

# ISLE OF ARRAN FERRY COMMITTEE

## Minute of Unscheduled Meeting

held on

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2013

at 7.30pm in the

Kinloch Hotel

**Present:** Robert Waine (Chair) Jim Lees (ACVS)  
Liz Robertson (NFU) Simon Richmond (CalMac)  
Bill Calderwood (Community Council) John Bruce (NAC)  
Kenneth Gibson (MSP)

Also present: Cheryl Murrie (Transport Scotland), Bill Main and David Taylor (Calmac), Megan Sabbah (K. Gibson's Assistant) and Elaine Parker (Minutes)

### 1. Welcome & Apologies:

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all present. Apologies were received from Iain Thomson, Guy Bodie, Alastair Dobson, Jim Henderson and Colin McCort.

### 2. Possible Summer Timetable Changes:

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and explained that the meeting would be to discuss the additional MV Isle of Arran sailings for next summer's timetable. The Chair reported that he had attended a meeting 2 weeks ago with Cllr Semple and the head of Visit Argyll, to discuss possible "tweaks" to the timetable. Cheryl Murrie of transport Scotland, explained that having had the first year of the additional sailings, Campbeltown were looking for improvements to their service – specifically the weekend (Fri, Sat, Sun) service to Campbeltown. Bill Main explained that Campbeltown wished one additional round trip via Brodick. Bill talked the Committee through the statistics that were distributed prior to the meeting which indicated the most and least utilised sailings. He also then distributed a draft timetable indicating the possible alterations. The proposed timetable showed a full MV Isle of Arran service Monday-Thursday, mirroring the Caledonian Isles sailings. However, on a Friday, a 7am off island sailing and a 1640 sailing from Ardrossan would be gained, but Arran would then lose the 1105, 1230 and 1350 MV Isle of Arran sailings. On Saturday, there would be the loss of the 0945 Brodick-Ardrossan sailing and also the last sailing of the day, the 2200 Ardrossan – Brodick sailing. On Sunday, there would be the loss of the 0905 sailing, meaning the first sailing off Island on a Sunday, would be the 1105. And a middle of the day, round trip would be gained. This would mean that instead of the MV Isle of Arran berthing overnight in Campbeltown on Thursdays and Fridays, it berth overnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

The committee expressed that the loss of the last boat on a Saturday night and the first sailing on a Sunday morning would most definitely not be a welcome change to the timetable. The Chair reiterated that having an earlier boat on Sunday mornings had been an issue for years and to now lose it again would be a huge loss. Bill Calderwood expressed that the feedback to the Community Council was that the 10pm sailing was a welcomed service.

Kenneth Gibson expressed his huge concern over losing 2 busy sailings on a Friday – which were already running at over 60% capacity this summer. Bill Main explained that 3 additional trips would be gained on the Thursday, however Kenneth again expressed that Friday sailings were more vital than Thursday sailings and Arran would lose far more than Campbeltown would gain from this change. The committee also questioned why a 3 year pilot timetable was then

being changed after the first year, and fully expressed that they felt the changes were solely to Campbelltown's gain, when Arran would lose key Friday, Saturday and Sunday sailings and gain non-vital mid-week sailings.

Resulting from the committees feedback, Bill Main then suggested the possibility of the vessel staying in Campbelltown overnight on a Sunday, meaning Arran would lose the 7am off island sailing on a Monday morning, but would still have the 7am off island sailing four days a week with the additional Friday sailing. Although this wasn't ideal, the committee felt that this option would be more agreeable, in order to maintain the vitally important sailings on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Cheryl explained that they would go away and draw up a revised draft timetable to reflect this change, and then come back and discuss with the committee further. She hoped to have the draft version ready within the next few days as she was keen to keep things moving so they could the timetable could be finalised as soon as possible. Cheryl explained that she understood that for a pilot to be successful, it required consistency and fully understood that the committee did not want to lose any sailings on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday. The Chair expressed the committee's willingness to assist with the timely finalisation of the timetable, and could easily call another meeting to discuss the timetable as soon as the amended draft timetable was made available. The Chair expressed his thanks to Cheryl, Bill and David for coming to the meeting to discuss the timetable, and he looked forward to hearing from them soon.

### **3. A.O.B**

Cllr. Bruce asked if any progress had been made regarding the disabled car parking spaces at the pier in Brodick. Simon reported that he had spoken to CMAL today and there was discussion surrounding the remarking for spaces and possibly increasing the number of spaces from 2 to 3. Simon also explained that in the meantime, should a disabled person need to park at the pier, they could park in the marshalling area.

Liz also raised the issue of staff cars blocking the walkway out of the pier, which caused a problems for those in a wheelchair. Simon explained that this was a designated staff car park, but agreed that the spaces needed to be depicted more clearly to avoid such issues.

With no further business, the Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.

**Signed:** .....

**Dated:** .....