

Isle of Arran Ferry Committee Meeting held on Monday 8 August 2022 at 7.30 pm at the Ormidale Pavilion

Present:

I Thomson, Haulage (Chair)
B Calderwood, ACC (Secretary)
S Gilmore, Tourism (Treasurer)
N Arthur, Independent Traveller
T Billings, NAC Councillor
S Clark, Stagecoach
M Currie, ACVS
D Henderson, NFU
C Reeves, Business
A Weir, NHS

In Attendance:

T Gore, CalMac
F MacRae, CalMac
D McKillop, CalMac

1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Don McKillop, new Area Operations Manager for the Clyde, and Ailsa Weir, deputising for R Betley. Apologies were received from R Betley, D Burke and K Gibson.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 2.1 The adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2022 was proposed by NA and seconded by SG.

3. Open Actions and Updates

- 3.1 Prior to this agenda item, the circumstances surrounding the events and disruptions over the past Saturday and Sunday were discussed at length. The major reason for the CI's inability to sail was that a rope from a creel pot had tangled in the boat's propeller.

- 3.1.1 SG stated that the situation at Brodick pier on Saturday evening was chaotic and fraught. Passengers were being given mixed messages from CalMac staff as to whether they would be able to board what was thought to be the last sailing of the day. She stated that it might have been more expedient to issue a form of "embarkation ticket" to assure passengers and assess the number of passengers to be carried. Ultimately, all passengers were accommodated. She also took the opportunity to thank the Ardrossan port staff for their diligence and cooperation.

- 3.1.2 FM recognised the issues and admitted that they were never quite right and are being reviewed.

- 3.1.3 The committee asked why it was necessary to deploy divers from the mainland when the island had divers who could have viewed the tangle on the propeller and perhaps may have been able to remove it. FM stated that they can only use approved divers. AFC then asked why they were only available on the Sunday. FM said that they would not have been able to make the last sailing and had been despatched as quickly as possible. The AFC asked what the criteria was for approval. When FM replied regarding the regulations,. The AFC said it was unlikely that any Arran divers could comply given the strict requirements and perhaps consideration could be given to equipping local resources. IT said that it appeared that red tape was overriding common sense.

- 3.1.4 BC queried the situation with MCA approval for Largs vessels. FM said that they had only done half. Question asked if the list had been prioritised for the Largs vessels most likely to deputise at Lochranza.

Action: FM to provide update on divers.

Action: FM to provide update on MCA certification and priority.

3.2 Updates had been circulated previously. Because of the time expended on the above, a brief summary was given as follows:

3.2.1 To alleviate traffic issues.

a) Brodick kiosk will open for the next sailing almost immediately after departure of the previous sailing. There will be a slight delay because of the need to process and collect paperwork and tickets for the next sailing. However, it was noted that cars were still backing on to main road on Saturday and Sunday. CMcC had informed staff of the new process but, perhaps, some may not be conforming to the procedure.

Action: TG to follow up.

b) At Ardrossan, TG and the port manager have investigated and Ardrossan kiosk will operate both sides for check-in at peak season and at times of disruption. In the quieter periods of the season it will revert to one sided.

3.2.2 IT queried the situation regarding a freight van being available on both ferries for the transportation of small goods. FM stated that it could not be done every day. IT said that former practice was to hire a van during summer period. FM said he will investigate. CR stated it was not always CalMac's fault that papers were late in arriving rather the fault lay with the distributor.

Action: FM to report back.

Action: CR to liaise with Hazel at Pirnmill to quantify the paper supplier's failures.

3.2.3 IT highlighted the situation with the 2200 sailing on a Saturday. Information showed that about a third had been cancelled/rescheduled, in most cases, to 2000 hours. FM stated it was a combination of berth availability and weather. IT said there was a perception that the crew just did not want to do it. He further added that, if this was an ongoing situation, people would not use it thus giving CalMac further reason not to sail as timetabled.

3.2.4 Replacement of fenders at Ardrossan

IT had emailed and phoned PPG MD. J McSparran of PPG had assured him that everything was on schedule. However, today IT had been notified there was a delay. He queried why no one from CalMac is asking PP. FM stated that there are weekly meetings but PP are not volunteering any information. IT said he was aware that CMAL had offered replacement fenders from their stock which potentially would fit and if PP are not cooperating, the problem needs to be escalated.

4 Correspondence

4.1 Regarding the Net Zero Commission, the committee intend to meet with AFC. The dates cannot be confirmed as yet but is likely to be on resumption of parliamentary business. They are particularly interested in the areas of health and social, young people's views and AFC data. Their online survey will close on 26 August.

4.2 An "Islands Connectivity" meeting has been proposed for 22 August on Arran with arrangements to be confirmed.

4.3 Troon timetables

Discussions are ongoing and options are being narrowed. CalMac propose to visit at the end of August for consultation. SG asked why it is taking so long. BC stated that several options were being prepared and public transport connections examined. It was expected that an engagement session would be announced shortly. IT stated that, given the current situation with the fenders at Ardrossan, a move to Troon may need to be considered and that a contingency timetable is needed soon.

4.4 An email from CMAL regarding the tidal restrictions at Claonaig which detailed their findings and their ongoing plans had been received.

Action: BC to re-circulate to members.

5 Treasurer's Report

5.1 SG reported that the current balance was £651.22.

6. Port Manager's Report

6.1 The PAS problem at Brodick has been resolved and FM was informed it should not recur

7. Date of Next Meeting

7.1 The date of the next meeting is 12 September 2022 at 7.30pm in the Ormidale Pavilion.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 IT had examined the AFC constitution and had ascertained that the position of Chair did not require any affiliation to a particular group. Therefore, he proposed to nominate Struan Armitage to represent the haulage sector. IT said he was willing to remain as Chair. Both suggestions met with the approval of AFC members who expressed no objections.

8.3 DMcK welcomed the opportunity to attend the meeting. He gave a brief resumé of his past career. He has been with CalMac for three years based in Oban and was previously in other forms of transport, mainly airlines.

9. Close

9.1 The meeting closed at 9.48pm.

Signed *I Thomson* Date *14/09/22*
I Thomson
Chair, Isle of Arran Ferry Committee