

ISLE OF ARRAN FERRY COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting

Held on

Monday 10th February 2014

At 7.30pm in the
Kinloch Hotel

Present:

Robert Waine (Chair)	Liz Robertson (NFU)
Simon Richmond (CalMac)	Jim Henderson (Community Council)
Iain Thomson (Construction/Haulage)	Alastair Dobson (Taste of Arran)
Bill Calderwood (Arran CVS)	Kenneth Gibson (MSP)
Sheila Gilmore (Visit Arran)	David Cannon (CalMac)
Colin McCort (Port Manager, CalMac)	Ramsey Muirhead (CMal)

Also present: Bobbi Adamson (Minutes)

1. **Welcome & Apologies:**

The Chairman opened the meeting, thanked all for attending and introduced Bill Calderwood representing ArranCVS. Apologised for the delay in getting the previous minutes out due to being away. Praise was expressed to BA for typing up the minutes of the previous meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr John Bruce, David Cameron, Guy Bodie and Jim Lees (ACVS) who was represented by Bill Calderwood.

2. **Minute of Previous Meeting**

After some minor changes were discussed and agreed on for the minutes of the previous meeting, the committee agreed that RW would approve the final draft, and they were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Liz Robertson Seconded: Sheila Gilmore

3. **Matters Arising**

3.1 Email from Guy Dale-Smith

RW read out an email which he had received from Guy.

Guy had explained that he was disappointed by several inaccuracies in the front page article of last week's Arran Banner. Guy made it clear that all CalMac vessels that routinely operate within the Clyde can, and always have been able to use Gourock's Linkspan Berth as a port of refuge. The shelter in the bay is but one of the many factors taken into consideration when looking at diverting to Gourock.

The water levels in the Old Tidal Basin at Ardrossan does limit the size of vessel that can operate from the Linkspan, specifically with reference to the draught in relation to the available depth of water. The current minimum Charted Depth in the Old Tidal Basin prevents using any vessels with a draught in excess of that of the Caledonian Isles, The Clansman or The Isle of Arran.

He clarified the following points from the last meeting.

The selection of Masters and Mates for the vessels operating the service is based on operational considerations, which are diverse and often complex. It also depends on crewing requirements across the network as a whole, and not just the Arran service.

The decision as to which vessel undertakes the service is based on many operational considerations specific to either the Arran service or the wider requirement to deliver services, lifeline or otherwise, across the whole network. In terms of overall capabilities the Caledonian Isles and the Clansman are broadly similar.

All Masters can ask to divert to Gourock and either the Master or the Mate on the vessel do hold a Pilotage Exemption Certificate which enables them to berth at Gourock. It is an operational decision on whether the Gourock option is appropriate or not and rests with the Network Operations Team and the Area Operations Manager.

With reference to this email, IT questioned that if Ardrossan cannot take a deeper draught than that of the Caledonian Isles, will any new vessels be suitable?

RM explained that dredging has been looked at and is an option for Ardrossan.

IT added that low tide had caused issues during sailings last Friday.

RM explained that the basin has changed shape, and this is likely due to silt.

RM explained that there had been meetings with CMal, CalMac, Clydeport and Transport Scotland regarding the many issues at Ardrossan. KG requested that the minutes were passed onto the Ferry Committee.

KG said that Clydeport don't seem to think there are problems with the Port, but due to RET there will be more income then they will surely consider dredging. He then added that we need more information on RET e.g. prices etc.

RW explained that Clydeport will be invited to the April meeting.

3.2 Vessel Review

RM explained that the Clydeport project has been stalled for a review of funding's etc. Have started looking at deeper dredging, as Brodick is the shallowest of 14 it would be foolish not to deepen.

SR added that a vessel review is underway. KG explained that we need to know when the review will conclude. People on Arran need to know that something is being done now.

IT asked if the plans were to replace 1 or 2 boats.

KG explained that the plans are to replace 2 vessels, firstly the Isle of Arran, then the Caledonian Isles. BC asked if Transport Scotland could be asked to discuss the timescale for the new boat at March meeting. RW said that he would pass this on.

3.3 Harbour

RM explained that the plan is to start tendering in March or April and finish in October or November. Hopes to push to do it all in one phase, funding dependant. KG asked is they were on schedule for 2015. RM said that they were perhaps a month or 2 behind, completion will be January or February 2016. Still awaiting a few funding confirmations over the next couple of months. Currently have a £4million shortfall. KG took actions for the design and funding areas identified.

RM also added that if it hadn't been for the recent bad weather there would have been a barge in the new pier site now. The barge needs a steady sailing to make it over and once in place it can use legs to hold steady.

RM then handed out drawings of the most recent changes to the plans, the changes are very minimum, bus stances, shelters, walk ways etc, no major details and very small interior tweaks, 99% sure about getting a biomass boiler installed with, backup power, and are looking into all environmental aspects. There are now 64 seats and with more space around the seats.

Removed the idea of a vending machine with the possibility of having a small coffee shop, without drawing business away from local shops.

Building will be clad in sandstone, similar to that of the Douglas Hotel, and there will be large windows looking out over the bay.

3.4 Harbour Revision Order

RM explained that they are hoping to conclude this by the end of this month as this is needed before the tendering can commence.

RM mentioned that the Linkspan at Brodick is a year older than the Linkspan in Gourock and added that Gourock's needed several repairs last year.

- 4. Finance**
There were no financial matters to be discussed.
- 5. Correspondence**
None
- 6. Port Managers Report**
Colin explained that during recent disruptions, staff at both ports received a lot of abuse, mostly from Arran residents. RW added that many have complimented the pier staff during recent difficulties as the circumstances have nothing to do with any of the pier staff.
The abusive posts on Facebook have not helped in any way either and there needs to be much more positive feedback being made.
The gangway was used as often as possible on the Isle of Arran while it was in service on Arran.
Reminded all that the concession cards are due for renewal soon.
The young scot vouchers that the kids receive are dated in advance meaning some are being turned away as they can't be processed until they are valid.
KG explained that he had heard a few complaints about the timing in which CalMac update the website and app etc. People catching buses in the south end at 7 in the morning can't know if the boat is sailing or not by the time they leave home. He added that on the 26th of January it was on Facebook that the Caledonian Isles had left Campbelltown but the staff on site at Ardrossan were unaware of this. SR explained that there was problems with the text on the website. He also expressed that updating the website at 7am is a problem as the staff are only arriving on site.
DC explained that the decision can't be made any earlier as this could result in a wrong decision causing many other problems.
SR said that the comments on Facebook are causing many problems as anyone that searches 'Arran' can see these negative comments.
DC explained that CalMac want to provide the best service possible, why would they not sail the boat after all the abuse received without good reason not to.
- 7. A.O.B**
SG explained that she would like to send out surveys to the committee members, all members agreed that BA could send out members email addresses to SG.
JH passed on a set of questions which he asked the Ferry Committee to hand over to CalMac and CMal for a written response to the Community Council.
- 8. Date of Next Meeting**
The date of the next meeting will be the 10th of March at 7.30pm at the Kinloch Hotel.

With no further business, the Chair closed the meeting.

Signed:

Dated: