

**Islay Community Council Meeting  
Draft Minutes  
Service Point, Bowmore – 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 18:30**

Item Number		Action
1	<p><b>Present &amp; Apologies</b></p> <p><b>Present:</b> Islay McEachern (IME), Convenor Jim Porteous (JP), Secretary Colin Fraser (CF), Joint Treasurer Sandy Taylor (ST) Video link Chris Abell (CA) Video link Councillor Anne Horn – Video Link Councillor Dougie McFadzean (DMF) Councillor Alastair Redman (AR) Video Link Frazer Campbell (FWC) Lucy Schwind (LS) Minute Taker Julian Green (JG) – Argyll &amp; Bute Council Video Link Gillian Neal (GN) – Argyll &amp; Bute Health &amp; Social Care Video Link Joe Tuohy (JT) - Police Scotland</p> <p><b>Member of the Public</b> Jean Knowles</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Garry MacLean (GML), Vice Convenor Scott Currie (SC) Billy Sinclair (BS), Joint Treasurer Jim MacCalman (JMC)</p>	
2	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>DMF informed the committee that he is policy lead for health &amp; social care, in light of Gillian Neal’s attendance at the meeting, who is the local area manager for Kintyre &amp; Islay, Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership.</p>	
3	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025</b></p> <p>The minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by JP and seconded by CF.</p>	
4	<p><b>Matters Arising/Action Points</b></p> <p>Waste bin at Uiskentuie – IME will schedule a further meeting with Islay Estates <i>Update February: Islay Estates have given permission for the waste bin to be replaced between Uiskentuie and Kilchoman. This now needs to be taken to the council. DMF will do this.</i></p> <p><b>Treasurer’s Report:</b> CF requested ICC should review moving bank account to RBS. <i>This will be covered in the treasurer’s report.</i></p> <p><b>ICAP:</b> JP expressed disappointment with lack of attendance at recent ICAP meeting. IME can circulate an email and see if we can agree date and time to accommodate more members. <i>Update: Action completed</i></p>	DMF

	<p>CA to write article for Ilead, which will include a link to the online report. <i>Update: Action completed</i></p> <p><b>Roads:</b> Disabled parking spaces in Bowmore - CA to contact Argyll &amp; Bute council regarding this. <i>Update: this will be covered in the meeting.</i></p> <p><b>Bowmore Hall Update:</b> DMF, would support ICC's proposal for a public meeting and is happy to write, requesting that IDI arrange one. DMF and AH will also request that the local building control manager, Tony Casci, complete a formal examination of the hall and provide an independent risk report. <i>Update: this will be covered in the meeting.</i></p>	
5	<p><b>Police Report</b></p> <p>JT – nothing significant to report. Currently have 4 PCs covering Islay. No decisions have been made by Police Scotland on the housing situation. Currently the standard of the housing is too poor to warrant a rental charge.</p> <p>The current call volume averages about 50 calls a day (not all requiring police attendance). Some road traffic accidents but none requiring police attendance. A couple of incidents within licensed premises.</p> <p>AR has been informed of some incidents of speeding past Port Ellen Primary School and requested police support. JT nothing has been reported to the police but if there are specific times when this occurs, they will see if can provide assistance.</p> <p>CA would be interested to hear JG's input regarding signage blown down in the bad weather around Port Ellen Primary School. JG advised that any lighting issues are dealt with by the street lighting department and also discussions are taking place regarding tidying up the signage in this area.</p>	JT
6	<p><b>Gillian Neal – Local Area Manager for Kintyre &amp; Islay, Argyll and Bute Health &amp; Social Care Partnership</b></p> <p>GN informed the committee that the Travel Policy has not been finalised. Once it is in an approved format GN will share with ICC. It is hoped that this will assist and clarify patient travel.</p> <p>The hospital and community services on Islay are in a good position, recruitment and retention is good. There is one staff nurse vacancy which they are in the middle of recruitment for. Once this post is filled the hospital will be fully staffed. Community nursing is also in a good position staffing wise. Home care services are the biggest challenge, and the care homes are quite reliant on agency workers to boost numbers.</p> <p>Budget – Accommodation costs are the biggest issue for agency workers. To tackle this, there is a working group focused on accommodation issues, and they are now in a position where they have leases on two properties and a third in the pipeline.</p> <p>Building works are up and running for the hospital, fire safety improvement works are required which has been signed off and</p>	

	<p>agreed and will be undertaken by their approved contractor in 25/26 financial year.</p> <p>There are still challenges to access to some services such as orthotics, podiatry and audiology.</p> <p>CA made an observation on the age of the hospital buildings and asked if there is a longer-term plan from NHS Highlands. GN it is on the radar for NHS Highland but unlikely that anything will be done soon. CA is there anything that would make it a higher priority. GN will let us know if she finds anything out.</p>	
7	<p><b>Julian Green – Team Leader Operations for Mid Argyll, Kintyre &amp; Islands, Argyll &amp; Bute Council</b></p> <p>JG offered to meet up again on another occasion to continue discussions.</p> <p>JG updated ICC regarding Bowmore street lining, in particular near the Co-op for the disabled parking bays and bus stops. The current priority is the completion of joints and seals, and the weather has meant this has taken longer than expected. The lining machinery is on the island and the disabled and bus bays will be a priority.</p> <p>Review of the area – discussions are taking place with network colleagues which is tied in with Argyll and Bute priorities. For example, signage issues. This will include other areas of the island.</p> <p>A new parking warden has been employed in the last week. This warden will work across the whole of the MAKI area. It is not currently clear on what proportion of time they will spend on the island. Will send further information to CA.</p> <p>Roads are being inspected regularly and to schedule. The Roads department do complete internal management reports on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Public utilities issues are a draw on staff time and resources. Many of the utility companies are low risk and there are few problems. For others there are ongoing problems that are being dealt with. The team conduct and inspect a proportion of works, 5-10%, within set timescales. Re-instatement timescales are now 6 years for public utilities (previously 2 years). Funding for next year indicates will have far less budget. Working on the islands continues to be challenging due to increased costs.</p> <p>JG is aware that there are issues with potholes and bad areas of road. Is only able to advise that there will be a follow up once they know what budget will be available.</p> <p>Also aware of the multiple issues after the last few storms, for example Bruichladdich near Tarff currently has traffic management to make safe. A prioritisation matrix is being worked on for A&amp;B Council as a whole, but again there is a limited budget.</p> <p>Port Ellen flooding has been mentioned to design team to pass onto the flooding part of that team. ICC would like to see if this can be pushed up the agenda. It is not a small fix; a major scheme is</p>	JG

	<p>needed, and this will depend on how it can be fitted into funding rounds.</p> <p>The team have a new officer on the island who is part of JG's team - Ian Laing.</p> <p>JK – do the council monitor the re-occurrence of potholes that have been repaired only to reappear again. JG any repair should be getting re-charged to the contractor. JG will ask the team to chase up the specific location mentioned by JK. The system will locate potholes in a location but won't guarantee that we are picking up the exact same hole. Tend to find that it's generally the material next to the pothole that starts to fail rather than the repaired pothole.</p> <p>JP – mentioned flooding at Port Ellen. An ICC member sent a message stating that some houses on the south side of Frederick Crescent were badly affected and are not included on the flood plan. AR asked A&amp;B Council why these were not on the flood plan and was advised that evidence needs to be sent to the flood management team by residents (photos, videos, address etc). JG knows there is a map which includes low lying areas which are of particular concern, used by flood team. JG would need to check this map to see if this relates to coastal defences or flooding. JG did speak to residents after the pre-Christmas flooding to ask that they provide any evidence they can of flooding as it will be extremely useful to reinforce the argument for additional work to be done.</p> <p>JP, SC sent a message that he had received a formal response from A&amp;B Council saying Frederick Crescent is not on the flood plan. This means that homes are not eligible for any extra funding. Evidence needs to be sent to the flood management team by residents. Send to the following email address:  <a href="mailto:Floodingenquiries@argyll-bute.gov.uk">Floodingenquiries@argyll-bute.gov.uk</a></p> <p>CF if inspector could visit the communal closes on Frederick Crescent, they would be able to see the water marks on the outside of the walls.</p> <p>FC noted that there were no locations on Islay included in the 2023-28 flood management plan. JG advised that there is a 5-year cycle of funding for flood prevention schemes, councils bid for funding on each round of funding. It might be that the report relates to current funding round rather than overall list of schemes.</p> <p>AR to copy JG with information received from A&amp;B Council. JG will have a look but may find that it is better to contact department directly (flooding team) to establish whether it is short term funding.</p> <p>JG stressed the importance of documentation and reporting of incidents every time there is an incident.</p> <p>DMF has the same information as AR in that areas of Islay are not on the flood plan which should be. Stephen Hall has been tasked with coming up with a plan and engineers will be sent out to review the sites. Pippa Milne and the Chief Exec of ACHA are also linking up.</p>	<p>JG</p> <p>JG</p> <p>AR/JG</p>
--	---	----------------------------------

	<p>JG discussed the coastal flooding at Port Ellen and the current measures in place, it is possible that there would need to be a storm chamber in the grassed area and a pump to push water out.</p> <p>FC raised a query regarding the area around Port Ellen pier, specifically where the road changes from CMAL to A&amp;B Council ownership. There is a septic tank underneath the road where heavy vehicles are crossing/parking and concerns of impact if this is damaged. JG advised if any private service is located under a public road, it remains the responsibility of the private owner to maintain it.</p>	
8	<p><b>Councillor A Horn</b></p> <p>Activities since the last meeting include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealing with emails regarding roads and footpaths</li> <li>• Several emails about welfare issues – which have been directed to the appropriate agencies within A&amp;B Council</li> <li>• Updating Friends of Portnahaven Church, more positive news as a financial amount has been agreed between the Church of Scotland and the Friends of Portnahaven Church</li> <li>• Dealing with lighting issues in Port Charlotte, which has now been rectified</li> </ul>	
9	<p><b>Councillor D McFadzean</b></p> <p>Activities since the last meeting include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviewing for the head of primary care, not appointed yet</li> <li>• COSLA meetings</li> <li>• Meetings with Health &amp; Social Care Partnership</li> <li>• Budget development meetings</li> <li>• Meetings with West Highland Housing Association regarding their future plans for Islay</li> <li>• Carbon Neutral Islands meeting – steering group meeting, Peter Leckie, IME, Tom Skinner</li> <li>• HSCP meetings</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Board Assessment</li> <li>• Meeting with AHPs</li> <li>• Meeting with UK government representatives regarding community regeneration</li> <li>• Hospital meetings/ Care Home meetings – stable on Islay</li> <li>• ACHA – a lot of issues with flooding, complaints</li> <li>• Civil works in Port Ellen</li> <li>• Lights on Burnside, Bruichladdich now fixed</li> <li>• Co-op meeting regarding development of stores in Bowmore and Port Ellen</li> <li>• Warm Works Scotland - additional cladding for homes in Portnahaven</li> </ul>	
10	<p><b>Councillor A Redman</b></p> <p>Full report in Appendix A</p> <p>Activities since the last meeting include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence regarding increase in ferry fares</li> <li>• Port Ellen storm/flooding damage</li> <li>• Portnahaven – the condition of Crown Street</li> <li>• Potholes and repairs not lasting</li> <li>• The condition of the Oa Road in Port Ellen</li> <li>• Port Charlotte to Portnahaven road, has been raised with roads department.</li> <li>• Storm Eowyn – lots of issues as a result of this</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting farmers, currently with the increase in gun licencing fees</li> <li>• Lot of streetlights damaged and out of action as a result of the storms</li> <li>• Transport issues continue, particularly the lack of proper transportation in relation to patient transport</li> <li>• There has been a spike in benefit enquiries</li> <li>• Dealing with social housing enquiries</li> <li>• Dealing with road safety concerns/issues</li> </ul>	
11	<p><b>Treasurer's Report</b></p> <p>CF, balance as of 20/01/2025 £4165.11</p> <p>ICC have not incurred any bank charges to date, so the bank account has been left with Bank of Scotland for the time being</p> <p>The accounts are with the auditor but are held up as there is one remaining invoice missing, for stationery for ICAP. Can CA/IME let CA know which one so that CA can provide a copy of this CF.</p> <p>Melissa Stewart has been in touch as ICC are still awaiting 2024 grant funds, there will be a slight delay but still within the timeline for this.</p>	CF/CA/IME
12	<p><b>ICC Ferry Committee</b></p> <p>See Appendix B for the report.</p> <p><b>Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The question has been raised with the cabinet secretary on the rationale for the increase in fares by 10% although the response failed to provide adequate explanation</li> <li>• The FCB were due to meet with the cabinet secretary 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and would be raising further questions regarding this increase. The increase has already been implemented; however, it would be good to know if this will be a one-off increase for 2025 or whether it will increase by a similar amount again</li> <li>• An up-to-date report was circulated earlier this week</li> <li>• The biggest issue in the short term, is the Finlaggan dry dock period scheduled for 3 weeks, late March/April. CalMac have advised only the Isle of Arran as a replacement. At this point in the season Islay should have two ships operating, with much greater capacity. Accommodation providers have already been losing business as visitors are unable to make travel bookings. Explore Islay and Jura have been collating information on the impact of this.</li> </ul> <p>CalMac are unable to defer the dry docking of the Finlaggan. The additional vessel they are considering utilising is the Lord of the Isles (similar size to Isle of Arran), which will still not provide sufficient capacity. If this is the case ICCFC have advised they would require additional sailings. ICCFC have also suggested CalMac reconsider Colonsay sailings. Colonsay FC are amenable to some adjustment of their timetable over this period.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICCFC representatives met with CalMac directors 20<sup>th</sup> February to review the computer system (this is a follow up from the round table meeting with Jenni Minto last week). CalMac have been promising a fix on the two Islay port booking requirement for some time. Their recently appointed new IT director, David Gammie, advised that they will have this fixed by May 2025.</li> <li>• Statistics are still not being received. In particular, commercial vehicle performance which includes lorry block bookings. The old statistics would show what block bookings were made, cancelled and how much space was unused. JP has been told that they may be close to a solution on this data reporting.</li> <li>• Questionnaire has been issued regarding the summer timetable and maintenance regime and added to the Community Noticeboard Facebook page</li> <li>• ICCFC have been advised by CMAL that start of the development work at Port Ellen may be delayed. As it would likely be September 2025 before all permissions are in place, it may be more appropriate to start after the winter season to avoid weather disruptions. If this is postponed, Port Ellen can remain open for longer. The use of MV Finlaggen to service Port Ellen has been agreed in principle until the closure of this port.</li> <li>• There is a new report on CalMac's website showing over 90% customer satisfaction. However, this report relates to a combination of routes across the region rather than being specific to Islay. CalMac has agreed to send statistics purely for Islay.</li> </ul>	
13	<p><b>Islay Community Action Plan (ICAP)</b></p> <p>CA provided an update on activities including:</p> <p>30 copies of final phase one plan have been produced. Jenni Minto has requested a copy, and Tom Skinner has also requested the use of some of the statistics gathered.</p> <p>ICAP have completed their end of project report for the Communities Fund Grant. They have underspent on funds but have made a case to agree an additional time limit to spend these funds.</p> <p>CA and ST have attended the planned school events (2 x afternoon workshops). This involved speaking to pupils in small groups and gathering their feedback on what they think should be included in an Islay Action Plan. It proved to be a very useful day, and 50 feedback forms were received. This will be collated and reported for the ICAP meeting.</p> <p>The plan is to now move to public meetings for the wider community. Potentially two meetings in the early part of April, one in ICCI and one in Port Ellen. Both would be early evening, potentially 5 – 9 pm. Venues have not yet been booked.</p> <p>An advert will be produced to include in The Ilead along with display posters. CA requested assistance from FC to include social media communications</p>	

	<p>The final report was included in an article in The Ileadh. CA requested assistance adding the response form to the website – IME will organise this.</p> <p>Additionally, a copy of the final phase report (page 17) hasn't fully uploaded, can this be rectified. IME will organise.</p> <p>24<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 18:30, for next meeting</p>	<p>IME</p> <p>IME</p>
14	<p><b>Planning Reports</b></p> <p>JP informed ICC of two recent applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The erection of a children's nurse at Port Ellen next to Ramsay Hall (Sonas Childcare Project).</li> <li>• 19 dwelling houses at Bowmore, land south of Sealladh Loch Na Dala</li> </ul>	
15	<p><b>CNI (Carbon Neutral Islands) Project</b></p> <p>Tom Skinner is working on solar panel project for community spaces. Contractor bids are currently progressing through A&amp;B Council's procurement process. Fitting should hopefully take place in June 2025. The project team are now looking at bids for future funding applications.</p>	
16	<p><b>Bowmore Hall Update</b></p> <p>Once again, many concerns were expressed regarding the Bowmore Hall Project.</p> <p>DMF attended a meeting with the IDI board. The situation with Bowmore Hall was discussed and the potential to form a working group. Two board members volunteered to be involved: John McIntyre and Kate MacAffer. The IDI board were unwilling to host a public meeting.</p> <p>DMF has also spoken to Tony Casci who is unable to assist in this matter and who could only suggest employing a surveyor. ICC discussed the continued lack of community space in Bowmore which residents have raised repeatedly to ICC members and councillors. Whilst ICCI is available, there is still no footpath access from Bowmore which causes safety concerns.</p> <p>CF advised that he had received numerous enquiries about the hall and there was much consternation around regarding the years' long closure of the facility, ongoing denial of its use for the community and lack of information on progress. He strongly emphasised the importance of resolving the situation as quickly as possible.</p> <p>JP suggested as an alternative to a public meeting that IDI be invited to meet with ICC so that they can jointly discuss ideas and support to move the project forward.</p> <p>ST queried whether it is known what the present project priorities are for works on Bowmore Hall. It was believed that the first priority was for the main hall to be wind and watertight, which is believed to be the case although there has been further water ingress. It is understood by ICC that there are no further funds available to complete further works. More detail would be required on work</p>	<p>DMF</p>



	<p>completed and monies spent before additional funding sources were approached.</p> <p>JP suggested that there was a need to establish exactly where things stand. DMF/ICC to invite IDI board members to meet with ICC members to discuss this project.</p>	
18	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A&amp;B Council visitor levy consultation is currently taking place</li> <li>• FC to add a further update to the Community Facebook page</li> <li>• Coastal Change Adaptation Planning Awareness Event</li> <li>• Loganair – correspondence from a member of the public regarding a refusal to allow travel to a patient with reduced mobility - Loganair’s response was noted and passed back to the member of public</li> <li>• Scottish Power/Machair Wind Project business excellence programme for people in the vicinity of the works (currently large businesses)</li> <li>• Scottish Islands Federation – a cross-party group on business enterprises social committee, meeting is taking place on 26<sup>th</sup> February</li> <li>• Speed management review – information received from the Scottish Government who are seeking feedback. There is an online link, 24<sup>th</sup> February at 1:30 and 27<sup>th</sup> February – final response date is 5<sup>th</sup> March. The proposal is to increase lorry speeds on single carriage ways from 40 to 50mph and for cars to reduce speed from 60 to 50mph.</li> <li>• Islay Link Club – health and needs assessment report recently circulated in collaboration with Islay Connections</li> <li>• Meeting hosted by IET re Argyll &amp; Bute Community Regeneration Partnership with UK government ministry.</li> <li>• Communication regarding Local Place Plan training, and how to form one received from A&amp;B Council, sent by TSI. CA advised that from an ICAP perspective Islay already has sufficient actions to carry forward. A Local Place Plan can always be formed in the future if it is felt to provide further benefit</li> <li>• A&amp;B Council have a community lottery starting up.</li> </ul>	FC
19	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <p>None</p>	
20	<p><b>Date/venue for Next Meeting</b></p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025, 18:30 at Service Point</p>	

## Appendix A – Councillor A Redman

### Islay Community Council Meeting Report

Date: 20 February 2025, 18:30

#### 1. Transport and Infrastructure

- **Ferry Fare Increase:** I have continued to challenge the Scottish Government's decision to increase CalMac ferry fares by 10%. This increase is unacceptable given the ongoing reliability issues such as frequent cancellations and breakdowns.
- **Hazardous Roads on Islay:**
  - **Port Ellen to Emerivale Road:** I have called for urgent repairs due to numerous complaints from constituents about potholes, vehicle damage, and safety risks.
  - **Crown Street, Portnahaven:** I submitted an urgent repair request due to significant potholes and surface degradation, creating hazards for both drivers and pedestrians.
  - **Oa Road, Port Ellen:** Residents have raised concerns about worsening conditions due to flooding, large potholes, and inadequate passing places. Poor drainage has made the road dangerous to navigate.
  - **Port Charlotte to Portnahaven Road:** A formal request for urgent road repairs has been submitted.
- **Council Response:** Roads and Infrastructure Services have acknowledged the complaints and confirmed that reactive repairs will be carried out. However, as these roads are not included in the capital programme, resources remain limited.

#### 2. Emergency Response and Storm Impact

- **Storm Éowyn Recovery Efforts:** I want to express my gratitude to emergency responders, engineers, and volunteers who worked to restore power, clear roads, and assist vulnerable residents following Storm Éowyn.
- I continue to push for additional government investment in rural infrastructure to ensure adequate emergency preparedness and recovery support.

#### 3. Local Economy & Community Issues

- **Gun Licensing Fee Hike:** I strongly oppose the proposed increase in gun licensing fees, as it unfairly penalises responsible firearm owners, particularly farmers and crofters who rely on firearms for land and livestock management. I have urged the government to reconsider this policy.

#### 4. Ongoing Constituency Work

- Many areas across Islay have experienced street lighting outages, particularly in the aftermath of Storm Éowyn. I have been raising this issue with the relevant authorities to ensure repairs are carried out promptly for public safety.
- I have been actively addressing issues raised by constituents, including transport concerns, road safety, and community support initiatives.
- Additionally, I have been handling numerous benefit inquiries, helping residents understand and access the support available to them.

- I have dealt with a few hospital transport inquiries, assisting residents with their concerns regarding medical travel arrangements.
- I have been addressing social housing inquiries, advocating for better living conditions and ensuring residents receive appropriate support.
- I have continued to meet with constituents and address their concerns regarding transport, road safety, and community support initiatives.
- Many areas across Islay have experienced street lighting outages, particularly in the aftermath of Storm Éowyn. I have been raising this issue with the relevant authorities to ensure repairs are carried out promptly for public safety.
- I have been actively addressing issues raised by constituents, including transport concerns, road safety, and community support initiatives.
- Additionally, I have been handling numerous benefit inquiries, helping residents understand and access the support available to them.
- I have dealt with a few hospital transport inquiries, assisting residents with their concerns regarding medical travel arrangements.
- I have continued to meet with constituents and address their concerns regarding transport, road safety, and community support initiatives.

Kind regards Cllr Alastair Redman - Kintyre and the Islands ward.

## Appendix B – ICC Ferry Committee

**ICCFC** - last regular meeting Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February. Draft Minutes to be posted in CC website.

Other meetings: Tue 14<sup>th</sup> Jan, Port Ellen Terminal development, reference group meeting (Teams). Mon 20<sup>th</sup> Jan, Islay working group (Teams). Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Jan, roundtable with MSP Jenni Minto (Teams), Mon 10<sup>th</sup> Feb with CalMac Transport Planning re timetables (Teams). Minutes of the roundtable circulated plus summer timetable options and other communications with CalMac.

Key items discussed include:

- Timetable during Finlaggan's annual overhaul from 23<sup>rd</sup> April. (Currently only the Isle of Arran is configured in the bookings system). Decision due from CalMac end of this week. Likely outcome is that the Islay route will be served by Isle of Arran and Lord of the Isles, which in a standard timetable would not be sufficient. ICCFC has asked for extra sailings and review of the Colonsay link to compensate for the shortfall. ICCFC has repeatedly made clear at highest levels that ongoing restricted capacity and continued delay in correcting this is causing major economic damage to the island and resulting in numerous lost/cancelled accommodation bookings. Islay and Jura Marketing Group has also been keeping ICCFC informed.
- Bookings system. Meeting am 20<sup>th</sup> Feb with CalMac director Diane Burke. Promised modification to the 2 Islay ports process is long overdue. CalMac say there is a delay due to the appointment of a new IT manager who is re-assessing the situation. Statistical data still incomplete and we continue to await the missing reports of lorry bookings performance.
- Lorry block bookings. Application of the existing rules, as currently defined, still under consideration by CalMac despite the ongoing loss of available capacity resulting from non-application. A survey of forecast distilleries' production is due to take place in the near future.
- Lorry drop trailers. Trials due to take place in the coming weeks at PE. Not permitted at PA.
- New vessels. ICCFC has requested retention of Finlaggan until PE closes for development - probably not now before 2026. In the interim this continues to provide the ability to call at both Islay ports. It also temporarily reduces the maintenance stoppage requirements by 50%, since these apply only for new vessels. CalMac is still discussing the question of weekly or monthly maintenance for the new vessels with hauliers, the majority consensus being that weekly, which provides greater consistency, is preferable.

### **Operational -**

ICCFC has continued to protest about the inadequacy and vulnerability of single vessel service during this winter's timetable.

ICCFC reached agreement 25<sup>th</sup> Jan with CalMac (for a 6-month trial basis) on Traffic Prioritisation protocols for displaced traffic during disruption.

## **Timetables/Capacity**

Apart from Finlaggan drydock time, people are still having problems making bookings, ships reported as fully booked are continuing to sail with vacant deck space, the position is exacerbated by late lorry booking cancellations and the Ar Turas computer system continues to cause problems (as highlighted above).

Date for a further meeting between ICCFC members and Alan Hood of CMAL to discuss 'Advance Standby' and how this might be improved has to be confirmed.

## **New Ferries -**

CMAL has confirmed that delivery of MV Isle of Islay remains likely to be around the end of the first quarter. A further update is due in the near future.

Port Ellen development work is unlikely to obtain the necessary consents and approvals, including SG funding approval, before September 2025 and CMAL are now contemplating deferral of start of the work until 2026, after the 2025/6 winter period. It is likely to take up to two years.

A public update event was held by CMAL at Ramsay Hall from 15.30 on 21st January regarding Port Ellen terminal development.

An on-site meeting is due at PA in the near future between A&BC and ICCFC to discuss their latest plans to safely accommodate the increased vehicle volumes for the new vessels. ICCFC members continue to have some reservations.

**Ferries Community Board -** Next regular meeting 7th March. Due to meet with the Cabinet Secretary for Transport at Holyrood on 20th Feb. Will discuss the fares increase, the new CHFS contract, FCB's role and any public engagements in the pipeline. (JP unable to attend due to clash with CalMac bookings system meeting).