



**Argyll and Bute Council**  
**Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal Agus Bhòid**

*Executive Director: Douglas Hendry*

*Kilmory, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RT*  
*Tel: 01546 602127 Fax: 01546 604435*  
*DX 599700 LOCHGILPHEAD*  
*25 January 2021*

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

A meeting of the **COWAL TRANSPORT FORUM** will be held via **SKYPE** on **MONDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2021** at **10:00 AM**, which you are requested to attend.

Douglas Hendry  
Executive Director

**BUSINESS**

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3. MINUTES** (Pages 3 - 10)  
Minutes of the meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum as held on Monday 16 November 2020.
- 4. FERRIES UPDATE**
  - (a) Caledonian MacBrayne (Pages 11 - 12)
  - (b) Western Ferries
  - (c) Gourock to Dunoon Ferry Service
  - (d) Shore Side Infrastructure at Dunoon (Pages 13 - 14)
- 5. POLICE SCOTLAND**
- 6. TRANSPORT SCOTLAND**
  - (a) VMS and Manual Signs
  - (b) A83 (Pages 15 - 16)
- 7. PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

- (a) Reduced Bus Services (Pages 17 - 18)
- (b) Bus Stop at Rest and Be Thankful
- (c) Dial-A-Bus

**8. TIMBER TRANSPORT GROUP**

**9. ROADS UPDATE**

- (a) Carriageway Roundels and Additional Signage at Colintrave
- (b) Traffic Management in Tighnabruaich, Kames and Millhouse

**10. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

**11. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- Monday 24 May 2021

**Cowal Transport Forum**

Councillor Alan Reid (Chair)

Contact: Adele Price-Williams, Senior Committee Assistant - 01546 60440

**MINUTES of MEETING of COWAL TRANSPORT FORUM held by SKYPE  
on MONDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2020**

**Present:** Councillor Alan Reid (Chair)  
Councillor Bobby Good  
Councillor Jim Anderson

**Attending:** Gordon Ross – Western Ferries  
Iain Slorach – Client Manager, Calmac  
Tommy Gore – Area Operations Manager, Calmac  
Iain Catterwell – Timber Transport Group  
Chief Inspector Douglas Wilson – Police Scotland  
Neil MacFarlane – Transport Scotland  
Murray Rogers – West Coast Motors  
Cathleen Russell – Colintrave & Glendaruel Community Council  
Iain McInnes – Lochgoil Community Council  
Graham Revill – Kilmun Community Council  
Wyllie Lynch – Dunoon Community Council  
Gordon Ramsay – Transport Scotland  
Scott Brown – Jacobs  
John Redpath - Jacobs  
Jeff McCormick – West Coast Motors  
Melissa Stewart – Governance Officer  
Ronnie McAlister – Bute Community Council

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for absence were intimated by:

Councillor Audrey Forrest  
Paul Paterson - Kilfinan Community Council;  
Stuart Watson – Assistant Network and Standards Manager, Argyll and Bute Council;  
Alistair McLundie – Western Ferries;  
Michael Breslin – South Cowal Community Council;  
Martin Arnold – Contract Officer, Argyll and Bute Council; and  
Marta Zawadzka – Community Transport Officer, Argyll and Bute Council.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Bobby Good made a financial declaration of interest in item 7 (a) on the basis he is a part-time employee of West Coast Motors. He remained in the call taking no part in the short discussion.

**3. MINUTES**

The minute of the meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum held on the Monday 24 August 2020 was approved as a correct record.

**4. FERRIES UPDATE**

(a) **Caledonian MacBrayne**

The Forum noted that sailings were back to a two vessel timetable which would be continued into the winter period with an amended timetable in place to accommodate the Gourock linkspan works where works were progressing well with completion on schedule for mid-December.

The Forum also noted that passenger carries were down to 54% for September on the Dunoon/Gourock route but 99% of sailings were on time and 88 sailings cancelled due to adverse weather. In respect of the Colintraive/Rhubodach route there has been no cancelled sailings but there was a big dip in carryings.

Calmac representatives confirmed that the late night sailings on a Friday and Saturday would be resumed once the opening time restrictions on licensed premises had been lifted.

Discussion focused on the deployment of the Coruisk. She is currently deployed on the Rothesay-Wemyss Bay service, but will be available for the Dunoon-Gourock service once the Gourock linkspan works are completed. When either the Ali Cat or the Argyll Flyer are in dry dock during the January-March period, the Coruisk will be deployed to cover the sailings normally operated by the Ali Cat and the vessel which is not in dry dock will be deployed to cover the sailings normally operated by the Argyll Flyer.

**Outcome**

The Forum;

1. noted the position; and
2. agreed that Calmac would notify the Forum as soon as the linkspan works are completed.

(b) **Western Ferries**

Gordon Ross updated the Forum that periods of inclement weather had resulted in a small number of sailings being cancelled and a small issue with a vessel had been quickly resolved. The Forum noted that they had now moved into new offices and the temporary ticket kiosk had been removed with some works still to be done to the staff parking area. A new bike rack would be installed but disability spaces were now reopen.

Discussion focused how it was hard to predict capacity issues due to closures at the Rest and Be Thankful as this is countered by November being a quiet time of year plus the re-introduction of travel restrictions effecting traffic levels.

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the update.

(c) **Gourock to Dunoon Ferry Service**

As there was no one present from the Ferries Division of Transport Scotland to speak to the issues so the Forum agreed to continue the item.

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the position and agreed to continue the item.

(d) **Shore Side Infrastructure at Dunoon**

As there was no representatives present the Forum noted the circulated presentation by CMAL which updated them on the Gourock/Dunoon project

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the presentation.

**5. POLICE SCOTLAND**

Chief Inspector Douglas Wilson, Police Scotland, gave an update on matters he had recently been attending which included being back to business in terms of traffic volume and speeding vehicles and stressed that most speeding was done by local people on the main roads and that Police Scotland were producing leaflets and posters to share with community councils to raise awareness through education. He also spoke about working with Roads in terms of addressing the condition of some road signage and trimming back undergrowth.

The Forum noted that work regarding the motorbike noise was ongoing and was subject to joint working between Police Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council and Transport Scotland and that a full update would be available once the matter was concluded.

Graham Reville, Kilmun Community Council highlighted potential speeding by timber lorries at Clachaig and asked whether leafleting haulage companies could be undertaken. Iain Catterwell did not consider that leafleting would be the correct way to address concerns and invited Graham to contact him with information.

**Outcome**

The Forum;

1. noted the update; and
2. agreed that Police Scotland would circulate leaflets and posters about speeding to community councils as soon as they were available for distribution.

**6. TRANSPORT SCOTLAND**

(a) **VMS and Manual Signs**

Neil MacFarlane, Transport Scotland updated the Forum in relation to VMS and manual signs which included that the intermittent issues with the new VMS was because they are solar powered and are not getting enough sunlight.

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the update.

(b) **A83**

Neil MacFarlane, Transport Scotland circulated a list of notable Transport Scotland roadworks on A83 and A82 Loch Lomondside for the next quarter as follows;

<b>Location</b>	<b>Works Description</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Rest and be Thankful	Landslide Mitigation	Ongoing	Ongoing
Glen Kinglas	Landslide Mitigation	November 20	Until Spring

**Resurfacing Projects**

<b>Scheme Name</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>TM Type</b>	<b>Timing</b>
A82 Bandry	8d	17-Nov-20	Convoy	Nightshift
A82 South of Falls of Falloch Phase 2	6d	30-Nov-20	Convoy	Dayshift
A82 North of Luss	10d	31-Jan-21	Convoy	Nightshift
A82 North of Aldochlay	10d	14-Feb-21	Convoy	Nightshift
A83 Butterbridge to Dunoon Jct	19d	01-Nov-20	Convoy	Nightshift
A83 Cairndow North Junction	5d	24-Nov-20	Convoy	Nightshift
A83 Drishaig to Strone	3d	01-Dec-20	Road Closure	Nightshift
A83 North of Strone Point	1d	06-Dec-20	Road Closure	Nightshift
A83 Oyster Bar	3d	08-Dec-20	Convoy	Dayshift
A83 South of Succoth Resurfacing	2d	11-Dec-20	Convoy	Dayshift
A83 Butterbridge to Dunoon Jct Ph2	10d	17-Jan-21	Convoy	Nightshift
A83 West of A815 Junction	8d	31-Jan-21	Convoy	Nightshift

Discussion focussed on the use of social media to update people with the message being to check before they start their journey with Twitter being noted as the most frequently updated. The Forum noted that not everyone had access to social media and questioned whether local and national radio stations could fill this gap. Neil confirmed that notification was provided to the radio stations although commented some were better than others at passing on this information.

Scott Brown from the Jacobs engineering group spoke to a presentation shared on the call in relation to the 11 corridor options under consideration for the Rest and be Thankful along with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) process for the project. The Forum noted that Jacobs were currently at the start of the process in DMRB stage 1 after a 5 week data collection consultation with stakeholders had closed with over 600 responses which were now being reviewed. It was anticipated that in Spring 2021 they will be in position to announce the preferred corridor and the Forum noted that the process was lengthy due to having to follow statutory procedures and practices.

The Forum further noted that the current mitigation measures are hoped to be completed by the end of the month allowing the A83 to re-open and that Neil MacFarlane would speak directly with Bear Scotland regarding the perception that the only diversion route available after 6pm was the A82 when Western Ferries provide an alternative option until 10pm.

### **Outcome**

The Forum noted the update.

## **7. PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

### **(a) Reduced Bus Services**

Murray Rodger, West Coast Motors stated that whilst working in conjunction with the council they could confirm that additional journeys on routes 480, 482 and 489 have been implemented as of today which took them to 80% normal capacity with updated timetables to be added at bus stops and sent to community councils to put up on notice boards. The Forum noted that in addition the printed timetables will have QPR codes on them to take people straight to the website for the latest updates.

Concerns were expressed that bus services had still not returned to pre-Covid levels of service. Murray Rogers explained that passenger numbers had not returned to pre-Covid levels and they relied on fare income as well as grants to cover their costs. Although the Scottish Government had provided an increased amount of grant, this was not enough to cover the cost of providing the pre-Covid level of service.

Discussion focused on the additional time and expense required to keep the buses safe and clean in light of covid-19 restrictions and how this time needed to be incorporated into timetables to remain compliant with the safety measures.

### **Outcome**

The Forum;

1. noted the position;
2. agreed to pass a query from Ronnie McAlister regarding the experience of Stantec in dealing with rural transport issues to Martin Arnold to respond to; and

3. requested that Martin Arnold distribute updated timetables as soon as possible.

**(b) Bus Stop at Rest and Be Thankful**

Following on from a desk top exercise to apply for funding and request changes to the TRO Roads had identified actions as follows;

1. A change to existing TRO;
2. Change direction of traffic to an anti -clockwise direction. Adjust signage to suit;
3. Signage for Service Buses only; and
4. Widen carriageway in turning area to accommodate tourist coaches.

The Contract Officer advised in a previously circulated update that they were awaiting a response from Roads regards this and that there was no update from Public Transport.

The Chair asked whether West Coast Motors would be stopping the use of the bus stop between November and the beginning of March, as had been the case in previous years. He pointed out that the weather in November was mild and asked if they needed to stop the use of the bus stop as early as 1 November. Jeff advised that although the weather was mild at present they had to notify the public and register for the amended service. On this basis it is not possible to fit in with milder weather patterns.

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the position.

**(c) Dial-A-Bus**

Having submitted his apologies the Contract Manager circulated the below update in advance of the meeting;

We are working on a new leaflet and poster, now that the Dial-a-Bus is back to operating full time. We will disseminate this to forum when it is complete. Currently scheduled to come out along with other timetable publicity material in time for next Summer season. I appreciate that this has been on the agenda for some time, but we are currently prioritising replacing at-stop timetable panels across Argyll and Bute on the run up to Christmas.

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the position.

**(d) Kames Bus Stop**

The Forum noted the update from the Contract Officer that Roads had put bus stop cage in most suitable location from a road safety point of view. The Chair confirmed that he had raised with Kilfinan Community Council who confirmed that the matter was now resolved.

**Outcome**



The Forum agreed to take the item off the agenda.

## 8. **TIMBER TRANSPORT GROUP**

Iain Catterwell, Timber Transport Group updated the Forum with the detail on the works of the Group which included that surfacing works on passing place creation would be completed with tarring done by end of the day and that a feasibility study for a dedicated haulage diversion route in Glen Croe for timber lorries only when the A83 and Old Military Road were unavailable was being undertaken.

### **Outcome**

The Forum;

1. noted the update provided; and
2. noted that the voluntary agreement with timber lorries avoiding travelling through Tighnabruaich during school opening and closing times would be issued to hauliers as a reminder by Iain Catterwell.

## 9. **ROADS UPDATE**

### (a) **Carriageway Roundels and Additional Signage at Colintrave**

The Forum noted the below as submitted in the absence of an Officer from Roads;

**Colintrave:** We are currently pulling together a list of additional road marking works in Cowal concentrating on junction marking refreshment and we will have this location included on these works. We have still to carry out the road marking work to our capital reconstruction sites for Bute and Cowal and this work will be done at the same time. The package of work will be issued before the end of November 2020 with the works to be done as and when the weather allows.

**White Lining:** We have added the training for using the road marking trailer to our training program which is collated and managed centrally by the HQ team at Lochgilphead for all of Operational services. There is a limited budget for training and so our training requirements are prioritised. Until we can gain the training we will continue to utilise the framework for road marking contractors. The trailer only allows for hand applied road markings and short lengths of edge and centre line to be placed such as give way, stop, disabled bays, parking bays, TRO's, bus stops etc. For long lengths, generally greater than 200m, of edge and centre line this needs to be applied by machine which is done by line marking contractor.

**Cairndow:** This did get missed the last time the road marking contractor was in the area despite requesting this to be done twice. We are currently pulling together a list of additional road marking works in Cowal concentrating on junction marking refreshment and we will have this location included on these works. We have still to carry out the road marking work to our capital reconstruction sites for Bute and Cowal and this work will be done at the same time. The package of work will be issued before the end of November 2020 with the works to be done as and when the weather allows.

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the position and agreed that give way lining should be prioritised as a matter of urgency due to ongoing safety issues at road junctions.

(b) **Speed Surveys**

The Forum discussed the submitted dataset in relation to traffic speed surveys conducted at the start of the year.

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the position.

(c) **Traffic Management in Tighnabruaich, Kames and Millhouse**

As there was no one present from Kilfinan Community Council to give an update there was no discussion on the item.

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the position and agreed to continue the item.

**10. PROPOSED ARGYLL RALLY**

The Forum considered a letter and a frequently asked questions update from Mull Car Club which was issued to community councils in relation to ongoing arrangements for Dunoon Presents Argyll Rally due to take place on 25 and 26 June 2020.

Discussion focused on concerns around how proposed road closures might impact on residents. It was noted that Mull Car Club were now engaging well with the community councils and Police Scotland and were open to continued discussion which would be further benefited by consulting with West Coast Motors.

**Outcome**

The Forum noted the position.

**11. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

None

**12. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was agreed that the future meetings of the Cowal Transport Forum would be held;

- Monday 1 February 2021; and
- Monday 24 May 2021.

Hi Adele and Alan

Happy New Year to you both!

I know I took an action away after the last Cowal Transport Forum regarding deployment of MV Coruisk on the Gourock/Dunoon route. As you are probably aware, with the delayed work on Gourock linkspan to 16<sup>th</sup> February at the earliest, MV Coruisk is in layup at Troon now until further notice, as she can only operate on the route with the linkspan and the boat steps. We have also only received funding for her to operate her usual commuter runs from Transport Scotland, and not to operate in full in replacement of MV Ali Cat.

I'm afraid I'm not in a position as yet to advise on the docking dates for MV Ali Cat and MV Argyll Flyer this year as these remain very fluid. As soon as these are confirmed I will share these with you and the forum.

Kind regards

Tommy Gore  
**Area Operations Manager (Clyde)**

**CalMac Ferries Limited**  
Ferry Terminal Gourock PA19 1QP



w: [www.calmac.co.uk](http://www.calmac.co.uk)

Enquiries and Reservations 0800 066 5000

---

This page is intentionally left blank

Update from Marine Operations Manager;

*A contract was awarded to Mott MacDonald on 14th January 2021 for the compilation of an Outline Business Case (OBC); the OBC will consider the feasibility of various design solutions to ensure safe berthing of the proposed new vessel (detailed specification to be provided by CMAL) at both Dunoon and Kilcreggan. Mott MacDonald is currently working, on behalf of CMAL, on an Outline Business Case to consider development options at Gourock – this is as a result of Transport Scotland’s decision to introduce new vessels on the Gourock, Kilcreggan and Dunoon triangle. The OBC for Dunoon and Kilcreggan is expected to be complete by August of this year.*

*As part of the work to be carried out by Mott MacDonald on the OBC, a public consultation will take place – so, public will be given an opportunity to comment on our plans.*

This page is intentionally left blank

**Major Transport Infrastructure Projects**

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF  
kimberley.hughes@transport.gov.scot



CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Mr Alan Reid  
[Alan.Reid@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Alan.Reid@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Our ref:  
2020/0004528

Date:  
January 2021

Dear Mr Reid,

**A83 Access to Argyll and Bute**

Thank you for your email of 05 December 2020 to Michael Matheson, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity regarding the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful and the Old Military Road diversion. Mr Matheson has asked me to thank you for your email and to respond on his behalf.

The Scottish Government is committed to an infrastructure solution to address the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslip risks. Delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority and we will continue to seek ways to achieve that as quickly as possible, noting all of the options require complex Civil Engineering.

The recognised UK wide process for the assessment of roads schemes is set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB). We adopt this process because it has been proven to provide a robust evidence base for decision making and firm justification for the use of Compulsory Purchase of land (CPO) which is likely to be required to deliver this scheme. The process also ensures that environmental impacts form a central part of decision making and that people, communities, landscape and ecology are properly protected.

The overall process itself is explained on our project website at  
<https://www.transport.gov.scot/projects/a83-access-to-argyll-and-bute/project-details/#64778>

You have raised the issue of land acquisition and compensation. The process surrounding CPO is carried out in two stages. First we must justify the principle of the acquisition of third party land. That is the public local inquiry process and matters of compensation do not fall under the jurisdiction of the inquiry. The test is whether the Acquiring Authority is justified in using its powers of CPO. That is why the DMRB evidenced based process is so important.

On the basis that consent to proceed with the acquisition is granted, the second stage is the negotiation of compensation. As you say this is a recognised independently led process governed by the statutory compensation code and managed by the Valuation Office.



Negotiations are generally carried out beyond the point the land is acquired and are not an impediment to the Acquiring Authority taking title or starting works. Any unresolved compensation disputes may be settled at the Lands Tribunal.

We recognise that the timescales for developing an alternative to the current route and finding a long-term solution to the challenges created by the Rest and Be Thankful section of the A83 are frustrating for the local community. However, it is important that the correct statutory process is followed to ensure a fair and transparent assessment of options and impacts on local communities and road users. We remain committed to progressing substantial shorter-term investment in the existing A83 in tandem with the work to identify a permanent solution as part of a two-phased approach.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Kimberley Hughes  
Project Administrator



**Bus, Accessibility & Active Travel**

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road  
Glasgow G4 0HF  
[trish.mccotter@transport.gov.scot](mailto:trish.mccotter@transport.gov.scot)



CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Mr Alan Reid

[Alan.Reid@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Alan.Reid@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Our ref:  
2020/0004529

Date:  
23 December 2020

Dear Mr Reid

Thank you for your email of 5 December to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity in respect of funding for rural bus services. I have been asked to respond.

We know that bus services are vital in keeping Scotland moving during the COVID-19 pandemic, be it helping people get to work, access health services and essential shopping, or meeting family and friends

Since receiving your email we have announced that we are providing up to £29 million in further funding to support bus operators with maintaining bus services up to 31 March 2021. This is in addition to the £162.3 million in funding that the Scottish Government has already provided to support bus services to date. This funding is to help operators to cover the expected loss of fare-paying passenger revenue that they continue to experience due to physical distancing requirements and reduced demand. We are also maintaining concessionary travel reimbursement and Bus Service Operator Grant payments at pre COVID-19 levels where we would normally spend over £260 million. We will continue to work with the bus industry and local authorities to provide a safe, flexible bus network for those who need it.

However, even with Scottish Government financial support and bus service levels at 95% of pre-Covid levels on average, bus operators in consultation with local transport authorities are having to make difficult decisions about where best to deploy the capacity they have, to meet current demand and reduce the risk of overcrowding on busier routes. Local authorities also have a duty to identify whether there is a social need for particular services and can subsidise these at their discretion. Local authorities and regional transport partnerships already have powers to secure additional bus services to meet local transport needs and funding for this is included in the local authority general revenue grant. In 2018-19, £57 million was provided in this way. The decision to subsidise services is solely a matter for local authorities and the Scottish Government has no power to intervene.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful.

Yours sincerely

Trish McCotter  
Bus Funding Policy

[www.transport.gov.scot](http://www.transport.gov.scot)

Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

This page is intentionally left blank