



Lochaber, Skye, Small Isles and Raasay Ferry User Group

West Highland Hotel, Mallaig, 1100 on Tuesday 25th April 2017.

Minute

Present

Cllr Allan Henderson, Highland Council (Chair)
Neil MacRae, HITRANS
Brian Fulton, CalMac Ferries Limited
David Taylor, CalMac Ferries Limited
Ross Moran, CalMac Ferries Limited
Demi Wyllie, CalMac Ferries Limited
Blair Moglia, CalMac Ferries Limited
Camille Dressler, Small Isles CC
Kirsty MacColl, Small Isles CC
Margaret Horn, Transport Scotland
Brian Gordon, Transport Scotland
Stephen Kerr, Scottish Citylink
Scott Dingwall, HIE
Rob Ware, Sleat Transport Forum
Roderick Murray, Sleat Transport Forum
Kevin Hobbs, CMAL
David Summers, Highland Council

Apologies

Cllr Brian Murphy, Highland Council
Des Bradley, ScotRail
Cllr Andrew Baxter, Highland Council

Cllr Henderson welcomed Members to the meeting and invited a round of introductions.

- 1 **Minute of Meeting held on 8 September 2016**
Minute approved as an accurate reflection of the discussion.
- 2 **Matters Arising not on Agenda**
No items raised under Matters Arising.

3 **Performance Audit of Scottish Government Funded Ferry Services**

Neil MacRae presented information on the Audit of Scottish Government Ferry Services on behalf of Audit Scotland and invited Members to submit any comments on their work, either to him or directly to Audit Scotland.

Rob Ware reported that Sleat Transport Forum had been consulted and Cllr Allan Henderson welcomed the review.

4 **Ferry Procurement Review**

Neil MacRae updated members on the Scottish Government's recent announcement to undertake a review of the procurement processes and state aid requirements for future funding of Scottish Government ferry services. Transport Scotland confirmed that they were in the process of arranging public consultation events.

5 **Caledonian MacBrayne Operational and Performance Update**

Ross Moran provided an overview of the Reliability and Performance Report circulated in advance of the meeting, highlighting the 21% reduction in cancellations over the equivalent period last year.

Ross Moran shared an example of much more detailed performance statistics that Cal Mac had piloted for the Arran andIslay routes and indicated that they would seek to extend this level of information to all routes in time. Sleat Transport Forum welcomed the offer to include the Mallaig – Armadale route in the initial pilot. It was agreed that this information should be shared at future meetings but also on the Cal Mac website with information on key statistics provided for more than just the previous year so that trends can be identified and understood. In presenting the results, Ross Moran highlighted the difference between the timetable and contractual results.

Camille Dressler highlighted the importance of freight and asked if information on this could be provided in future.

Sleat Transport Forum asked if definition for the following could be provided. Demand Led Analysis and Short Shipped. David Taylor confirmed any vehicle or passenger who had been left behind on a sailing (booked or unbooked) was accounted for by this term. Rob Ware stated that while the annual total for Mallaig to Armadale amounted to 1% it would be beneficial to know what this figure was for the October-March period.

Sleat Transport Forum also sought clarification on the process by which additional sailings had been provided on the Arran service. Transport Scotland confirmed that the decision had been made following the presentation of a paper outlining the economic case with projected freight having an important element in the decision making process.

Action – CalMac to provide Sleat Transport Forum with the winter only statistics.

6 **Ferry Online Availability Study Update**

Neil MacRae presented the report on the results of 2016 Ferry Availability Study.

With progress being seen through VRDP and by the operator towards a new bookings and reservation system HITRANS have decided not to continue with the work for 2017 but should it become evident that the work needs to be restarted that could be feasible in future years.

Cal Mac confirmed that they are currently working on updating the terms and conditions for 'no shows'. Camille Dressler when it would e-tickets would be available online. Ross Moran confirmed that the existing booking system was being adapted to provide this function.

7 **Summer 2018 Timetable Consultation Process**

Demi Wylie presented the process and steps required to be met by CFL on timetable consultation.

Key points of the presentation included:

- Winter Deadline
- Summer Deadline
- Feedback forms now distributed by future planning.
- Proposed timetables will be based on previous years. Change requests will only be if they are cost neutral or can demonstrate savings elsewhere to facilitate cost neutrality.
- Process Steps

Demi Wylie confirmed that for they confirm with the Coach industry in June that the following summer timetable will be as per current unless advance information is available for the purposes of them preparing their schedules.

Roddy Murray highlighted the impact on business resulting from the unreliable service between Mallaig and Armadale and that the current information provided in the roadside warning signs was unhelpful.

Neil MacRae confirmed that there had been dialogue previously with Cal Mac and Transport Scotland to see if the signs could be improved or replaced but would seek to address this again.

David Summers requested that the proposals clearly identify where in the consultation timeline FUG's would feature so that issues that involve integration with other public transport services such the bus service in Sleat can be considered. Demi Wylie said that it was the responsibility of the new Transport Integration Manager to undertake an impact assessment where there has been a change.

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Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan

Margaret Horn and Brian Gordon provided a presentation summarizing the 2015 Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan Annual Report.

Subsequent discussion included the following issues:

- Increasing the number of vessels which berth overnight in Craignure
- How the results of the Ferry Availability Study were being incorporated.
- The impact of the new MCA regulations – Kevin Hobbs confirmed that 3 routes would be reclassified and that CMAL were preparing for this eventuality.
- Need for a capital Plan to implement proposals – Transport Scotland confirmed that there was an outline capital plan in the Scottish Ferries Plan and that they also prepared a case for supporting the VRDP on an annual basis.
- Assurance sought on role of Loch Nevis for Small Isles - Cal Mac confirmed that there was unlikely to be a change in deployment next year

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Integrated / Public Transport Update

David Summers reported that the new Highland Council public bus service contracts had commenced on 24th April. The winter Armadale bus contract had not been renewed as part of this process but it was hoped that Stagecoach would be providing their traditional summer service from June with the multi-operator ticket available from then as well.

Rob Ware noted that this would result in a period of up to 5 weeks with no bus service beyond the single school run despite the island already experiencing high visitor numbers. David Summers said he would explore if there was an option of utilizing any ward discretionary budget to address this gap in provision.

Camille Dressler said that there was an opportunity to draw on experience of Smart solutions elsewhere to help improve level of service.

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Consultation Terms of Reference

Neil MacRae introduced the report on the proposed updated Ferry Consultation Terms of reference and invited Members to feed any comments. The aim of revising the terms of reference is to find a way of ensuring that the FUG groups are fit for purpose and we would welcome thoughts on how Members see us achieving this objective. Key elements to the revisions proposed within the Draft terms of reference are:

- Greater clarity of the roles and relationships that allow FUGs to coexist alongside without confusing the role of the ferry committees and other first point of engagement fora.
- Formalising the timetable consultation timeframe
- A proposal that an Independent Chair be appointed to provide a consistency across all 4 Ferry User Group meetings. This individual would provide a link to the CalMac Communities Board.

Roddy Murray asked who would be responsible for appointing the Communities Board. Brian Fulton confirmed that this would be Cal Mac initially following an interview and selection process but thereafter it would be the responsibility of the Board to appoint in future. Brian Fulton also highlighted how he was seeking to ensure that there was a clear distinction between the role of the Communities Board and the FUG's or Ferry Committees.

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Dates of Future Meetings

Action – It was agreed that FUG members be contacted once local authorities have completed their appointment process with meeting dates with a view to these taking place early in November 2017.

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No further issues were raised