

## Islay & Jura Transport Group

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 10.40am at Islay Airport Meeting commenced at 10.45am after a move to Airport Fire station due to delayed departure of plane.

**Present:** Jim Porteous (JP) ICC; Rachel Whyte (RW) ICC; Niall Colthart (NC) HIAL; Maureen Mackinnon (MMK) Transport User; Pat McGrann (PMG) ICC; Anne Horn (AH) Councillor; Alyson MacGillivray (AMG) SID; Mike Senior (MS) Seniors Forum; Michael Donnelly (MD) Ileach; Martin Arnold A&BC; Marta Zawadzka (MZ) A&BC; Christine Todd (CT) A&BC

**Apologies for absence:** Ian Ritchie (IR) Loganair; Andrew Burnham (AB) Islay Baptist Church; Jura Community Council; Ker Corbett (KC) City Link; Jean Knowles (JK); Robin Currie (RC) Councillor; Martin McWilliam (MMW) Hebridean Air; Liz Renfrew

**1. Welcome and apologies:** JP (Convener) warmly welcomed those present paying particular thanks to Niall Colthart for his generous hospitality. Special thanks also to Martin Arnold and his colleagues Christine and Marta.

Apologies for non-attendance at this meeting were received and have been noted above.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting:** The minutes from previous meeting held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019 were distributed, read and with a couple of minor spelling typos were proposed as true and correct by NC with JP seconding this motion.

**3. Matters arising:** Mundells Ltd contract due to expire 2020. **MA/MZ will send us a template for distribution and publication to allow the community to communicate their desires/aspirations/ concerns re public travel on Islay.**

**AMG requested a copy of above.**

Seasonality will be instrumental in the formulation of new timetables.

Port Charlotte bus shelter (opposite health centre) will be in place for before end of 2019 or early 2020.

Bus stop at Ceol na Fairge (Kilarrow) – AMG reported the lack of shelter for children waiting for school bus. Means the children often arrive at school wet and cold. **Discussion took place and MA/MZ will look into this.** PMG stated that ICAG (Islay Community Action Group) may be able to help when the pathway from Bowmore village to ICCI is formed.

Charlotte Street, Port Ellen bus stop – **MA/MZ will follow up as this is still not on site.**

**4. Bus services – M. Arnold, A&B Council, community transport officer.** Bus Shelter Requests; Islay Coaches/B Mundell Ltd; Jura Ferry; Hebridean Air Services – interim extension

MA formally introduced Marta Zawadzka who will be our new contact for transport matters and will be attending our future meetings.

3.30pm ferry departure – City Link often does not link up with this sailing and passengers have found that they arrive at Kennacraig to find ferry has departed. However, it is noted on CalMac web site that this particular service may NOT meet the ferry on time.

**Jura ferry & CalMac – No update on Jura ferry. Jura CC is anxious about connectivity with CalMac ferries. RW to forward email address of Jura CC to MZ.**

At present Hebridean Air is continuing flights to Islay but it is to be noted that it is commercial and NOT recognised as a formal public service. Previously when Hebridean Air left Colonsay at an earlier time they were able to link up with Loganair on Islay for forward flights. This is not now possible.

**MD suggested that CalMac ask passengers (over tannoy) if there is anyone requiring onward travel information for taxi or bus services. MA/MZ to follow up.**

**MMK requested that bus times from Kennacraig to Oban be included in new transport brochures. MA/MZ will follow up.**

**5. Air, Loganair - Performance Statistics, Cancellation of New Edinburgh Service, Timetable Glasgow Service, new aircraft, Glasgow Airport, passenger mobility and assistance.**

Ian Ritchie was unable to be present at the meeting due to an aircraft technical failure. JP asked to be minuted that Loganair had given no formal notice of withdrawal of the Edinburgh service. We had found this important information from a press release printed in the Ileach.

MA and NC also noted little consultation.

NC advised that Islay airport roster is based on first flight in and last flight out of airport.

JP acknowledged the meeting's disappointment that there had been a lack of community engagement from Loganair regarding the withdrawal of Edinburgh service.

MD made the point that there is no "drop down" menu for Edinburgh to Islay flight.

NC commented that Loganair have had outside financial pressures such as Air Traffic controllers not working overtime.

The consensus from the Transport Forum was that, "The Edinburgh – Islay service was not advertised as well or as widely as it could have been. To have found out only about the Edinburgh flight withdrawal from the local paper, was felt to be disrespectful."

The low uptake of Sumburgh/Benbecula flight was discussed. As with Islay a majority of locals use ferry travel in preference of air travel.

AMG pointed out that the reliability of plane v ferry travel for Glasgow/Edinburgh appointments was also a factor in low uptake.

New 48-seater plane should be more reliable. Tourists using midday flight reduces the impact on NHS patients travelling to and from appointments.

MMK commented that the new Loganair timetable does NOT connect with Islay public transport.

**Unanimous agreement by all those present was to ask Loganair for one of their decision makers to attend this forum to Provide more clarity regarding the decision to terminate the Edinburgh service and to try and improve the engagement process between service provider and community. JP to write to Ian Ritchie and Jonathan Hinkles with invite.**

## **6. Islay Airport, HIAL – Niall Colthart:**

NC stated that Islay Airport has 37 staff – the highest in many years. Two relief Air Traffic will complete training in October 2020 are included in the 37 totals.

Tim Smith moving into new role Barra/Tiree/Benbecula/Islay and Niall will take on extra role as Islay specific.

New snow clearing vehicle is ordered.

Two pods for staff are being implemented.

RW asked what are the emergency procedures (overnight sleeping arrangements) for passengers with no accommodation due to flight cancellation. NC is arranging Emergency Planning Group meeting and this will be on the agenda.

## **7. Ferries – ICCFC – Jim Porteous;**

The group have been working for weeks towards the 'Ferry Summit' on 16<sup>th</sup> Sept attended by Michael Russell, Brendan O'Hara, Donald Cameron and a variety of key stakeholders. The summit was aired on BBC Alba. This followed an Infrastructure Summit in 2018 and previous Ferry Summit in 2016.

Some actions from the previous Ferry Summit had been actioned

New Islay ferry design to be completed within six months and expected to be built four years from now. ICCFC has input to the process – requesting that crew accommodation should amongst other things be included.

Extra Summer sailings introduced from 2017.

Better system reporting was requested from CalMac. Improvements had exposed the major loss of car spaces due to cancelled block bookings. Distilleries 'silent seasons' now have to be taken into account.

Based on recent Distilleries' forecasts, Islay will need the equivalent of up to 12,000 MORE car spaces annually by 2022, compared against 2018. For every 1,000 car spaces lost, the Islay economy loses 1.62 million pounds revenue on accommodation, food and purchases, not including distilleries purchases.

Tourism growth is 4 to 5% per annum. Combining this with a progressive 33% increase from distilleries over the next 3 years will necessitate ferry capacity increases to be found from next year.

Proposal from ICCFC for a Night freight ferry - would not only provide extra capacity and ease the pressure on infrastructure but would also help to free up daytime space and reduce the risk of accidents caused by overtaking lorries.

Commonality within fleet of engines, fuel, lifeboats, spare parts will be looked at.

A full report and actions of ferry summit will be in next Ileaf. Pat McGrann and Anne Horn both expressed huge thanks to Islay McEachern and Jim Porteous for all their hard work in bringing together such a great event.

**8. Scottish Citylink Coaches Ltd – Ker Corbett:** Report held over till next meeting due to KC not in attendance

## **9. AOB:**

NC commented that Colonsay fish farm had not posted in Planning therefore not giving the opportunity to allow objections. This will affect Islay waters.

**10. Summary of actions agreed: For ease of reference these are noted above in red bold.**

**11. Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019 within Islay Airport at 10.40am

Meeting closed at 12.55pm.