels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MV Isle of Islay commenced Builder's Sea Trials in the Sea of Marmara on Thursday 22 May 2025. • MV Loch Indaal is progressing well, as are Hull 1100 (MV Lochmor) and Hull 1101 (MV Claymore). It is anticipated that MV Loch Indaal will be delivered early 2026 with the third and fourth vessels delivered at 3 - 6 months intervals respectively. • MV Glen Sannox entered service on 13th January 2025 and is performing well. • MV Glen Rosa is scheduled for delivery in 2026 – Scottish Parliament was recently advised of delivery rescheduling through NZET Committee. • The contract for seven new all-electric small vessels was awarded to Remontowa Shipbuilding S.A. on 28th March 2025. Hull Numbers are B621/1, B621/2, B621/3, B621/4, B621/5, B621/6 & B621/7. Steel cutting for vessel one is scheduled for November 2025. • MV Hebridean Isles is due to go to Denmark soon for disposal. • MV Caledonian Isles has been floated out of the dry dock and is now moored alongside the quay at James Watt Dock. Alignment works on both shaft lines is progressing well. At present the plan for completion of works and sea and berthing trials for the vessel will allow for a phased return to service during the week commencing 9th June 2025.

- CMAL continue to scour the globe regarding 2nd hand tonnage but as stated it is not bearing fruit – the exception being the MV Loch Frisa.

Port Infrastructure

- Wemyss Bay signage improvement works & traffic management works will be carried out In June.
- Various fender repairs have been completed or are planned to be carried out in near future at Armadale, Colintrave, Gourrock, Kennacraig, Kilchoan, Lochboisdale, Tobermory & Tiree. Further fender repairs are required at Tiree Ferry Berth & Coll non-ferry berth after recent inspections.
- Various building project works are progressing; at Tiree with the design of a new building due following overall decision on the traffic management project, a modular terminal building being designed for Kennacraig to coincide with traffic management works, and an extension of the existing building at Colintrave is planned.
- All linkspan statutory inspections are in date.
- All Passenger Access System (PAS) statutory inspections are in date.
- For the new Islay vessel enabling works, works at Kennacraig are substantially complete except for shore power installation, remedial works at Colonsay are substantially complete with the contractor completing final tasks prior to demobilising by mid-June, and mooring aid winches have been installed at Port Askaig.
- Ground investigation works for the Small Vessel Replacement Programme (SVRP) are currently out to tender with a return date in early June.
- Some of the shore power dates for SVRP phase one will be beyond or tight to the delivery of the vessels. We are working closely with SSEN to improve on these schedules. There may be a short gap in shore power availability which CMAL will keep to a minimum with additional options for interim solutions also being investigated
- Detailed design for the Cumbrae Slip development has been completed and the tender documents have been uploaded to PCS. Harbour Revision Order stakeholder consultation has closed with no objections, the period for Environmental Impact Assessment consultation for the Marine Licence has been extended to 30 May 2025.

General

- Current and Future Project Engagement: There are several project stakeholder engagements and communications in progress. These include Port Ellen Terminal Development Marine License Application: In April, the project team issued community communications regarding the Port Ellen HRO.
- The CMAL Board will be travelling to Oban/Mull soon and will be engaging with a series of different community stakeholders at both locations.
- Brian Fulton and Kevin Hobbs met with the 'Save Ardrossan Harbour' Community Group on Friday 23 May at the CMAL offices.
- Brian Fulton will also be participating in the upcoming Ferries Community Board (FCB) interviews alongside the current FCB Chair to select the new members for the board.

		<p>There followed a short discussion with issues raised including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Martin asked if the delayed ferry delivery might see any compensation from the yards for the economic cost to communities? • Gordon Ross noted a mismatch in published delivery dates for the new Dunoon ferries where ICP suggests completion in March 2026 but there seems to be no published project plan to align with these dates. • Jim Porteous raised health and safety concerns over the layout at Port Askaig which was to be subject of a consultancy report and the community would appreciate an update on this. Scott Reid confirmed that a road safety report would be prepared and implemented to ensure that the constrained footprint at Port Askaig be looked at and when this is taken forward the community would be part of this process. The expectation is that this will focus on management of the layout. <p>Action 12 – Paul Linhart MacAskill would ensure that the update provided to the FSG will include information on delivery timescales for the new vessels and why the ICP references March 2026 but this is not being updated on by CMAL.</p> <p>On behalf of FSG Members the Chair thanked Mr Fisher for his update to the Ferry Stakeholder Group.</p>
9	Argyll and Bute Council update	<p>Argyll and Bute Council</p> <p>Scott Reid provided a verbal update on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council covering the ports for which the Council has responsibility. Questions raised on the item were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gordon Ross sought an update on Dunoon and Kilcreggan • David Clough asked that there be no spend on Dunoon until the detail of the new vessels is known to ensure that the infrastructure design is appropriate to the vessels. Scott confirmed that ground investigation works have been paused for this reason. The only expenditure plans relate to passenger facilities that will be appropriate regardless of the long term vessel deployment. • For information David Clough noted that the Dunoon community have commenced the process of Community Asset Transfer for the Dunoon Linkspan to transfer to the community with the aspiration to tender for a Town Centre to Town Centre Vehicle Ferry to operate on the route. • John Auld noted that Kilcreggan Community Council would welcome the opportunity to engage with Argyll and Bute Council and keep a flow of update and information from the Council to the Community. <p>On behalf of FSG Members the Chair thanked Mr Reid for his update to the Ferry Stakeholder Group.</p>
10	Western Isles Health and Transport Action Plan	<p>Neil Macrae submitted a Report providing an overview of work being undertaken through the Western Isles Connectivity for Health Travel Working Group that the Cabinet Secretary had asked HITRANS to chair and report on in December 2024. The Report provided an update on the work of the Working Group and outlined the actions and next steps that had been identified by the Group and several other areas for consideration. Key early actions to the work set out in the report included the extension of the Urgent Medical Travel protocol to inter island ferries on the Sound of Harris and Sound of Barra. This was a welcome step taken early in the process by Transport Scotland and Calmac Ferries.</p> <p>On behalf of FSG Members the Chair thanked Mr MacRae for his update to the Ferry Stakeholder Group.</p>

11	Scottish Islands Passport	<p>Neil MacRae introduced a report to update on progress made on the Scottish Islands Passport project. Key points of the report included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full set of 4 Travelogues launched and are on sale covering 72 islands. • Over 43,115 app downloads and 249,144 unique sessions at the end of March (up from 22k and 154k respectively for March 2024). • Stamps collected for each of the 72 islands covered by the app: 43,864 stamp unlocks to date with 29,718 people using the manual unlock option showing that the app is providing inspiration for island visits. • We now have data to compare across more than 3 years which shows a continual increase in monthly in location unlocks. • A number of marketing displays are now out of contract although will remain until providers find replacements including Inverness Airport, Glasgow Airport, CalMac ferries and Oban Ferry Terminal. • We have continual marketing on screens onboard Northlink ferries. • We are included on new HITRANS printed bus timetables. • At the end of March we started a campaign on new digital screens at Stornoway airport for 1 year. • The project this supported with funds from the RURALITIES Horizon Europe project. <p>On behalf of FSG Members the Chair thanked Mr MacRae for his update to the Ferry Stakeholder Group.</p>
12	Confirm Pre-agreed Date of Next Meeting	<p>It was agreed that the next meeting of the Clyde, Kintyre and Islands Ferry Stakeholder Group would take place on Monday 8th December 2025 at 1000*. The meeting would be online only via Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>*December FSG meeting subsequently rescheduled for 1300 on 8th December 2025.</p>