

Isle of Arran Ferry Committee Meeting held on Monday 9 May 2022 at 7.30 pm at the Ormidale Pavilion

Present:

I Thomson, Haulage (Chair)
A Dobson, Business (Vice Chair)
B Calderwood, ACC (Secretary)
N Arthur, Independent Traveller
S Clark, Stagecoach
M Currie, ACVS
D Henderson, NFU

In Attendance:

D Burke, CalMac
T Gore, CalMac
A Hood, CalMac

1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly D Burke, Commercial Director, and A Hood, Head of Customer Services. Apologies were received from R Betley, K Gibson, S Gilmore, C McCort and F MacRae.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 2.1 The adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2022 was proposed by SC and seconded by DH .

3. Open Actions and Updates

These had been circulated prior to the meeting. Updates were noted.

3.1 Livestock

This item will be removed from the Actions list but will continue to be monitored.

3.2 Brodick kiosk relocation

TG stated that there was no update. CMAL had confirmed that this was CalMac's sole responsibility. The issue of traffic backing on to the road was raised once again. An example was given from last week where vehicles were queuing back to the bank. The committee asked why the kiosk could not be manned earlier, both at Brodick and Ardrossan where it was also causing problems despite having two windows.

Action: TG to investigate and propose solution ahead of summer volumes.

3.3 Booking/ticketing system

The introduction of Ar Turas is now scheduled for October. Further engagement to be undertaken with AFC.

3.4 0700 sailing

This item still requires to be resolved. Update is required on timing for replacement of final fenders. This sailing is important to the provision of services to the island and cannot be ignored with better weather reducing the incidents.

3.5 Brodick port resilience

CMAL have confirmed that monitoring is ongoing. The buoy deployed to gather information will have collected the required one year's data at the end of June. Pursuant to this, an independent consultant will examine and analyse the information and make recommendations. This analysis will take approximately three months. CMAL will arrange a further discussion to present the findings and discuss possible solutions.

3.6 Weather disruptions

Further examples of where potential disruption notice had been published and conditions at ports were at variance. This has caused cancellations and uncertainty for customers including CalMac MD. Further discussions within CalMac are planned to review possible revisions.

3.7 Patent transfer

TG has a meeting with RB and CMcC this Friday to discuss. As an aside, given that RB has not attended several AFC meetings, AD suggested it might be prudent to ask her to provide updates to AFC.

3.8 Regarding private cars being given priority over commercial vehicles at times of cancellations, a scenario meeting will be scheduled between Brodick and Ardrossan port managers. AFC have provided a few examples.

Action: BC to arrange suitable date for meeting.

3.9 Tidal restrictions at Claonaig

In light of CalMac's predicted cancellations, CMAL do regular checks and can see no reason for cancellations. IT asked of TG that CalMac explain the reason for cancellations and exactly what the problem is at Claonaig

Action: TG

3.10 Replacement seating

TG stated that the replacement of the outdoor seating on the CI is on schedule to be completed by the end of May. Delay was due to late delivery of frames.

4. **Correspondence**

4.1 In view of the recent local council elections, NAC had contacted AFC and asked whether we preferred the elected councillor or a NAC officer be appointed to the AFC. It was determined that this was within the purview of NAC to decide. AFC requested that the rep should provide an effective flow of information between AFC and all sectors of NAC in a balanced format as AFC is apolitical.

4.2 Prior to the AGM, member groups were requested to confirm their appointment of a member to the AFC from their representative bodies. MC has already been designated by ACVS.

5. **Constitution**

5.1 The role of the Independent Traveller has been more clearly defined. This, together with minor changes, had been accepted and incorporated. Therefore, the constitution has been adopted.

6. **Treasurer's Report**

6.1 Whilst not at the meeting, SG reported that the current balance was £437.99.

7. **Port Manager's Report**

7.1 TG reported that the demolition works of the old pier are ongoing and progressing well. Work expected to take approximately six months.

7.2 In light of the Ardrossan port manager, D Lockhart, on secondment for three months, Katie Denham from the Brodick office has temporarily undertaken the position.

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

8.1 The date of the next meeting is revised to 20 June 2022 at 7.00pm in the Ormidale Pavilion. This will commence with the AGM followed by the normal monthly meeting.

9. Any Other Business

9.1 AH provided a visual presentation of CalMac's proposed changes to its terms and conditions regarding fees to be incurred regarding amendments to bookings, cancellations etc. These are currently under consideration and views are being sought from eight island communities. Because of the volume of "no shows" (188301 across the network) CalMac had determined that this needed to be addressed.

A discussion, at times very heated, ensued. The salient points from this were:

- It was inappropriate to introduce the penalties before the introduction of the new booking system if at all.
- Persistent "offenders" should be identified instead of penalising everyone.
- Scale of penalties were considered disproportionate to the "offence. "Sledgehammer to crack a nut" was the opinion of the committee.
- Scepticism as to the figures provided and the ability to accurately reflect customer traveling on other sailing.
- Why only private vehicles and not commercials which could prevent the usage of mezzanine decks thus limiting capacity significantly.
- Situation has not been helped by changes to CalMac's policy following cancelations where high demand often results in displaced customers unable to travel for several days. These revisions do not address this.
- No attempt from CalMac to take any action on "no shows" even on a sample basis.
- Everything geared to penalise customers with no consideration given to compensation for customers whose travel was interrupted.
- CalMac needed to manage capacity better.
- This will cause further negative feedback to an organisation already considered poor for customer service.
- Bureaucracy in management will be immense.
- Community engagement time was felt to be inappropriate.

DB and AH stated that the purpose of this exercise was to garner islands' views which will be considered in determining the final result. AFC suggested that the matter should be held until after the introduction of Ar Turas and review data from an improved booking system which would also provide traceability to "offenders".

Action: AFC to respond to CalMac with initial views and seek further engagement prior to any decision.

10. Close

10.1 The meeting closed at 10.20pm.

Signed  Date 22/06/22

I Thomson
Chair, Isle of Arran Ferry Committee