

Islay Community Council

Draft Minute of meeting held on 18 August 2022, via Zoom video conferencing, 6.30pm

1. Present - Community Councillors: Islay McEachern - Convenor; Garry McLean - Vice Chair; Jim Porteous - Secretary; Calum Murray - Minute Secretary; Colin Fraser - Treasurer; Billy Sinclair; Frazer Campbell; Niall Colthart

Argyll & Bute Councillors: Dougie MacFadzean

Oban Times: Sandy McNeil

Education: Tracy Mayo; Alyson MacGillivray; Tina Cunningham

Public: Mike Senior; Pat McGrann

Apologies: Robin Currie

2. Declarations of interest:

None

3. Minutes and matters arising.

The Draft Minutes were adopted with no amendments.

Proposed: Calum Murray; Seconded: Billy Sinclair

Matters arising: no significant updates.

4. Police Report:

Nil

5. Councillor Currie report:

Not in attendance

6. Councillor McFadzean report:

Cllr McFadzean outlined his Council activities, relevant to Islay since the last meeting. These included: housing issues; potholes and signage; toilets closing early; joined ACHA board; homelessness; Jura ferry; council meetings; preparation for by-election; wind farms; appointed "children's champion. As a new councillor Mr MacFadzean tells us he is in a "whirlwind of learning"; complaints re Ardview Inn.

Pat McGrann outlined concerns about customer behaviour at the Ardview Inn. These included drinking outside the premises; bad language; fighting; noisy early hours dispersal

After police involvement some reduction of noise and crowds outside.

Cllr McFadzean had conversations with manager, seeking improvements

Will seek signage on Frederick Crescent to remind public of by-law forbidding outdoor drinking in the area.

7. Treasurer's report:

Colin Fraser reported no change in current spending.

8. ICC Ferry Committee report

Jim Porteous submitted a report:

ICCF - last regular meeting 20th July, minutes on website. Next meeting 24th August.

Operational.

27th July Heb Isles sent to Uig triangle to cover for 'Hebrides' fire fighting equipment problem. Colonsay-PA-KC sailing cancelled.

28th July 6 Heb Isles sailing legs cancelled, no extra sailings Finlaggan. Numerous booked travellers from Islay stranded, with up to 40 cars being slept in at port.

29th July Fin on normal 6 sailing legs timetable. Heb Isles re-joined, sailing from Oban to KC then PA/KC and return to PE. Backlog cleared by end of day after long delays for many.

After another fire fighting equipment problem on 2 Aug, 'Hebrides' was sent to Dales Marine on Clyde for repairs. ICCFC warned Calmac that re-deploying Heb Isles again would cause an outcry and suggested Calmac should look at Loch Frisa and Coruisk. Decision was taken to send Isle of Mull to Uig and reposition Coruisk to Oban/Craignure to work with Loch Frisa - also to step up Lochaline/Fishnish sailings.

Timetables/Capacity - 'short life working group' meeting attended with Calmac and TS by IM and JP 16 Aug. Timetable proposal from Calmac included a small adjustment in balance of calls PA v PE but with no material benefit in capacity. Discussions to continue. None of the measures proposed by ICCFC to improve capacity has been accepted so far. Calmac/TS are however looking into the possibility of obtaining 'Pentalina' to add to the fleet and possibly provide a freight service from Port Askaig to Troon.

Winter timetable publication delayed, awaiting Ministerial decision around Uig port closure.

Lorry block bookings utilisation - July worst month of the year so far for the Islay route - 37% of booked space not used, losing the equivalent of 2235 car spaces. This amounts to around 12% of total available car space for one of our busiest months. Calmac say they are discussing with hauliers and engaging in consultation to change rules. We have made very clear that this is completely unacceptable and there is scope within existing rules for tighter management.

IM & JP met with MSP Jenni Minto on 9th Aug to highlight the issues and discuss support. There has been further correspondence with Jenni who is pursuing at high level. We were informed that a much earlier request for Calmac to hire relief crew seems to have been actioned. Robbie Drummond has informed Jenni that they now have relief crew which they deploy to cover for sickness, absence and disruption events and have raised with TS the possibility of a full relief replacement crew to operate more sailings.

Volumes have again risen substantially, in the 12 months year on year since August 2021, in Calmac's latest July figures.

New Ferries - IM and JP again highlighted concerns regarding the readiness of port modification work and now have a response from A&BC regarding Port Askaig.

This says they are in discussion with Dunlossit Estate for an area of land at the top of the road into Port Askaig and if this doesn't go to plan, also land across the road owned by Islay Estates. ICCFC has also suggested, they might consider building an extra storey above the existing carpark.

A CMAL public 'drop in' meeting was held at the ICCI on 15th August to obtain an update on 'port enabling' work. IM & JP attended.

CMAL is unwilling to divulge Calmac captains' views on whether any of the options for shoreside development at Port Ellen would affect the likelihood of Port Askaig diversions (due to weather and/or barley boat). We have asked Calmac directly and they have agreed to share with us.

A meeting was attended on 4th August by IM, FC and JP with CMAL and local PE residents who had expressed some concerns regarding the potential impact on property owners and had requested an early meeting.

Calmac personnel: Captain Guy Robertson, Captain of Finlaggan, retired from service. Farewells took place at PA on 6th July and a gift presented to him on behalf of ICCFC.

Don McKillop, area ops manager, Argyll and Bute has been long term seconded to a similar position for the Clyde. A gift was presented to Don on ICCFC's behalf on 15th August. Donna Lockhart has been designated to take on Don's role here.

Ferries Community Board: Meeting with Richard Hadfield, Transport Scotland 22 July to discuss Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) which will replace the Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan (VRDP). Further discussion to be held with FC's.

Full meeting due 1st and 2nd September, including temporary attendance by the Transport Minister and a separate meeting with the DML board.

At the meeting Garry McLean raised issues with block bookings
There was discussion re readiness of Port Ellen for new ferry.
Billy Sinclair raised concerns re cruise ships anchoring in bay.

9. Planning reports:

Calum Murray outlined the current planning applications, mostly of a domestic nature.

10. Education:

Convenor welcomed Tracy Mayo, Alison MacGillivray and Tina Cunningham's attendance at the meeting.

The meeting welcomed the news that the current education department plans are to be shelved but questioned the "spin" promulgated by officials that the environment of mistrust surrounding the proposals is due to misinformation spread by parent councils and the teaching unions.

Concern was also raised that council officials were also suggesting that parent councils should stick to their own patch and not consult each other on education issues.

11. Carbon Neutral Islands:

Islay Energy Trust will arrange a meeting for interested parties.

An article to be published in the Ilead is envisaged.

Financial assistance to the tune of £40'000 is to be provided.

12. Roads:

High friction anti-skidding material installed at tight bend near Port Askaig.

Road line markings to be complete by end September.

Ardnahoe road developments postponed.

Niall Colthart told the meeting that there will be excess aggregate when Islay Airports runway is resurfaced and is looking for ways that the community can make use of this.

He has also suggested that the materials be freighted to Islay rather than on the already over-burdened ferry services.

13. Islay Community Action Plan:

Consultants are now available to meet with representatives of ICC to get things moving. Islay McEachern to ascertain what dates they may be available. Chris Abell and Sandy Taylor willing to help.

14. Correspondence:

A) Nomination papers for the next community council have to be submitted by 8 September and the new council will be operational 20 October

Islay McEachern has been made aware that Chris Abell and Sandy Taylor will be submitting papers.

B) proposal by Scottish Power to meet with ICC re possibility of an Islay wind farm.

C) Mary Stonehouse is A&B Regional Network Coordinator on climate issues.

D) Bulletin from Scottish Islands Federation outlying Orkney Food "good practice"

E) Bruichladdich "Little Book of Scams" It was agreed that this should be posted on ICC website.

15. AOCB:

Mike Senior announced he will no longer be participating in community council meetings and will be resigning from the Ferry Committee to be replaced by Jack Prentice.

Mike was thanked by all for his very much valued participation and input to both the ferry committee and community council.

Mike recalled that there had been negotiations re a local whisky levy and wondered if there had been developments – Mike was advised that this was considered to be work in progress.

A discussion took place regarding the re resurrection of the ICC Transport Group. It was agreed, should there be sufficient interest, that this group be resurrected ASAP.

16. Date of next meeting:

Wednesday, 21 September 2022.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm with thanks to all for their attendance.