

**Islay Community Council Meeting  
Minutes  
Service Point, Bowmore – 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 18:30**

Item		Action
1	<p><b>Present &amp; Apologies</b></p> <p><b>Present:</b> Garry MacLean (GML), Vice Convenor Islay McEachern (IME), Convenor Richard Mansbridge (RM) Scott Currie (SC) Tom Skinner (TS) Colin Fraser (CF), Joint Treasurer Frazer Campbell (FWC), Joint Treasurer Councillor Dougie McFadzean (DMF) Grant Deans – Police Scotland (GD) Meghan McLoone - Police Scotland (MML) Lucy Schwind (LS) Minute Taker</p> <p><b>Apologies/Absent:</b> Jim Porteous (JP), Secretary Garry MacLean (GML), Vice Convenor Jim MacCalman (JMC) Alyson MacGillivray (AMG) Chris Abell (CA) Sandy Taylor (ST) Councillor Alastair Redman (AR) Councillor Anne Horn (AH)</p> <p><b>Members of the public:</b> Thomas Rumgay Jean Knowles Brian Palmer Greg Morrison</p>	
2	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b> None</p>	
3	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2026</b></p> <p>The minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by RM and seconded by SC. It was noted that as the previous meeting in January was cancelled, there may be a need to reduce the gap between meetings to ensure</p>	
4	<p><b>Matters Arising/Action Points</b></p> <p><b>Waste Bin at Uiskentuie</b> DMF – requested this stay as an action until the bin is back in situ. He has been promised a weekly update from A&amp;B Council. (June) <i>February Update: DMF has been assured that there will be a bin in place by the beginning of the summer season. The location of the bin remains unclear due to recent erection of fencing and gates. DMF continues to investigate.</i></p> <p><b>Julian Green Update/Flooding at Port Ellen</b> <i>December Update:</i> <i>JP: AH and AR may need to be escalated beyond the community council.</i> <i>AH: attended an area committee meeting today. The situation is more complex than just clearing out the pipes/drains. Mark Calder (A&amp;B Council) has been doing work on this, and AH will put them in touch with CA and ST.</i> <i>AR – at the recent MAKI committee he stressed the lack of action regarding flooding, lighting etc across the area.</i> <i>February Update: AH unable to attend the meeting. Action carried forward.</i> <i>CA has provided a detailed report on the flooding in the Port Ellen area. The other area of concern in Port Ellen is in front of the Co-Op. This has been included in the report.</i></p> <p><b>Islay Community Action Plan (ICAP)</b> GML to complete statistical analysis graphs/charts. Meeting to be held after this <i>February Update: GML unable to attend the meeting, action carried forward.</i></p> <p><b>Planning</b> JP – Laphroaig deforestation project. IME expressed concerns over road suitability for the amount of heavy traffic that will be generated for this project. ICC should request the council provides some detail regarding their plans to repair/maintain this</p>	<p>DMF</p> <p>AH</p> <p>GML</p>

	<p>road. IME understands that Laphroaig do intend to consult with the community on this project. AH/AR are happy to be included/involved and support this action with the council  <i>February Update: DMF will pick up this action with A&amp;B Council</i></p> <p><b>AOCB</b>  Mobile Library on Islay.  <i>December Update: AH advised that the role has been advertised x 2 but there are also issues with the van itself and she is now waiting for an update as to what is needed for the vehicle.</i>  <i>February Update: AH unable to attend the meeting, action carried forward</i></p> <p><i>Beach Cleaning: AH felt that GRAB was keen to have community work for people undertaking community service and will chase up again and ask for a timescale and logistics.</i>  <i>February Update: GRAB – funding availability is being investigated by AH JP/IME to drop an email to AH for an update.</i></p> <p>JT – it appears that Kilarrow Centre is now charging for use by some clubs. AR/AH to have a look at this.  <i>February Update: Action remains in place to monitor</i></p>	<p>DMF</p> <p>AH</p> <p>AH</p> <p>AR/AH</p>
5	<p><b>Police Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PC McLoone informed the committee that in January they received 33 calls. There have been 2 people reported for driving without insurance and other road traffic offences, some damage offences reported. 2 thefts reported, also assault and threatening and abusive behaviour. Two instances of driving under the influence.</li> <li>• As a result of correspondence in January regarding speeding concerns in the Ballygrant area, they have made themselves present and feel this has had a positive impact.</li> <li>• Staffing wise - George and Meghan will now stay in post until July/August as their secondment has been extended. They also have another new member of the team joining in May (permanent) and have secured two houses for police accommodation which will help them offer more permanent positions on Islay.</li> <li>• Due to an instance reported on Hogmanay they have increased licenced premises checks in local pubs.</li> <li>• They also have regular patrols on hot spots for 'recreational driving' and anti-social behaviour and have been actively engaging with individuals. They are planning some visits to the local high school regarding incidents which have occurred recent to reinforce safe driving.</li> </ul> <p>TS: Is there an update on staffing levels during Feis? Meghan unable to confirm at this stage.  DMF: Raised concerns regarding speeding in Ballygrant. Greg is attending the meeting as he has a key interest in this. DMF advised that A&amp;B Council will be looking at speed limits in 'built up areas' with a view to implementing reducing speed limits.  RM: noted that there are no 'count down boards' to prepare the driver for the reduction in speed when you reach Ballygrant.  IME: Solar powered signs which flash the speed limit are very effective. Could we get some sponsorship for these signs (about £4k per pair). IME has received some information recently which he will circulate.  SC: Will check out the Community Benefit Fund with TS. It may also be worth approaching Dunlossit Estate.</p>	<p>IME</p> <p>TS/SC</p>

	DMF: There may be funding opportunities for infrastructure projects to be delivered in 2026/27. Correspondence has been submitted to ICC requesting expressions of interest	
6	<b>Councillor A Horn</b> Apologies received	
7	<p><b>Councillor D McFadzean</b> Update from DMF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has been attending regular budget planning meetings since November 2025. The funding allocated was below that anticipated which has necessitated some fine tuning. He is going through the same process for the HSC Partnership budget as well as actively lobbying for as much additional funding as possible.</li> <li>• Has been meeting with Scottish Government Ministers regarding additional funding</li> <li>• West Highland Housing – the allocation of new homes in Port Charlotte is still awaiting dates for handover which has been further delayed. They should know by end of this week when access will be provided.</li> <li>• Has joined the football club as a trustee</li> <li>• Helping Greg and others with speeding concerns in Ballygrant and has been in touch with Police Scotland regarding this</li> <li>• The road surface at Ballygrant has been reinspected and is being resurfaced by the contractor (has been classed as a failed project). This is scheduled to take place when the weather improves.</li> <li>• Electricity disputes – supporting and advocating for local residents where bills have increased exponentially</li> <li>• Has been dealing with lots of housing support issues. People are still struggling with the current cost of living crises</li> <li>• Educational issues, in particular the behaviour of young people in and around the high school.</li> <li>• Supporting some social work cases</li> <li>• The Environmental Warden was on the island this week and will be returning on 1<sup>st</sup> March. They have been investigating several abandoned vehicles/boats/engines which have been dumped in various locations. Enforcement stickers will be applied and they are returning in March to attempt to remove these objects.</li> <li>• There is an emerging issue at Port Charlotte regarding coastal erosion between the Port Charlotte Hotel and the new build. Approximately 2-3 meters of coastline has been lost in the most recent storms. This could cause a major problem as there is a sewage pipe here which is gradually being exposed. He is hoping a community group will be formed to work towards a solution. He will be meeting with Scottish Water, although the land is privately owned which is complicating the situation.</li> <li>• New funding streams. DMF is trying to fast track funding for communities for capital expenditure. This includes funding of £2.2m from Crown Estates plus other funds as well.</li> </ul> <p>SC – there is a meeting about the Kilarrow hub next week. It is presumed that the plan is to shut down the centre and demolish the buildings to make way for an extended plot for new housing. It is expected that there will be a consultation with the community before this happens.</p> <p>RM – queried work being undertaken in Bruichladdich. DMF: this will be works for coastal defences as well as the footpath – different planning and funding for each project.</p>	
8	<b>Councillor A Redman</b>  AR summarised key elements of his monthly report. The full report is in Appendix A	

9	<p><b>Treasurer's Report</b> FC bank balance as of 26/1/26 £2714.00. There are 4 x cheques o/s to come off this and the ICAP money to be refunded.</p>	
10	<p><b>ICC Ferry Committee</b></p> <p>See Appendix B for the full report. This has been circulated by JP.</p> <p>RM: Read that the ferry cards are being discarded and there will be one combined card with bus cards. Is there a system in place at CalMac to recognise a 'bus pass' card/number at the booking end of the ferry system. IME to follow up.</p>	JP/ IME
11	<p><b>Islay Community Action Plan (ICAP)</b></p> <p>Work has been done to create the plan and are now just awaiting the report and implementation plan.</p>	
12	<p><b>Planning Reports</b></p> <p>SC: 2 x large planning applications have been approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The footpath from Bowmore to Bridgend (maps of the plan are available on the planning website).</li> <li>Ballivicar Peat Extraction application has been approved. This is a 15 year project and an annual report will need to be submitted, there is a limit of 2,000 tons per annum and other environmental restrictions.</li> </ul> <p>There are also a few new planning applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ardbeg distillery for repair to the sea wall and pier.</li> <li>Solar lights around Port Ellen Community Hub – between the hub and the campervan area.</li> <li>Solar panels for the swimming pool and Donald Caskie Square</li> <li>Old Bank of Scotland premises: plans for 2 offices and a holiday let.</li> <li>ICCI to extend the kitchen</li> <li>IDI for change of frontage and internal layout for the old tourist information office</li> </ul>	
13	<p><b>CNI (Carbon Neutral Islands) Project</b></p> <p>TS: The project will continue for a further year but there is a reduction in the amount of capital money available for the project. Other sources of revenue are being explored. They have secured funding to double the solar array at Castlehill and this should commence in the next 4 weeks.</p> <p>As there isn't any guarantee on future funding, they are also exploring other avenues such as geothermal.</p> <p>CNI held its first domestic energy surgery at the end of January which was very successful. They have another two planned for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026 (one at the Gaelic Centre and one at Port Ellen).</p>	
14	<p><b>Bowmore Hall Update</b></p> <p>DMF So far, council still sitting on finances. Public Procurement Scotland for notes of interest. 9 received. Generated 2 x tenders before the 4 deadline. These are now with the QS as they are over the funding available. £425K. Going to see if can get to within the budget. Then scoring panel to review this. No dates yet as waiting on the QS. Hoping to get work started March/April and plan to open by Christmas. Both contractors who have submitted have a 'footprint' on the island, unable to say who they are.</p> <p>IME –noted that the timescale for tendering was very short.</p>	
15	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fencing and locked gates at Uiskentuie – DMF has been involved in this.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Water – have given notice that they are closing the high road for approx. 3 months – has been circulated. Starting 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Temp parking restrictions on shore street in Bowmore to accommodate the additional traffic.</li> <li>• Collection of evidence for a paper on roads to make a case for additional funding as roads are continuing to deteriorate. CF noted that the condition of the roads was also raised with the transport minister at the recent meeting with ICC. There will also be additional traffic going to Port Askaig when the port is closed at Port Ellen, will put additional demands on the network</li> <li>• Speeding at Ballygrant – discussed earlier</li> <li>• Report submitted from ST and CA on flooding in Port Ellen</li> <li>• Bus shelter replacement at Port Charlotte – looking at disabled access and therefore needs a new shelter. This will involve removing a section of wall and using some space in the graveyard. No comments from committee members.</li> <li>• Proposal of new powers for Community Councils is being lead by the Isle of Mull, who have suggested a petition. ICC will need to prepare their thoughts on this. IME to recirculate the correspondence.</li> <li>• Licencing board – application for a licence for Furrows End, Bruichladdich. No objections.</li> <li>• Engagement with Loganair – JP/IME will be meeting with them to see how can work together moving forward. Will update once this is agreed</li> <li>• Emergency Action Plan – who is going to lead/chair this (was this going to be led by the Police)? MML and GD to take this action and find out who is dealing with this.</li> </ul>	<p>IME</p> <p>MML GD</p>
16	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RM has removed the final Covid sign in Bridgend</li> </ul>	
17	<p><b>Date/venue for Next Meeting</b> Next meeting 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 18:30, Service Point, Bowmore</p>	

## **Appendix A – Councillor A Redman – report**

### **Council Budget Settlement – Argyll and Bute Short-Changed**

I wish to highlight serious concerns regarding the recent budget settlement set by the Scottish Executive, which has resulted in Argyll and Bute Council receiving the smallest proportional funding increase of any council in Scotland.

This decision fails to properly reflect the real cost of delivering services across large rural and island areas, where transport, infrastructure and operational costs are significantly higher.

While I am not part of the current council administration, I do believe the administration should have challenged this outcome more robustly and made stronger representations on behalf of our communities.

The impact is very real. The council is facing a projected budget gap of around £15 million next year, placing further pressure on essential services including roads, education, social care, housing and local infrastructure.

Argyll and Bute's geography and dispersed communities create unique demands that funding arrangements must take into account more seriously than they currently do.

I will continue to raise these concerns directly with the Scottish Executive and the council, and to press for funding decisions that are fair, realistic and in the best interests of island and rural communities.

### **Scottish Executive U-Turn on Rural Policy**

I note the recent decision by the Scottish Executive to reverse course on proposals affecting deer management and rural sporting activity following significant concern raised by those working in the sector.

This episode highlights the importance of listening to rural communities before policies are introduced. Rural industries support employment, land management and local economies across Scotland, and poorly considered decisions risk undermining livelihoods.

The fact that ministers were forced into a public reversal demonstrates the strength of feeling among rural workers and communities, and reinforces the need for government to properly understand the realities of rural Scotland before introducing major policy changes.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.scottishdailyexpress.co.uk/news/politics/snp-forced-humiliating-u-turn-illogical-35123456>

I will continue to support policies that recognise the value of rural employment and practical land management, rather than decisions driven by ideology.

### **Bowmore to Bridgend Footpath Approved**

It's good to see long-awaited progress on the proposed Bowmore to Bridgend footpath, with planning permission now finally granted after a process that has taken nearly three years.

Improving safe connections between communities is important infrastructure for residents, families and visitors alike, and this project has been discussed locally for a considerable period of time.

While I welcome the decision, it is also fair to say that the length of time taken to reach this point has been far from ideal.

Projects that deliver clear community benefit should not be subjected to unnecessary delay.

I have consistently supported improvements to local infrastructure where they strengthen connectivity and safety, and I hope momentum can now be maintained so that residents begin to see tangible progress on the ground.

You can read more here:

<https://news.stv.tv/west-central/five-kilometre-on-islay-granted-planning-permission>

Positive news — but a reminder that communities deserve timely decisions as well as the right ones.

### **Road Gritting and Winter Conditions – Kintyre and the Islands Ward**

During January, a number of residents contacted me regarding hazardous road and pavement conditions during periods of cold weather across the ward. These reports highlight the importance of timely and effective gritting in maintaining safety for pedestrians and drivers.

I raised specific locations and concerns with Argyll and Bute Council's Roads Department as they were reported. While some sections were treated, other areas required further attention, and I continued to press for improved coverage where this was necessary.

Concerns were also raised regarding gritting coverage on routes in the south of Islay, including the road between Port Ellen and Bowmore and routes towards The Oa and surrounding areas. I asked for clarification on coverage and for these routes to be treated as a priority during icy conditions.

I also raised concerns regarding dangerous ice forming on both roads and pavements in residential areas, including Church Way in Port Ellen, and requested that these locations be included in routine treatment plans.

Feedback from residents remains extremely valuable in identifying problem areas quickly, and I am grateful to those who continue to report issues as they arise. I will continue to press for consistent standards and reliable winter maintenance across the ward.

### **Concerns Regarding Environmental Changes in Bowmore**

Concerns were raised with me regarding the removal of grassed areas and their replacement with hard surfacing within a residential area of Bowmore.

Residents expressed frustration about the lack of advance communication and questioned whether appropriate procedures had been followed, particularly given the location sits within a conservation area.

Public confidence depends on transparency and consistency. It is important that communities are properly informed about environmental or infrastructure changes that affect their neighbourhoods, and that processes applied to residents are equally applied to public authorities.

I have raised these concerns with the council and will continue to seek clarification where necessary.

### **Public Bin Capacity and Waste Concerns**

Concerns have been raised with me regarding overflowing public bins in a number of locations across the ward.

Overflowing bins create avoidable environmental problems, detract from the appearance of our communities and can pose hygiene concerns, particularly during busier periods or where collection schedules do not match local demand.

Reliable waste collection and adequate bin capacity are basic services that residents and visitors rightly expect. I have raised these concerns with the council and will continue to press for practical solutions, including reviewing collection frequency and bin provision where necessary.

### **Road Defects and Immediate Safety Concerns**

I have also been contacted by residents regarding specific road defects that presented an immediate risk to vehicles and road users.

On one such occasion, concerns were raised about a developing dip and surface failure on a local road, which had worsened following wet weather and temporary repair works. Residents reported that the defect was difficult to see when filled with water and posed a risk of vehicle damage.

I raised this directly with the Roads Department, providing details and photographs supplied by residents, and requested that the location be inspected and made safe as a priority. I also asked that the quality and durability of recent repairs be reviewed to reduce the likelihood of repeat failures.

These incidents highlight the importance of not only responding quickly to defects, but ensuring repairs are robust and properly monitored.

I will continue to encourage residents to report emerging hazards and will raise urgent safety concerns directly with officers where necessary.

## **Increase in Funeral Costs**

I wish to highlight concerns regarding the recent increase in funeral charges, which have risen by approximately 15%.

Funeral services are essential services that families must rely upon during some of the most difficult moments of their lives. Increases of this scale inevitably place additional financial pressure on households at a time when they are already facing emotional strain and significant personal expense.

I have written to the Leader of the Council and the Depute Leader to raise these concerns directly and to seek clarification regarding the rationale behind the increase.

It is important that affordability, sensitivity and fairness remain central considerations when reviewing charges for services of this nature, particularly given the financial pressures many households are already experiencing.

## **Roads, Potholes, Road Surface Condition and Flooding**

Concerns regarding potholes, deteriorating road surfaces and recurring flooding continue to be raised with me across the ward. These issues affect safety, accessibility and vehicle damage, particularly on island roads where diversionary routes are limited.

I continue to receive reports of worsening potholes and surface failure, alongside ongoing problems with standing water following heavy rainfall. Poor drainage and blocked gullies contribute to repeat flooding in the same locations.

I am pressing the Roads Department not only for reactive repairs, but for more sustainable solutions involving drainage improvements and planned resurfacing. Reliable and resilient road infrastructure is essential for island communities, and I will continue to push for long-term improvements.

## **Ferry Cancellations and Ongoing Disruption**

Ferry cancellations continue to have a significant and damaging impact on residents, businesses and essential services across the ward.

While adverse weather is sometimes unavoidable, there is increasing frustration locally at the frequency of cancellations linked to operational and vessel-related issues. These ongoing problems place additional strain on island communities that have limited transport alternatives.

The scale of disruption is clear. Across Argyll and Bute and the wider west coast network, more than 16,000 ferry journeys have been cancelled due to technical faults over the past three years alone. This level of disruption is unacceptable for communities that depend on ferries as lifeline services.

I have raised these concerns directly in meetings and correspondence, emphasising the need for improved reliability, clearer communication and effective contingency planning. Front-line ferry crews and port staff continue to work hard in difficult circumstances and deserve recognition, but persistent failures at a higher level remain unacceptable.

Ferries are lifeline services for island communities. I will continue to press for meaningful action to reduce disruption and improve reliability across the network.

## **Air Services and Connectivity**

In January, I attended an Air Service Roundtable Meeting online, where I relayed concerns raised by residents who rely on air services for work, medical travel and wider connectivity.

Clear and consistent communication is essential, but it must be matched by real and visible progress. I made the point that local partners, government and the Scottish Executive must avoid becoming overly focused on meetings and process, and instead concentrate on delivering practical results.

Our island communities need action, not endless discussion. I will continue to press for outcomes that improve reliability, confidence and connectivity.

## **Opposition to Proposed Public Toilet Closures**

I remain firmly opposed to the proposed closure of public toilets across Argyll and Bute.

Public toilets are a basic but essential service, particularly for older residents, families and those with health conditions. On islands such as Islay, where alternatives are limited, their removal would have a disproportionate and damaging impact.

I will continue to oppose any proposals that undermine accessibility, dignity and public safety.

### **Opposition to the Closure of Council Service Points**

I am strongly opposed to proposals that would see the closure or reduction of council service points.

Many residents continue to depend on face-to-face access for housing, council tax and benefits. Increased reliance on online systems risks excluding those who require direct assistance.

I will continue to press for fair funding and accessible local services.

### **Opposition to Proposed School Clustering**

I remain opposed to proposals to cluster schools, reflecting concerns shared by parents and community members.

While collaboration can be beneficial, formal clustering risks distancing decision-making from local communities and weakening accountability, particularly in island and rural settings.

Any changes must put pupils, families and communities first.

### **ASN Provision and Changes to Support**

Concerns regarding Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision continue to be raised with me by families seeking appropriate and timely classroom support.

Delays, inconsistent provision and lack of clarity are placing additional pressure on children, parents and schools.

I will continue to press for ASN support that is properly resourced and focused on real outcomes.

### **Social Housing and Local Need**

Housing pressures remain a major concern across the ward. Residents continue to raise issues regarding availability, property condition and long waiting times.

In island communities, limited housing stock and rising costs make these challenges more acute. I continue to raise these issues with relevant bodies and will keep pushing for housing policies that prioritise genuine local need.

### **Ongoing Commitment to Local Residents**

I will continue to work hard for residents across my ward throughout the year, without fear or favour.

My priority is to put local people first, above political parties, council administration or opposition group interests. I will continue to speak up, challenge where necessary and advocate strongly for island and rural communities.

## Appendix B – ICC Ferry Committee Update

ICCFC - last regular meetings 6<sup>th</sup> Jan and 5<sup>th</sup> Feb. Draft Minutes to be posted in ICC website.  
Other meetings: 5 Dec, JP FCB meeting; 8 Dec, Clyde, Kintyre & Islands FSG meeting, not attended by ICCFC; 17 Dec, IME/JP workshop with CalMac & Haskoning re Port Askaig traffic management; 18 Dec, IME/JP meeting with Transport Scotland re fares - Oban & Kennacraig. 5 Feb, half hour meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and 12<sup>th</sup> Feb, JP attendance at CalMac Customer Steering Group.

Key issues include:

Since the last meeting, a number of sailings were cancelled/diverted due to weather.

On Sun, 18 Jan, all sailings were cancelled due to a generator issue for Finlaggan.

The first two sailings on Mon 17<sup>th</sup>, 07.00 ex KC and 09.45 ex PE were also cancelled pending repairs.

Fixed late am on Mon and the ship resumed service with the 13.00 ex KC. (ICCFC contacted CalMac on Sun and again on Mon am and followed up by writing to the Cabinet Secretary, Jenni Minto, Duncan Mackison and others to demand a solution. It was agreed that if the vessel was not sorted same morning, CalMac would send Isle of Arran.

Block Bookings - CalMac introduced a tightening of their management process from 20<sup>th</sup> October, to help enable better use of available capacity. This has coincided with a downturn in distillery production, thus lower volumes but CalMac has reported an overall improvement in block bookings take up and control, increasing since August, from 53%, to 64% in September, 65% in October and 78% in November. Although this slipped to only 64% in Dec, due to a 2 week distilleries closure not being considered, CalMac has said they will address this for December 2026. Target is 80%.

Bookings system. The long awaited fix for the unwieldy Islay 2-port booking system for ports staff is now expected to be included in CalMac's June amendment update. Former Waitlist procedures are under review, with Islay and Little Minch due to be used as pilots to test a revised process which CalMac is planning during a four week period in April/May - further discussion due.

New vessels. 'Isle of Islay' was handed over to CMAL by the ship yard on Thu 15<sup>th</sup> January and has sailed for the UK via Gibraltar, Almeria and Coruna. The ship is due to berth initially at Inchgreen, Greenock in the UK and all being well, is expected to be able to join service by end of March. CalMac and CMAL have said they will include ICCFC in discussions regarding her introduction to the Islay community.

The report which CalMac were expecting in late January from independent consultants, Haskoning, regarding marshalling and parking areas and traffic control measures at Port Askaig has been delayed until February. (ICCFC attended a workshop on the subject with Haskoning and CalMac in December).

Funding for the required development of Port Ellen port has yet to be agreed. ICCFC asked the Cab Sec at their meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> August. According to a variety of sources, the outlook currently seems optimistic, with a possibility of commencement in May or June. We also asked the Cab Sec about additional funding for A&BC to assist with road improvement between Port Ellen and Port Askaig during the estimated two year closure of Port Ellen to ferry traffic. We additionally stressed the need to rebuild confidence through a good and reliable service, without again reducing to single vessel after this winter.

Winter 2025/6. Current timetable is based on Finlaggan single vessel but with Isle of Islay to be added when she joins service. ICCFC have confirmed the need for the two vessels working together and have asked that the booking system is updated to include these as soon as possible. ICCFC has previously asked that calls at PE should be maintained by Finlaggan while this port remains open. ICCFC had also requested a second vessel to work with Finlaggan from the start until Isle of Islay joins the service but this was not agreed.

Summer 2026. ICCFC has requested a reliable two vessel service with timetables that enable travel to/from the island between early am and evenings to enable reasonable time for users to conduct their business in a single day. Also, adequate capacity to meet demand for all, and good public transport connectivity at either end, with a split of calls as near as possible to 50/50 while both Islay ports remain functional.

CalMac has agreed to add another vessel to the booking system for booking purposes during Finlaggan's drydock in April/May. They were unwilling to add Isle of Islay until it is actually delivered but conceded that their original proposal to base booking availability only on single vessel with Isle of Arran would be unworkable. So Lord of the Isles is currently programmed in for the 3-4 weeks concerned.

Winter 2026/7. CalMac has proposed to initiate discussions with ICCFC on this in the near future.

Other -

Ferries Community Board - At the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December, the chair, Angus Campbell, formally stepped down to take over as chair of HIE. A replacement chair for the FCB is being advertised. Two current members have also subsequently resigned from the board. There are still some board member vacancies.

DRAFT