

ISLE OF ARRAN FERRY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on
Monday 9th April 2012
at 7.30pm
in
Brodict Castle

Present:

Ken Thorburn (National Trust) (Chair)	Margie Currie (NAC)
Russell Duncan (Independent Traveller)	Guy Bodie (Stagecoach)
Willie Kelso (Community Council)	Robert Waine (Visit Arran)
	Jim Lees (ACVS)

In Attendance: Kenneth Gibson (MSP), and Jim Nichols (Secretary).

Also Present: Elli Olson, Parliamentary Assistant, Scottish Parliament

1. Welcome & Apologies:

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

Apologies were submitted from Iain Thomson (Construction & Haulage), Liz Robertson (NFU), Robbie Brown (CalMac), Colin McCort (CalMac), Gary Robertson (MD, CalMac) and Sharon Ashmead (CalMac).

2. Minute of Previous Meeting:

The Minute of the previous meeting, held on Monday 12th March 2012, was adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Jim Lees

Seconded: Margie Currie

3. Matters Arising:

3.1 Lochranza-Claonaig Service (Item 3.1)

Kenneth Gibson reported he had contacted Judith Ainsley again regarding his letter on the earlier roll-out of RET on the Lochranza-Claonaig service but had received no response to date.

3.2 Future of Ardrossan Harbour (Item 3.2)

An email sent to the Chair from Gary Robertson, CalMac MD, had advised that, following consultation with Caledonian Isles' Masters, contact had been made with Clydeport and proposals for investigation had been set out regarding possible improvements at Ardrossan Harbour.

Short term requests had included improvements to the berths, roads at the port and signage, with longer term options being considered by Clydeport.

Ongoing

Kenneth Gibson mentioned he would meet with Euan Jamieson in the following week.

Kenneth Gibson spoke of the need to make Clydeport aware that the position at Ardrossan was untenable.

3.3 Ferries Review (Item 3.3)

The Chair reported that the Ferry Committee's response had been submitted and acknowledged and was available to the general public.

He added that the National Trust for Scotland had also submitted a response.

3.4 Membership Fee (Item 3.6)

A decision on the membership fee will be made at the AGM which will take place in June. The date of the AGM will be confirmed at the May meeting.

3.5 Ferry Fares (item 5.1)

There was no further information on the fares increase.

3.6 Earlier Sunday Sailing (Item 8)

The Chair read out Gary Robertson's email with regard to an earlier Sunday sailing in which he requested feedback from the Ferry Committee on the requirement. An excerpt from the email read as follows:

The original proposal by members to drop a mid-day sailing in favour of a 7.00am service does not seem wise as too much volume travels on the middle of the day services. Indeed, looking across the week as a whole the 0700 sailing is the one that is least used and therefore it is hard to see that it is going to be any different. Perhaps we can have a clear statement from the group on the rationale; if it is about newspapers for instance then there must be a more cost effective way of getting that sorted.

The ship's crew does need time to undertake a weekly test of emergency drills including lifeboat deployment and we are happy to be flexible about slotting this in. We have reviewed the possibility of removing the last leg from a Saturday to leave the vessel at Brodick overnight to start with an 0820 sailing from Arran on a Sunday, however, the 1920 from Brodick is relatively well utilised and therefore not recommended. If we are to add a complete return trip to the timetable then unfortunately it will not be without cost and I am happy to propose this to Transport Scotland for funding with a strong brief from the Arran Ferry Committee.

Jim Lees suggested a return sailing to Brodick at 8.30pm on a Saturday night would allow the 7.20pm sailing to continue.

The Chair suggested writing to Gary Robertson proposing discussions at the May meeting when he was in attendance.

The Ferry Committee's position was agreed as:

- 1 An early Sunday ferry was required during the summer.
- 2 Later Friday night service extended to Saturday with an 8.30pm return to Brodick for overnight berthing.

Guy Bodie mentioned the knock-on effect this would have on other services, e.g. buses and trains.

3.7 Public Access to FC Minutes (Item 10.3)

The Committee again discussed making the minutes of meetings available to the public.

Jim Lees mentioned that only ratified minutes could be released and Willie Kelso pointed out that the release of FC minutes had been carried out in the past.

Following discussion it was agreed that future minutes would be made public, through dissemination to the Library.

The Chair agreed to inform Gary Robertson and the Arran Banner of this decision.

Action: Chair

3.8 Additional Summer Service

Gary Robertson's email had contained details of a proposal that had been prepared for submission to Transport Scotland requesting Ministerial funding approval post recess. The proposal considers the options for deploying MV Isle of Arran with a view to minimising cost and maximising service based on total carrying perspective from the previous year. The proposal is:

- 1 Freight only (with up to 12 passengers) sailings on week days to remove commercial traffic from Caledonian Isles and thereby freeing up space for cars
- 2 Passenger and car sailings at weekends

The proposal consists of 16 round trips per week, with additional sailings to be considered if volumes exceed those budgeted for.

Gary Robertson had also expressed the need to try for greater utilisation by passengers of the 7.00am Caledonian Isles sailing from Ardrossan to take pressure off the 9.45am on peak event weekdays.

Following discussion, it was agreed to accept the proposal as presented with riders regarding certain Arran events.

4. Finance:

4.1 Bank Balance

The Secretary reported a bank balance of **£363.64**

4.2 Expenditure Approval

None

5. Correspondence: **5.1** The Chair reported he had received correspondence from Lochboisdale Amenity Trust seeking information on the Ferry Committee's Constitution etc.

5.2 Willie Kelso reported correspondence received from an Arran resident.

5.3 Kenneth Gibson reported the Community Council had raised issues concerning the money to be spent on the new linkspan. He advised he had provided detailed Fiscal information to the Community Council and added that a copy of this was available.

**6. Port
Manager's
Report:**

There was no report due to apologies submitted from Port Manager, Colin McCort .

**7. Earlier
Sunday
Sailing:**

Previously covered.

**8. Date of
Next Meeting:**

The next scheduled meeting of Isle of Arran Ferry Committee will be held in **Brodict Castle** at **7.30pm** on **Monday 14th May 2012.**

**9. Any Other
Business:**

9.1 Jim Lees mentioned that as Margie Currie was retiring, this would be her last Ferry Committee meeting. He made a suggestion that Margie remained on the Committee but this was declined with thanks.

The Chair thanked Margie for her valuable contribution over the years and mentioned a possible farewell get-together.

10. Close:

As there was no further business to discuss; the Chair all for attending and closed the meeting 8.35pm .

Signed:

Dated: