

**Isle of Arran Ferry Committee Meeting  
held via Zoom on  
Monday 15 March 2021 at 7.00pm**

**Present:**

I Thomson, Haulage (Chair)  
A Dobson, Business (Vice Chair)  
B Calderwood, ACC (Secretary)  
S Gilmore, Tourism (Treasurer)  
N Arthur, Independent Traveller  
M Currie, ACVS  
D Henderson, NFU  
E McMaster, NAC Local Councillor

**In Attendance:**

T Gore, CalMac  
J Irvine, CalMac, Ar Turas  
M Stevenson, CalMac, Ar Turas

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting particularly J Irvine and M Stevenson. Apologies were received from R Betley, S Clark, K Gibson and C McCort.

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

2.1 The adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2021 was proposed by NA and seconded by EMcM.

**3. Open Actions and Updates**

As before, these had been previously circulated. Updates were noted. The items for discussion were as follows:

- 3.1 Regarding the dry-docking schedule, still awaiting confirmation. The AFC have written requesting information for 2021/22 and also asking how to minimise problems.
- 3.2 The Gourock linkspan has been handed over to CalMac but there remains some snagging issues to be resolved.
- 3.3 The "turn up and go" procedures were to be confirmed for summer together with improved process of advertising by CalMac. TG stated that CalMac were aware of Arran's need to retain this service.
- 3.4 In reference to the repositioning of the 7.00am sailing, it was emphasised by several members the severe impact of this was having on essential workers, businesses, services etc and was getting to a crisis point. IT questioned why this was a recurring situation with the ferry having to dock in Brodick, particularly in the last two years. Response still required to the re-positioning decisions. Also MCA views around interpretation of regulations.  
Action: TG to follow up.
- 3.5 The government's decision to re-establish the Campbeltown sailing for summer 2021 has been challenged. This is particularly relevant given the restrictions in capacity due to social distancing.
- 3.6 Re the Ardrossan Task Force, communications are being discussed to enable community engagement in June/July period on timetables and landside designs.
- 3.7 The following is a report from the CalMac Community Board:
- 3.7.1 Regarding campervans, there had been mixed views on this. However, it was considered that the fairest way was to have them pay equivalent cost taking into consideration height etc. This is being progressed with TS.
- 3.7.2 CalMac have prepared a template for those islands wishing to establish a ferry committee although its use is not mandatory. It is based roughly on the structure of the AFC.

3.7.3 CalMac indicated that, when restrictions ease, they intend to enforce conditions of travel more actively. The opinion was that this should be reciprocal, ie. compensation if service fails. Will be discussed further.

3.7.4 Regarding the recent government announcement concerning free bus travel for under 22's, it was requested that this also be extended to ferries.

#### **4 Update on Ar Turas Project**

MS gave a presentation of the project to date as follows:

4.1 Subsequent to world-wide research, the contract, signed in December, was awarded to a supplier, Edea who are based in Italy.

4.2 This is market leading software to enable the purchase of travel an easier and better experience for the consumer.

4.3 The system is estimated to go live in September 2022.

4.4 A member enquired whether Arran could be a beta testing site prior to implementation. MS stated that testing will be done across the network because of the differing requirements of individual islands.

4.5 Several other queries were raised, eg unmet demand, transport of cycles etc. MS said that some of these would be covered in the new system.

#### **5 Correspondence**

5.1 With the closure of the port offices outwith ferry arrivals/departure, the reason given was the safety and health of staff. However, several requests had been made that the accommodations be made available. The answer was that it could not. There was, however, an exception in that those travelling from hospital would be admitted if they let the staff know when they arrive at the port, ie Ardrossan.

#### **6. Treasurer's Report**

6.1 Per SG, the current balance is £542.54.

#### **7. Port Manager's Report**

7.1 The works at Lochranza are now complete. IT enquired whether this would improve the tidal situation. TG responded it would not as this was due to Claonaig limits but he would ask the question.

#### **8. Date of Next Meeting**

8.1 The date of the next meeting will be held on 12 April 2021 at 7.00pm via Zoom.

#### **9. Any Other Business**

9.1 AD requested that CalMac and Transport Scotland be asked about operational capacity in relation to the expected government announcement. He also asked that a meeting be set up with those groups and involve NAC. TG stated that they were planning for a full summer timetable as appropriate to any Government announcements around a drop in tier levels relating to Covid.

9.2 AD also suggested that the newly appointed Islands Officer be involved with the AFC. BC stated that he will have a meeting with her later this week and will raise the issue.

#### **10. Close**

10.1 The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed .....  ..... Date 15/04/21 .....

Iain Thomson,  
Chair, Isle of Arran Ferry Committee