

CAMPBELTOWN TO ARDROSSAN FERRY SERVICE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Transport Scotland published the Scottish Ferries Plan in December 2012 and there was a commitment to introduce a pilot summer seasonal ferry service between Ardrossan and Campbeltown for a period of two years. The first year was introduced without the benefit of any marketing and consequently Transport Scotland agreed to extend the pilot a further year. This year marks the completion of year two and despite a targeted marketing campaign the passenger carrying dropped by 6.5%.
- 1.2 Transport Scotland had commissioned a consultant Vector Research to undertake a monitoring and evaluation survey on the final two years of the pilot service. They conducted a survey of 1,578 passengers on 53 services highlighting that 55.3% of the passengers were using the service for holidays or short breaks to visit family or relatives. The consultant also conducted business surveys with 100 respondents in Campbeltown and south Kintyre. The preliminary findings from a business perspective are that 43.5% of respondents claimed that turnover had increased in the past two years with 13% claiming a decrease. Of those claiming an increase 66.7% in Campbeltown/Kintyre stated that the ferry had contributed a minor role although almost one quarter – 23.1% had claimed that the ferry had played a significant role.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee note the report:

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3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 This paper gives an update on the second year of the pilot service operating between Campbeltown and Ardrossan. The second year had the benefit of marketing by the operator CalMac Ferries Ltd (CFL) who had engaged with the ferry sub group under the chairmanship of former Councillor Mr. John Semple. There had also been new signage installed in both Inveraray and Lochgilphead highlighting a seasonal service to Ardrossan from Campbeltown.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 That the Committee note the contents of the report

5.0 Detail

The season commenced on the 1st May and was scheduled to operate until 28th September. The timetable which had been subject to extensive discussion both with Transport Scotland and CFL in order to achieve a change that would suit potential users from and to Kintyre remained the same as 2013.

The fares for a driver/passenger saver 5 day return was £16.45, single £9.80 and for a car £60.00 single or £102 for a 5 day saver return.

Marketing was achieved through the Days Out brochure produced by CFL highlighting a Kintyre Sunday lunch cruise, this brochure also promoted Campbeltown and the wider Kintyre area through the Discover More pages with specific reference to the Kintyre trail and the Kintyre Way. 75,000 copies of the brochure were distributed to Port offices, tour shops and all Visit Scotland Information Centres.

There was further marketing through the CFL GoExplore brochure that provided more detailed information on destinations within Kintyre, how to get there and local activities and events. 2014 also featured the year of Homecoming and the Commonwealth Games centred in Glasgow.

Transport Scotland had commissioned the consultants Vector Research to undertake a monitoring and evaluation survey that would extend over the remaining two years of the pilot. The first year report has yet to be published but during the course of this season the on board survey covered 1,578 passengers on 53

services. Business surveys were also undertaken with 100 respondents in Campbeltown and south Kintyre. The preliminary findings from a business perspective are that 43.5% of respondents claimed that turnover had increased in the past two years with 13% claiming a decrease. Of those claiming an increase 66.7% in Campbeltown/Kintyre stated that the ferry had contributed a minor role although almost one quarter – 23.1% had claimed that the ferry had played a significant role.

The household surveys revealed that there was a 99% awareness of the pilot service with 42% usage.

The passenger surveys identified 55.3% of the trips were for holiday or short breaks with the largest percentage (18.1%) using the service to visit friends and relatives.

The full report is expected to be published early in 2015.

5.1 Usage

The table shows the passenger /vehicle returns for the second year compared to those achieved in 2013.

	2014	2013
Passengers Arriving	3,645	3,686
Passengers Departing	3,341	3,798
Total	6,986	7,484
Cars	1,200	1,226
No. Of sailings	107(8 cancellations)	106(8 cancellations)

It is disappointing to note a downturn in passenger numbers although with the Commonwealth Games this year it is considered that a number of visitors will have chosen to visit Glasgow and not extend their tour.

The most recent ferry sub group meeting held in Campbeltown to discuss the ferry service highlighted the need to re-visit the timetable to help ensure that the pilot service is successful.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The second year of the pilot service was marketed strongly through CalMac ferries but despite this the passenger carrying figures were down by approximately 6.5%. The consultants appointed by Transport Scotland to monitor and evaluate the services have yet to publish their first year results with a full report due following on from the conclusion of the final year of the pilot in September 2015. EDST staff will continue to work with key stakeholders to promote the benefit of the service to the Kintyre area and lobby Cal Mac for improvements to the timetable and a continuation of marketing and promotion.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1	Policy	None
7.2	Financial	none.
7.3	Legal	None
7.4	HR	None.
7.5	Equalities	None
7.6	Risk	That the ferry service is not continued upon the conclusion of the three year pilot.
7.7	Customer Services	Campbeltown and south Kintyre in particular will lose a direct ferry link to the detriment of both tourism and business.

Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure

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