

Isle of Arran Ferry Committee Meeting held on Monday 10 January 2022 at 7.00 pm Via Zoom

Present:

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

In Attendance:

K Gibson, MSP
T Gore, CalMac
F MacRae, CalMac

1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from R Betley and C McCort.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 The adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2021 had been digitally circulated to all members and approved.

3. Open Actions and Updates

As before, these had been previously circulated. Updates were noted. BC pointed out that the list now extends to 3-4 pages, some going back to 2017 and needs closure. Most required action from service providers to resolve. Discussions as to how these can be closed quicker.

3.1 Livestock

This is an issue that has been ongoing since 2017. DH stated that a meeting is to be arranged with CalMac, farmers, hauliers and auction companies. The guidelines have been updated by CalMac. BC said the transportation of timber also needs to be resolved. FM is trying to work with hauliers, forestry, etc. IT stated there was no reason not to discuss at the same time as livestock and will attend if timing is suitable.

3.2 Booking/ticketing

The Ar Turas system was on schedule to be available in March. However, FM stated that training is being impacted due to Covid. He will respond with further information. Concern raised for short term capacity availability for residents.

Action: FM.

3.3 Unmet demand

This will not be fully recognised with the new system. At the last meeting of the Ferries Community Board it was stated that this needs more work.

Action: TS/CalMac/CMAL.

3.4 Claonaig toilets

Facilities are scheduled to be in place for new season starting. To meet this date IT stated that the work should be starting now. CalMac had previously promised to install temporary facilities if this fails. BC said that, with increasing use, this should provide a justification.

Action: FM to respond.

3.5 Brodick kiosk

TG stated there were no updates. There was a need to get the harbours team to liaise with CalMac and CMAL. IT said K Hobbs of CMAL knew nothing about it. FM said it may be lower down in the organisation. Update requested for February meeting.

3.6 Improved detail of carrying numbers

CalMac now have information going back a year. Looking to include in new reports.

3.7 07:00 sailing

A substantial discussion took place regarding this matter. BC reported that, in December, 37% of the sailings from Ardrossan had been cancelled with the ferry berthing overnight in Brodick. FM said that the weather system used by CalMac was "very, very good". He also said there was no benefit in berthing in Brodick. IT asked about the presentation that TG was to arrange. TG stated he thought it had taken place. The Chair enquired why Gourrock was not being used. FM responded that the masters had been trained but had never had real experience. SG and AD stressed the importance of the 07:00 sailing in terms of supplies etc. BC highlighted the effect on social care, etc. IT stated that, if CalMac persisted with the cancellation of the 07:00 sailing, then we should consider reversing the timetable as it is clear that they prefer to berth in Brodick overnight.

Action: TG to come back re presentation.

Action: FM to come back re Gourrock.

3.8 Brodick port resilience

BC reported that KH is discussing an investigation into the wave structure under the pier. A breakwater solution was considered too costly. IT stated that this may be taken forward with KH and/or G Dey.

3.9 Utilisation of vehicle capacity

This should improve with the Ar Turas system. There is no further information on the £10 administration fee for changes but the matter has not been dropped.

3.10 Food trial

It was acknowledged by CalMac that some changes had worked and some did not. Amendments will be made following 1st phase of trial and it will continue to be assessed. D. Burke to update.

3.11 Priority for cars

This issue, previously raised, relates to unbooked private cars being given priority over commercial vehicles. TG asked of FM if the was a network problem. FM stated "yes and no". A solution is still ongoing with the Customer Services team. BC said that dates were needed within the organisation for guidance and consistency of approach.

4. **Correspondence**

AFAG

4.1. The Chair stated that Transport Scotland (TS) had asked the AFC to respond to the list of questions submitted by AFAG to them. This had been done and, in response, AFAG said they will publish this on Wednesday.

4.2. He also stated that the Chair of AFAG had requested a meeting with IT and BC. This will be arranged and feedback will be provided to AFC members.

4.3. NA said AFAG had written to TS regarding amendments to timetables. He questioned what mandate they had to do so. AFAG are aware that all timetable requests will be routed via AFC at the appropriate time.

4.4. BC stated that S Bourne, AFAG Chair, had met via Zoom with A Campbell, Chair of Ferries Communities Board, asking on his own behalf, regarding increased fares for motorhomes. BC, also in the discussion, explained the decision was made by Transport Scotland who decided that it was equitable that vehicles pay for the space used. However, this increase meant that the rate was still lower than that being charged for commercial vehicles.

5.0 **Treasurer's Report**

5.1 As per SG, the current bank balance is £620.90.

6. Port Manager's Report

6.1 In CMcC's absence, TG reported as follows:

6.1.1 At the moment, the main challenges are crew shortages related to Covid and dealing with a single vessel. Currently, 10 staff at Brodick are self-isolating. FM said that 130 staff have been affected across the network.

6.1.2 The CI dry dock had been delayed by two days and will now return to service on 25 January. It was asked if the HI could be retained until this time.

Action: FM to report back.

6.1.3 It was requested that more services be provided for Lochranza and asked for the support of TG and FM.

6.1.4 SG enquired whose policy it was for the deep cleaning of the vessels. TG stated that it was CalMac. FM said that the clean was done in crew and passenger areas but will disappear in the future. BC asked if cleaning of crew quarters could not be done while the vessel was in transit. FM replied it was required to accommodate crew break in times.

6.1.5 SG requested that text communications for cancellations cease using the vessel's name and quote sailing times only.

Action: TG to enquire.

7. Date of Next Meeting

7.1 The date of the next meeting will be held on 14 February 2022 at 7.30pm. The method will be decided on the Covid regulations at that time.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 KG stated he had had a conversation with K Hobbs and G Dey. AFAG are still pushing for the introduction of a catamaran. CMAL have stated that the vessel does not meet any of the required specifications.

8.1.2 KG also stated that he had had many requests from AFAG but concluded there were no issues that the AFC had not previously raised.

8.1.3 IT stated that, if the issue regarding the 07:00 sailing cannot be resolved as expressed above this may require to be escalated to G Dey.

9. Close

9.1 The meeting closed at 9.55pm.

Signed
Iain Thomson,
Chair, Isle of Arran Ferry Committee

Date

15th February 2022.