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MINUTES of MEETING of CAMPBELTOWN FERRY COMMITTEE held in the CONFERENCE ROOM, AQUALIBRIUM, CAMPBELTOWN on TUESDAY, 23 AUGUST 2016

Present: Councillor John Armour (Chair)
Shona Barton, Area Committee Manager, Argyll and Bute Council
Simon Richmond, Area Operations Manager, Calmac
Angela Herd, Calmac
Mairi Paterson, Explore Campbeltown
Ewen McDonald, Explore Campbeltown
Ruaridh Wilson, West Coast Motors

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were intimated on behalf of:-

Councillor Anne Horn;
Ranald Watson, Springbank Distillers;
Kevin Lewis, Machrihanish Dunes; and
Tommy Millar, The Laggan Community Council

Having noted that the Chair, Councillor Horn had sent her apologies the Committee agreed that Councillor John Armour assume the role of Chair for the duration of the meeting.

2. MINUTE OF CAMPBELTOWN FERRY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2016

The Minute of the Campbeltown Ferry Committee meeting held on 15 June 2016 was approved as a true record.

3. CONSULTATION RESPONSE SENT TO CALMAC

The Area Operations Manager of Calmac, Simon Richmond addressed the group in relation to the short timescale for the turnaround of the consultation on the Summer timetable for 2017. He advised that due to pressure of business, there was a shorter than anticipated timeframe to complete and return the document. Mr Richmond advised that the document from Campbeltown Ferry Committee had been received by the Future Planning team at Calmac, and consideration was being given to the comments and wishes of the Committee. Discussion took place in respect of the process now followed by the Future Planning team, with Mr Richmond advising that Transport Scotland are responsible for driving the process and that responses are now being worked through by the Future Planning team ahead of the meetings of the Ferry User Group (FUG) in September. Mr Richmond advised that information relating to the final decision dates on the Summer timetable for 2017 would be clarified at the FUG. Mr Richmond further advised that the Arran Ferry Committee were also looking for an increase in the number of sailings and the length of season. He advised that Transport Scotland would look at the feasibility of requests with consideration being given to both cost and operational aspects. Mr Richmond advised that the Ferry Committee should be invited to send a representative to attend the meeting of the Clyde FUG in September. The Committee agreed that Councillor Armour would be the representative, but he advised that he had not received an invite and requested that the Area Committee Manager liaise with the Strategic Transportation and Infrastructure Manager to ensure that an invite was received.

Further discussion took place in respect of the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET); the Vessel Replacement Strategy and the period of notice for future consultations. The Area Committee Manager requested that the group be given advance notice of the timelines in order to arrange meetings to coincide with responding to consultations. Mr Richmond agreed to take the comments of the Committee on board.

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to note the information provided by the Area Operations Manager, Calmac.

4. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Area Committee Manager provided an update on the membership of the Committee. Mrs Barton advised that letters had been issued to those previously identified as potential members. She advised that there had been 3 positive responses from West Coast Motors, Explore Kintyre and Jim Martin Supplies. She advised that she would update the membership list to include the details of those interested parties.

Councillor Armour advised that he had made contact with NFU, and was currently waiting on them to identify the most appropriate individual. Councillor Armour advised that he would make further contact with NFU in this regard and that he would make contact with local haulage companies to see if they were interested in becoming involved. The Area Committee Manager agreed to invite local MSP Mike Russell to future meetings of the Committee and progress the notice for an independent traveller to be displayed in Harbour office.

Outcome:

The Committee agreed:-

1. To note the progress to date on the Membership of the group; and
2. Requested that the Area Committee Manager provide an update at the next meeting, outlining the responses to the notice for the independent traveller.

5. FUTURE ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

The Area Committee Manager sought the thoughts of the Committee in relation to the future administrative arrangements of the group. She advised that previously it had been agreed to reduce the role of the Council's Governance and Law Department when the group had established itself. Mrs Barton suggested that the status quo remain until the conclusion of the consultation process plus one meeting. Discussion took place in respect of the FUG meeting in September and the likely number of Ferry Committee meetings before the year end, with the Area Operations Manager of Calmac offering advice on how other Ferry Committees are structured.

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to review future administrative arrangements in the early part of the new year.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Ruairidh Wilson of West Coast Motors suggested that public transport should tie in with the ferry timetable. Mr Richmond agreed to provide Mr Wilson with the contact details of the appropriate person from Calmac in this regard.
- Discussion took place on the new vessel “Catriona” for the Claonaig to Lochranza route, with Mr Richmond advising that it is anticipated that she would be on the network from next year.
- Discussion took place on the disruption to the Campbeltown to Ardrossan service caused by the fault in the propulsion system on the Isle of Arran vessel, with Councillor Armour advising of the negative feeling towards the service. He advised that many believed that the term “technical issues” was being used to cover a wide variety of matters at times where greater detail would be appreciated. Mr Richmond agreed to look into the possibility of running a press release outlining the factual information on the difficulties faced.

Date of next meeting:-

The Committee agreed that the date of the next meeting should be arranged following the Clyde Ferry User Group meeting in September.