

**Islay Community Council Meeting  
Draft Minutes  
Service Point, Bowmore – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024 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  Garry MacLean (GML), Vice Convenor  Frazer Campbell (FWC)  Sandy Taylor (ST) – Video Link  Chris Abell (CA) – Video Link  Councillor Alastair Redman (AR) – Video link  Councillor Dougie McFadzean (DMF) – Video Link  Councillor Anne Horn – Video Link  PC Amy Wilson (AW), Police Scotland  Deborah Bryce (DB), Community Engagement Manager, Machair Wind Project  Kiera Wilson (KW), Project Lead, Machair Wind Project – Video link  Ellen Kane (EK), Stakeholder Manager, Machair Wind Project - Video link  Lucy Schwind (LS) Minute Taker</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b>  Billy Sinclair (BS), Joint Treasurer  Scott Currie (SC)  Jim MacCalman (JMC)</p>	
2	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>None</p>	
3	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting – 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b></p> <p>Subject to agreed changes, the minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by SC and seconded by CF.</p>	
4	<p><b>Matters Arising/Action Points</b></p> <p>Laphroaig expansion plans – ICAP Phase 1 report.  <i>Update November 2024: format has now been agreed and can now be circulated. GML to provide copy to JP for circulation and sending to Beam Suntory.</i></p> <p>Waste bin at Uiskentuie – the issue is still not resolved and now needs to be escalated within A&amp;B Council. AR will see if can assist to resolve. IME will approach the estate owners to clarify their position.  <i>IME has a meeting scheduled with Islay Estates next week.  Action carried forward to next meeting.</i></p> <p>Last year’s accounts have been progressed and now awaiting audit.  <i>See the treasurers report. Action closed.</i></p> <p>IME to send an email again to the police force as no response received regarding lack of cover - An additional officer has subsequently been recruited temporarily for Islay.</p>	<p>GML/JP</p> <p>IME</p>

	<p><i>Update: JP has replied to Sergeant Shaw. Additionally, JP has been advised that the next police report should provide more detail.</i></p> <p>CA has written to Stuart Watson on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024, requesting the co-operation of the roads department and expressing frustrations at the lack of response and action. A response was received on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024 confirming that A&amp;B Council was supportive of the proposal and would respond as soon as they were able. CA to contact Julian Green</p> <p><i>Action to be carried forward to next meeting.</i></p> <p>Bowmore Hall – DMF will see what he can establish regarding ownership and owner’s responsibilities/commitments.</p> <p><i>Update: Action completed.</i></p> <p>ICC Membership – CF to check with individuals to gauge their interest and commitment before providing names to JP</p> <p>Correspondence – JP to ask Mike Horner on behalf of Elixir for an update on planning permissions for employee housing for new distillery.</p>	CA
5	<p><b>Police Report</b></p> <p>AW provided the committee with statistics from the previous month. The call list has doubled in the last month and the majority of calls have been as a result of a variety of road traffic collisions as well as assisting members of the public. A number of crime reports have been raised over the phone. Police are aware of the anti-social behaviour issue in Bowmore with dirt bikes. Police have been engaging with the riders and will monitor the situation. No reports of drugs/drug dealing in the island. There will be an additional 2 officers over Christmas period.</p> <p>AR raised a concern regarding littering at Bowmore pier which seems particularly prevalent during school lunchtime/break time. AR has raised this with the council but feels the police should also be aware. AW noted this and will look to provide more police presence over lunchtime in this area where possible.</p>	
6	<p><b>Machair Wind Project Update</b></p> <p>The meeting was attended by DB, KW, EC from the Machair Wind Project. To provide an update to ICC on the project. A Powerpoint presentation was given. It was seen from the presentation that the area of the proposed wind farm has been reduced by approximately 200km<sup>2</sup> (from 754 to 510 km<sup>2</sup>). Fixed bottom offshore wind project. The water depth is relatively shallow – max depth for the turbines is 60 and ours is 53. There will be between 88-147 turbines (as it is currently not agreed how tall they will be and therefore how many will be needed).</p> <p>The power grid connection is to South Ayrshire. <b>This</b> has been dictated by National Grid. Subsea cables will connect from the windfarm, around the Kintyre peninsula to South Ayrshire.</p> <p>AR raised concerns that there is no direct connection to Islay, along with the potential impact on fishing grounds and that there is no direct benefit for the island.</p>	

	<p>DB - Will continue to refine the area down and identify within this area what is suitable, for example ground conditions. They are carrying out surveys to better understand the site. The turbine range will continue to reduce as they gain a better understanding of the site and the turbines used. In terms of losing ground for fisheries for local fishermen, Machair have been working with local fishermen to reduce the impact and essentially, even during the construction phase, there will be safety buffers so that parts of the site will still be open for fishermen to continue their activities. Machair Will continue to engage with them before the next phase of site investigation works. Regarding the grid connection to South Ayrshire, this forms part of the plan to connect to the national grid but Machair are still exploring the option to connect to Islay. The first feasibility study is now complete and DB can share with ICC as soon as it is available. There will be a number of further reports still to complete, for example environmental impact.</p> <p>KW talked through the table of development activities on slide 2.</p> <p>CA – questioned the scoping report in relation to delivering a connection to Islay, in particular the ‘will to do it’, in order to overcome the technical issues. KW advised Machair want to explore this and whether this is something that can be delivered. They have commissioned this and further studies. Machair also need to consider the regulatory perspective – within one year of being up and running are obliged to divest to a third party.</p> <p>IME – requested Machair keep ICC informed on these challenges and barriers as the project progresses. KW agreed this would be possible.</p> <p>KW - No decisions on which port will be used, there will be a number of different options and Machair are completing due diligence with a number of options, will keep ICC up to date.</p> <p>EK – Machair is engaging with businesses that are eligible to bid for work. There is also the Supply Chain Stimulus Fund, Machair are investing £25m. Social Economic Impact Study and Assessment is being carried out – there is a report available on their website. The report will consider a number of locations across Argyll &amp; Bute that could support Machair’s construction and maintenance phases. A full assessment will take place in 2025. They will continue to engage with local schools, pupils and educators.</p> <p>AR – questioned the benefit to Islay, the manufacturing of turbines for example. KW advised the report was focused on port locations more than fabrication. No decisions have been made on ports as yet. It is feasible that different parts and components could be built around different parts of Scotland. Will be an ongoing discussion with the supply chain.</p> <p>DMF – questioned skills training, both for the initial installation and the ongoing care and maintenance of the turbines once erected. DMF advised he has had a conversation with a local education establishment, UHI, regarding the creation of suitable training courses for local people. UHI tutors should have been in touch with</p>	DMF
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	<p>DB who advised that has not heard from him. DMF will chase this up with UHI.</p> <p>DB – Machair are already engaging with local schools and potentially creating local training academies to develop the skills that would be required. EK confirmed UHI already on Machair radar and will be engaging with local education and training providers.</p> <p>AH – has already raised the question regarding future opportunities for young people on this project. Also questions the locality of employment and manufacture – for example the transport of materials and equipment, where manufacturing should be as local as possible we will still need to consider the impact of this on the islands.</p> <p>DB – ran through the community engagement plan. Donations have been made towards Jura Festival, Jura Christmas Fair and Port Ellen Sports day. If islanders want further projects to benefit from donations, then they will be willing to consider further requests.</p> <p>There will be a statutory consultation between May and June 2025, across all 5 islands. This will be followed by second round of statutory consultation in Aug/Sept 2025. Machair Will aim to work around major events on the island.</p>	
7	<p><b>Councillor A Horn</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Couple of road issues which have been forwarded to the appropriate officers</li> <li>• A few contacts from constituents concerned with cost of living crisis, who have been put in touch with the appropriate welfare teams</li> <li>• Meeting with Emily from the McTaggart Leisure Centre, who shared information about the plans to take this forward</li> <li>• Attended Islay Senior Citizens Tea and Cake where she met the Machair Wind Farm team and saw the presentation.</li> <li>• Islay Show date – due to schools return before show date. AH has been speaking to Peter Leckie. One of the questions for councillors is how the change of school holiday days came about and who was consulted about this. AH asked education officers if an impact assessment had been done for Islay and if this is received will send a copy to ICC</li> <li>• GML – decision regarding show date will be finalised tomorrow evening 21<sup>st</sup> November. AH will forward correspondence received onto the show committee</li> <li>• Some home visits – both raised issues of not being able to get on and off the bus at the bus stop due to parked cars (Bowmore).</li> </ul>	
8	<p><b>Councillor D McFadzean</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also involved in the discussions regarding the Islay show date. The education authority have issued an ‘authorised day of absence option’. It has been made clear this will not affect student’s attendance records.</li> <li>• Self directed payments - if an individual with additional needs requires a care and support worker there is now a new model for employing and paying for this service. There are difficulties on Islay due to the lack of care and support workers available and this is causing a lot of issues.</li> <li>• Proposed Tourism Levy enquiries – DMF questioned the prospect of Argyll &amp; Bute Council taking up the visitor levy, a</li> </ul>	

	<p>decision has not been made yet and the council are currently planning a further 12 week consultation from December/January.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has had conversations with Julian Green and Jim Smith regarding the quality of the road repairs in Bowmore and was informed that remedial work will be dealt with.</li> <li>• JP – questioned road quality and remedial work on the roads in Bowmore. Will this come off the roads budget for Islay? DMF understands this won't come out of the roads budget.</li> <li>• Housing enquiries – lots of enquiries received.</li> <li>• Met with Councillor Luna Martin on the island where they have looked at current projects such as the solar farm, wind turbines and peat restoration. Tom Skinner has been successful in the bid for funding to retrofit solar panels onto community buildings.</li> <li>• Meeting held 20<sup>th</sup> November with Islay Energy Trust and Exor G3 to look at an innovative heat storage system using a type of ceramic brick.</li> <li>• Attended the Ferry round table meetings plus other meetings representing the community and complaints.</li> <li>• Two armistice events attended.</li> <li>• Scottish and Southern energy engagement meetings regarding infrastructure improvements on Islay.</li> </ul>	
9	<p><b>Councillor A Redman</b></p> <p>Full report in Appendix A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing matters - mould, windows doors roofing etc</li> <li>• Damaged paving slabs in Bowmore Square – reported to Argyll &amp; Bute Council Roads Department, but awaiting response</li> <li>• Raised littering with both police and the council – particularly around the pier area in Bowmore</li> <li>• Ongoing problem with drains in Port Charlotte. Drains were damaged during previous works – Scottish Water will rectify 'soon'</li> <li>• Street lighting concerns – local contractor was in touch regarding some of the lights being repaired. Has also raised concerns with the Street Lighting Department</li> <li>• Correspondence about CalMac ferries – bookings, rate increase (has also written to government ministers about this)</li> <li>• Port Charlotte footbridge repairs are still not complete, just a temporary repair in place. No one has submitted a tender in the recent tender process.</li> <li>• Remembrance Sunday – attended events</li> <li>• Foodbanks – welcomed support from Islay food bank</li> </ul>	
10	<p><b>Treasurer's Report</b></p> <p>CF, balance as of 13/9/24 £4960.11 Still to have this funding year grant of £700 from Argyll &amp; Bute Council</p> <p>Bank of Scotland account – as of 14/1/25, Bank of Scotland are changing the account to a 'community account' which will cost a maintenance fee of £4.25 per month. CF requested ICC should review moving bank account to RBS</p>	BS/CF
11	<b>ICC Ferry Committee</b>	

	<p><b>See Appendix B for the report</b></p> <p>JP attended the teams round table recently with Jenni Minto. The Winter timetable was again discussed and ICCFC have raised their concerns about a single vessel service, also including national press. The island has recently seen the impact of the single vessel service with the disruption in October. CalMac are struggling to provide additional ships as MV Caledonian Isles is in a long term repair situation and MV Hebridean Isles has now left the service.</p> <p>A meeting will be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November, 18:30 in Bowmore with CalMac's Transport Planning Department to discuss the summer timetable when we have the new ships. Islay has been given two options for the ship maintenance regime, either 6 hours a week or 1 day per month. Both scenarios result in very different timetables. CalMac have produced a paper and want to discuss this before deciding on the maintenance schedule. ICCFC members have had some responses from local people, including concerns regarding buses/connections, as well as getting on and off the island in a reasonable time on a regular basis, consistency of provision. It would be helpful if more ICC/ICCFC members attend this meeting.</p> <p>DMF will be able to attend in person  AH can't physically attend but if have option for online would be able to attend.  AR in the same position, and can also attend online  CA &amp; ST will also be able to attend online if this option is available</p> <p>GML will see if this will be possible to set up a video link</p> <p>Rate increase – ICCFC have complained to the Minister about this as it comes on top of a previous increase in 2024 of over 8%. Have also asked the community board to do an island impact assessment. So far there has only been a small number of complaints from islanders about this increase which is surprising given the impact.</p> <p>25<sup>th</sup> November 2025 - CalMac plan to update the website and booking system. There may also be a potential fix for the Port Askaig/Port Ellen issues when making bookings by January 2025.</p> <p>Scott Reid has agreed to meet with ICCFC to discuss Port Askaig works (15:00, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025 – remote link is also available). ICCFC are still waiting for a copy of the plans from A&amp;B Council. Please let JP know if you wish to attend.</p> <p>IME to councillors – what are your views on this? AR not keen on any increases. If ICC want to write a letter AR will support this/sign it. Concerns raised about the rationale for the increase which is above the rate of inflation and not comparable with other transport industries for example ScotRail.  AH is meeting Jenni Minto on Friday and ferries and the fare increase are on the list for discussion. And would be happy to support a letter  DMF – happy to support any letters regarding the fare increase – would like to see the calculations behind the 10% increase.  Action JP to write to the Minister for Transport.</p>	<p>GML</p> <p>IME</p> <p>JP</p>
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	<p>Service Level Agreements are being discussed at the round table meetings with Jenni Minto and this does include reimbursements.</p> <p>Would be helpful if Jura would also support the protest regarding the fares increase. DMF will email Jura Community Council.</p> <p>FC will re-share on Facebook the post regarding timetable changes and requesting community feedback.</p>	<p>DMF</p> <p>FC</p>
12	<p><b>Islay Community Action Plan (ICAP)</b></p> <p>CA – a good meeting was held last week with the ICAP sub group where it was agreed GML’s report could now be published. Discussion took place on the draft questionnaires created by ST and how they should be utilised. A second draft should be sent out soon for feedback. There will be an update for the website which will include the report and the response sheet once agreed. ST and CA will be at the school before Christmas to pilot the questionnaire and see how the consultation would work with the response forms. Next meeting will be the second week in January.</p>	
13	<p><b>Planning Reports</b></p> <p>SC – nothing to report. Consultation out asking for people’s experiences of the planning department. FC will post this on Facebook page.</p> <p>JP understands the new distillery at Port n truan will be submitting a planning application for staff housing – to look out for this.</p>	<p>FC</p>
14	<p><b>Roads</b></p> <p>No updates other than re-remediation of roads in Bowmore.</p> <p>CF advised that the re-instatement works at a number of the road crossings in Bowmore are not of good quality. However, the procurement process to get approved contactor to carry out road crossings is extensive. There are also a number of collapsed culverts that need to be addressed.</p> <p>Julian Green did offer to attend an ICC meeting if invited. Agreed that CA will invite to next ICC meeting.</p> <p>GML correspondence with Julian Green regarding overgrown vegetation on the road between Ardbeg and Ardtalla where foliage has blocked the roadway, causing damage to vehicles. Some work has been done to remedy this but there are still some obstacles in place which have not been addressed. No response from the council. AR will see if he can assist</p> <p>FC – had someone approach him as an ICC member regarding the road condition by the monument and pier, he will take a look at this and take photos for potential submission.</p>	<p>CA</p> <p>GML/AR</p> <p>FC</p>
15	<p><b>CNI (Carbon Neutral Islands) Project</b></p> <p>Virtual meeting on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> November, which SC is attending on behalf of ICC with the CNI steering group. Scott will send an update to the ICC.</p> <p>3 Islay projects identified – distillery waste repurposing, replacement of fertiliser with farmed seaweed and an improved provision for electric vehicles.</p>	<p>SC</p>

16	<p><b>Bowmore Hall Update</b> DMF shared the legal pack that had from council solicitor.</p> <p>JP - Differing accounts on the cost to complete the project. ICC have offered to see if they could assist.</p> <p>JP to DML - Need to know if the project still ongoing and whether there is funding in place to complete it and additionally what would be the completion time. DML does not have this information.</p> <p>CF – no-one seems to know who the project team are i.e. surveyor, principal contractor, health &amp; safety advisor etc.</p> <p>GML understanding is that to make it wind and watertight £250/300k</p> <p>Tourist information office – DMF understands that as the property was owned by Visit Scotland there is a requirement for the building to be offered to community organisations first. As such, IDI have put in a notice of interest in the building to block the auction and allow opportunity for a community organisation to take on the building.</p> <p>CA – What are the plans for Kilarrow House? DMF understands that the council’s preference is to redevelop the whole site and build affordable housing. Ideally this would include key workers accommodation.</p>	
17	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An individual from the Bruichladdich area raised a complaint regarding Loganair service where flights were cancelled with no notice, additionally morning flight times were not convenient for hospital visits. Loganair responded to advise that HIAL staff should communicate when flights cancelled and they would bring this to their attention. However, flight times were not adjustable.</li> <li>• A query was raised from an individual in the Laphroaig area that SC was not listed as an ICC member. ICC have responded to state that SC is included in A&amp;B Council website as an elected member and the Islay CC website and is also referred to in any meetings.</li> </ul>	
18	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <p>GML received a complaint regarding disability/accessibility surveys undertaken by the council for adaptations to homes due to illness or injury. A household needed to make adjustments to their bathroom due to severe illness but did not get any assistance from the council and this ultimately resulted in the requirement to pay for their own adjustments. GML to email DMF or ask the individual concerned to email him directly. AH also happy to assist in taking this forward.</p>	GML/AH
19	<p><b>Date/venue for Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025, 18:30 at Service Point</p>	

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

### **Report for Islay Community Council Meeting**

#### **Presented by Councillor Alastair Redman**

Date: 20/11/24

#### **Introduction:**

As the independent councillor for Kintyre and the Islands, I am committed to addressing the needs and concerns of Islay's residents. Below is an update on the key work I have been undertaking for the benefit of our island.

### **1. Housing and Local Infrastructure:**

#### **Affordable Housing:**

I have been working to address the growing need for affordable and suitable housing on Islay. I have also been advocating for improved access to part-rent, part-purchase schemes to enable local families to find homes that meet their needs.

#### **Bowmore Square Paving Slabs:**

Broken and uneven paving slabs in Bowmore Square have been raised as a concern by local residents. These present a safety risk, particularly to elderly residents and visitors. I have flagged this issue with the relevant council departments and am pressing for timely repairs to improve the safety and appearance of the area.

#### **Littering at Bowmore Pier:**

I have raised concerns about littering at Bowmore Pier with the appropriate department. This issue affects the appearance of the area and its usability for residents and visitors. I will continue to follow up to ensure action is taken.

#### **Port Charlotte Drain Issue:**

Concerns were raised about a drain in Port Charlotte being tarmacked over. I have since been informed that this is a temporary safety measure, as the drain functions as a breather for the sewer. While this was done to protect pedestrians, I am in contact with Scottish Water and council departments to ensure a proper, permanent repair plan is implemented. It is vital that access to key infrastructure remains unhindered for future maintenance or emergencies.

#### **Streetlighting Concerns:**

I have been in regular contact with the council's Roads and Streetlighting Department to address the many damaged or faulty streetlights across Islay, particularly in Port Ellen. This issue is especially concerning during the winter months, as it impacts visibility and safety for pedestrians and drivers alike. I will continue to press for urgent repairs to ensure well-lit and safe streets for residents.

### **2. Community Emergency Response:**

#### **Advocacy for Community First Responders:**

I am actively working to reintroduce and expand the Community First Responders programme on Islay. This initiative aims to improve emergency response times and provide essential safety equipment for residents across the island. I have been engaging with the Scottish Ambulance Service to secure their support and resources for this critical project.

### **3. Transportation and Connectivity:**

#### **CalMac Ferries:**

Ferry disruptions continue to pose significant challenges for Islay. I have been vocal in raising these concerns, focusing on:

The 10% increase in ferry fares, which I strongly oppose.

Issues with the reliability of the aging ferry fleet, particularly breakdowns like those experienced recently with the MV Finlaggan.

Communicating constituent frustrations about the booking system and ensuring these are addressed in discussions with CalMac and Transport Scotland.

#### **Port Charlotte Footbridge Repairs:**

The damaged footbridge remains a significant concern, as it requires long-term repairs. While the contract for these repairs has been put out to tender, there have unfortunately been no takers so far. I am continuing to work with council departments to explore options to ensure this essential infrastructure is restored as soon as possible.

### **4. Community and Social Wellbeing:**

#### **Remembrance Sunday:**

On Remembrance Sunday, I attended the service at St Kieran's Church on Islay and laid wreaths at the Portnahaven and Port Wemyss War Memorials to honour the sacrifices of those who served in the armed forces. It was a privilege to participate in this solemn occasion alongside members of the community, reflecting on the importance of remembrance and gratitude.

#### **Food Bank Contributions:**

I have continued to support local food banks with food donations, including the Islay, Tarbert and Lochgilphead food banks, to help vulnerable residents during challenging times.

#### **Youth Support:**

Recently, I donated a sewing machine and jigsaws to the Tarbert Youth Group to enhance their activities and development opportunities.

#### **Social Housing and Estate Management:**

Social housing conditions remain a key concern across Kintyre and the Islands. I have been actively engaging with ACHA to address a range of issues raised by residents, including maintenance delays, damp and mould in properties, and the need for timely repairs. I will continue to push for swift action to ensure that all tenants live in safe, comfortable, and well-maintained homes, while also addressing broader housing challenges within our communities.

### **5. Advocacy on Policy and Funding:**

#### **Opposition to Visitor Levy:**

I am strongly opposed to the proposed visitor levy, which risks placing an additional financial burden on tourists. This could negatively impact local businesses and the tourism sector, which are vital to Islay's economy. I will continue to advocate against the levy to protect our community's interests.

### **Support for Farmers' Protests:**

I stand firmly with farmers and crofters who are raising concerns about policies impacting rural livelihoods. I have expressed my support for their protests in London and other cities, recognising the critical role farmers play in sustaining both our local and national economies.

### **Welcoming Rural Growth Money:**

I welcome the allocation of rural growth money for our region, which provides a significant opportunity to invest in Islay's infrastructure, economy, and communities. I will work to ensure that Islay receives its fair share of these funds to support local projects and improve services for residents.

### **Opposition to Rewilding Policies:**

I continue to oppose rewilding measures that negatively impact farmers and crofters, and I recently submitted a letter to the Scottish Government demanding the return of £25 million intended to support rural communities.

### **Roads and Infrastructure:**

I remain concerned about the allocation of council funds to external contractors for road maintenance. I continue to press for fair investment in Islay's infrastructure to ensure roads are properly maintained for residents and visitors.

## **6. Community Feedback and Events**

### **Planned Date of the Islay Show**

Members of the public have expressed dissatisfaction with the proposed date for the Islay Show, an event that holds significant cultural and agricultural importance for our community. Concerns have been raised about the timing and its potential impact on attendance and participation. Residents are urging organizers to reconsider the date to ensure it aligns better with local needs and traditions. I will continue to engage with the community and organizers to facilitate constructive dialogue on this matter.

### **Conclusion:**

My focus remains on championing the needs of Islay's residents and ensuring our voice is heard on critical issues affecting our community. I will continue to engage with stakeholders and fight for improved services, infrastructure, and support for all who call Islay home.

## **Appendix B – ICC Ferry Committee**

**ICCFC** - last regular meeting Wed 16<sup>th</sup> Oct, next Tue 26<sup>th</sup> Nov. Draft Minutes posted in CC website.

### **Operational -**

Lord of the Isles left Islay service 18<sup>th</sup> Oct to supplement Arran during Caledonian Isles drydock. From then, Islay is on a timetabled single vessel service for winter with Finlaggan.

Severe weather on Sun 20<sup>th</sup> Oct resulted in all Islay sailings cancelled. Mon 21<sup>st</sup> am, Finlaggan broke down and returned laden to Kennacraig. Loti was redeployed to Islay service, pm on Tue 22<sup>nd</sup>, by which time there was a major backlog of around 289 cars, 65 CV's and 989 passengers.

Finlaggan rejoined the service after repairs, on Thu 24<sup>th</sup> am. Lord of the Isles was retained until Sat 26<sup>th</sup>, working with Finlaggan to help clear backlog. After this, Islay reverted to single vessel service with Finlaggan. Many problems were caused for community and businesses by the disruption. ICCFC has strongly protested about the continuing inadequacy and vulnerability of single vessel service and has also engaged with the national press. (Calmac's port staff were acknowledged to have provided excellent service throughout the period whilst having to cope with major upset).

A virtual Working Group meeting was attended on 30<sup>th</sup> Oct with Calmac. Discussions included Calmac Stats, Block Bookings, Drop Trailers, Haulier Incentivisation to use off peak sailings, Timetables, Route and Traffic Prioritisation matrixes and Port Askaig development.

Hebridean Isles left the Ullapool-Stornoway route on Sun 17<sup>th</sup> Nov and is now at Glasgow, out of service and awaiting arrangements for dismantlement.

A further 'Teams' roundtable follow up virtual meeting (previous meeting 4<sup>th</sup> Oct) was hosted by Jenni Minto on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov. Due to current shortage of vessels, ICCFC's request for a backup vessel to work with Finlaggan during the winter cannot currently be accommodated. ICCFC also repeated their request for a meeting with A&BC regarding Port Askaig works and this has subsequently been agreed for 4<sup>th</sup> Dec. CMAL advised that the mooring aid system is now expected to be delivered in Jan and will then require trials after SSEN's connection of power supply. Other items discussed included drop trailers, haulier incentivisation for less popular sailings, night freight, freight ferry, booking system, ongoing lack of stats from Calmac and summer timetable options. Minutes of this meeting will be circulated in due course.

ICCFC is still awaiting a formal confirmation from Calmac on Traffic Prioritisation protocols at times of disruption.

### **Timetables/Capacity**

An update from Calmac on 5/11, showed that many of the popular sailings for two weeks ahead were fully booked, including all sailings from Islay four days ahead.

An ICCFC meeting is scheduled with Demi Wylie and others from Calmac on Mon 25<sup>th</sup> November at Bowmore to discuss options for the Summer 2025 timetables.

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 -**

During Oct, CMAL informed ICCFC that delivery of mv 'Isle of Islay' was likely to be delayed by a further two months, until Jan/Feb. There has been no change.

Port Ellen work is unlikely to obtain the necessary consents and approvals, including SG funding approval, before Summer 2025 and the work is then expected to take around 18 months.

**Ferries Community Board -** Next Board Meeting due in Greenock on 6th December. A virtual meeting to review the agenda is due on 21st Nov.

DRAFT