



Lochaber, Skye, Small Isles and Raasay Ferry User Group

Moorings Hotel, Banavie

Wednesday 7th September 2016

Present –

Cllr Allan Henderson, Highland Council
Paul Flynn, Transport Scotland
Brian Gordon, Transport Scotland
Drew Collier, CalMac Ferries Limited
Ross Moran, CalMac Ferries Limited
Demi Wyllie, CalMac Ferries Limited
Graeme McFarlan, CalMac Ferries Limited
Scott Dingwall, HIE
Rob Ware, Sleat Transport Forum
Roderick Murray, Sleat Transport Forum
Kerr Corbett, Scottish Citylink
Kevin Hobbs, CMAL
Ranald Robertson, HITRANS

Apologies –

Cllr Brian Murphy, Highland Council
David Summers, Highland Council

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

1. Minute of meeting of 16 February

Agreed as an accurate reflection of the discussion.

2. Matters Arising not on the Agenda

No items raised under Matters Arising.

3. CalMac Summer 2017 Timetable Proposals

Drew Collier spoke to the Summer 2017 timetable pack.

Rob Ware asked for an update on how investigations into seeking additional tonnage are progressing.

Drew Collier confirmed that a vessel was looked at in Norway but due to various factors that had to be considered when looking for a vessel this particular one wouldn't be suitable for numerous reasons such as the requirements to get it flagged in the UK and port infrastructure.

Kevin Hobbs added that it was intended to look at a vessel option in Denmark but the costs of acquiring the ship and converting it for use are unknown. This vessel would have a capacity of approximately 60 cars. Vessels that are suitable for Western Isles use tend to be build for bespoke use on particular routes and tend to life expire on these routes.

Action - CalMac agreed to circulate an update setting out the process and stages as they progress.

4. CalMac Ferries Limited presentation on the new CHFS Contract starting 1 October

Drew Collier presented on some high level details of the new CHFS contract. The presentation covered:

ITT Parameters

- fares set by Transport Scotland
- Routes and timetables set by TS and based on Summer 2015 for pricing purposes.
- Must use CMAL vessels
- Fixed price contract

Key High Level Changes to the new contract

- New Harbour Operating Agreement
- Tightly defined reporting arrangements
- Performance regime against KPIs.
- Introduction of Smart Ticketing
- New transport integration arrangements
- New accessibility and environmental requirements
- Detailed stakeholder relationship structure
- Operator responsible for vessel maintenance obligations..

Bid Summary

- Aim to meet the needs of communities, customer, stakeholder, sister agencies and Scottish Ministers
- Deliver long term subsidy reduction by growing revenue and operational improvements.
- Will continue to create long term social and economic value.

7 themes that underpin the outcomes for service

- Safety
- Value for money
- Developing sustainable communities
- Being a socially responsible employer.
- Improving customer service.
- Enduring commitment to environmental sustainability.
- Managing change effectively.

Improving customer service

- £6M investment in on board and port improvements to passenger areas.
- Daily management of demand for deck space to improve capacity.
 - o New terms and conditions to discourage no shows.
- Improve Quality of customer travel information at ports and on vessels – particularly during disruption.
- Appoint Transport Integration Manager to work with other providers on timetable connections.
- Innovative approach to smart ticketing.

Engaging and developing sustainable communities

- Appointed Brian Fulton as Director of Communities
- Create a Communities Board with the commitment to have this up and running by October 2017.
- Consult local and national user groups.
- Maximise procurement opportunities for SMEs.
- 80% target for local fresh produce (From 50% today)
- Continue to provide opportunities for direct local employment including apprentices.

Other points

- No compulsory redundancy policy.
- Appoint Environment Manager
- Have Transport Integration Manager appointed by 1 October.

Key points from the subsequent group discussion included:

What demand management measures can the company deliver and whether there could be scope to include price. Transport Scotland confirmed price was not a tool available. Areas identified include elimination of multiple bookings, introducing a no show charge, impact from haulier block bookings being dropped.

How to implement no show management and what role stakeholders can provide on supporting the development and delivery of such a new system.

5. Transport Scotland Presentation on the Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan

Brian Gordon presented on the Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan. The presentation provided an update on key findings from the 2015 VRDP.

Background

- Independent demand forecasting exercise.
- Introduced in phases to represent changes around the network.
- Annual basis and looks at July/August.

Key Assumptions

- Based on current timetables.
- Previous demand increases.
- Point at which demand reaches 70% across the week.

Two demand/capacity models have been developed to assist with this decision making process, one for major routes the other for minor.

VDRP 2014 Recommendations

- 2 new vessels needed.
- Identified Ardrossan – Brodick and Uig to Lochmaddy / Uig to Tarbert
- MV Hebrides redeployed to Oban
- MV Isle of Lewis to move to Oban to Craignure
- Recognised medium term vessel provision for Islay.

Progress to date on VRDP 2014

- 2 new vessels in build at FML.
- Deployment of MV Isle of Lewis to Oban to Craignure could not proceed. Discussions with ABC ongoing.
- Shoreside infrastructure requirements are being assessed and addressed.

Major Route Model Outputs

- Oban to Craignure remains the most critically capacity constrained route.

Medium / Minor Route Model Outputs

- Mallaig to Armadale is the most critically capacity constrained route.

RET Impacts

- All model re-runs have incorporated up to date RET increases.
- For Arran routes a distinct second year uplift is emerging.

Arran routes post RET

- Ardrossan – Brodick year 1 pax up 5% cars 40% year 2 7% and 10%
- Lochranza to Claonaig

Emerging conclusions

- Oban to Craignure remains a challenge
- New vessels will help.
- Analysis and decision needed on Islay
- Further assessment on Uig – Lochmaddy / Tarbert and Stornoway – Ullapool
- Other priorities include Mallaig – Armadale and Sound of Harris.
- Review all options for additional capacity.
- Public finances remain tight.

Next steps

- Ferry User Group meeting presentations.
- Finalisation of 2015 report
- Presentation to Councils and RTPs
- Submission to Ministers for approval and publication.

6. Performance and Operational Report

Ross Moran provided the CalMac Operational and Performance Update for each route picking out key trends for each route and network wide.

There has been real disappointment on the performance issues faced on the Armadale – Mallaig route. A large number of additional services have operated but this is with a backdrop of real performance issues affecting both MV Lochinvar and MV LOTI.

Small Isles performance has improved which is welcome.

The company is worked hard to adapt new ways of working and managing these issues. It is planned to begin daily publication of performance on a route by route basis.

Initiative to establish a new contract for weather information to provide Masters with the best information possible to support their decision making process.

Printable tickets are being developed for at home ticket printing.

Dry docking regime is an area where CFL would like to improve transparency and it is Intended to extend invitations to communities to see the dry dock work on their vessels while it progresses.

Brian Gordon updated that following receipt of an options paper for the Winter 16/17 timetable a recommendation has been provided to support Ministerial decision making.

7. Ferry Availability Study

Ranald Robertson provided a short verbal update on the Ferry Availability Study which seeks to capture the availability to book online on reservable sailings focussing on a number of routes in the HITRANS area.

The research is conducted by Outer Hebrides Tourism who initiated the work voluntarily with a single route focus on Stornoway to Ullapool a number of years ago. HITRANS has supported expansion of this work to include additional routes and this has expanded to include Lochboisdale to Mallaig and Armadale to Mallaig from Summer 2017.

On these last two routes We have early indications on where capacity constraints exist for booking online although the report needs to be completed before a clear

picture can be presented on this. Ranald provided some feedback from the spreadsheets available for June (and in some cases July).

8. Public Transport Update

Ranald Robertson spoke to this item highlighting that CalMac had reached agreement with Shiel Buses to operate a service to connect with the Lochboisdale services from Mallaig to Fort William.

Kerr Corbett invited members of the Group to get in touch or let him know any thoughts they have on the Scottish Citylink service offer.

9. AOCB

Rob Ware thanked the CalMac commercial team for the partnership working they have offered to help overcome the performance issues and promote the fact that Skye was still a destination they could visit.

Rob Ware congratulated Demi Wyllie on her award for her outstanding contribution at the Scottish Transport Awards.

Cllr Henderson thanked Sleat Transport Forum for their hard work in making the case for their route.

10. Date of future meetings

Action - The date of the next two meetings will be proposed by CalMac Ferries Limited to align with key consultation dates and these will be circulated by HITRANS to the Membership as soon as possible.