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MINUTES of MEETING of COWAL TRANSPORT FORUM held in the TIMBER PIER BUILDING, DUNOON on FRIDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2016

Present: Councillor Alex McNaughton (Chair)

Attending: Lorna Elliott, Community Governance Manager, Argyll and Bute Council
Kevin McIntosh, Contracts Manager, Argyll and Bute Council
Martin Arnold, Public Transport Officer, Argyll and Bute Council
Sgt Crawford Richmond, Police Scotland
Verina Litster, Scottish Fire and Rescue
Simon Richmond, Calmac
David Black, Calmac
Cynitha Spencer, Calmac
Alistair McLundie, Western Ferries
Paul Sexton, Scottish Water
Kirsty Stoddart, Scottish Water
Archie Reid, Strachur Community Council
Willie Lynch, Dunoon Community Council
Cathy Morrison, South Cowal Community Council
Iain McInnes, Lochgoil Community Council
Graham Revell, Kilmun Community Council
Iain MacNaughton, Sandbank Community Council

1. APOLOGIES

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

Apologies for absence were intimated by:

Gordon Ross, Western Ferries
Paul Farrell, Argyll and Bute Council
Keith Murray, Transport Scotland
Scott Goodwill, Calmac
Fulton McInnes, Hunters Quay Community Council

The Chair took the opportunity to thank all participants for their commitment and attendance throughout the year.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTE OF THE LAST MEETING OF COWAL TRANSPORT FORUM HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2016

The Minute of the previous meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum held on 2 September 2016 was approved as a true record.

Having noted the other commitments of some participants of the meeting, the Chair agreed to take the agenda items out of sequence.

4. ROADS UPDATE

(a) Turning Circle

The Forum gave consideration to a verbal update from the Council's Contract Manager. Mr McIntosh outlined the steps taken by officers investigating the issues and also the difficulties faced in obtaining and maintaining a traffic order. Mr McIntosh further advised that the issue appeared to be a reluctance by the bus company to use the area. Discussion took place in respect of evidence gathered by residents of vehicles parked in the area, including heavy good vehicles; the inability of Police Scotland in the absence of a traffic order, the value of works undertaken to create the turning circle and the need to find a resolution to the issue as soon as possible.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to:

1. note the information provided by the Contracts Manager; and
2. requested that the Chair, Councillor McNaughton progress the issue through the appropriate Council channels.

(b) Congestion at Hunters Quay

The forum gave consideration to updates from both Argyll and Bute Council and Western Ferries regarding the flow of traffic during busy periods and in particular the queuing of traffic on live lanes. Captain McLundie provided an update in relation to the link span contingency plans. He further advised that Planning Permission had been granted for the implementation of a fourth link span at McIlroy's Place, and that it was hoped that this would be up and running by Cowal Games weekend 2017. Discussion took place in respect of the congestion with a general agreement that the situation was being handled well and that any congestion was cleared within 5-10 minutes.

Outcome:

The Forum noted the information provided.

(c) Progress Update on Implementation of VMS Signs

Argyll and Bute Council's Contracts Manager provided an update in relation to the implementation of VMS signage in the area. Mr McIntosh

outlined the measures being put in place on the A815 at Kilmun and A815 at Strachur; the possibility of smaller rolling signs in rural locations; associated installation and maintenance costs and the need to establish a protocol for issuing messages on the signs.

Discussion took place in respect of the extension of Drimsynie Estate and budget constraints. The Contracts Manager agreed to provide an update to Mr McInnes of Lochgoil Community Council by the end of January 2017.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the update provided.

5. PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

(a) Car Parking in Bus Stops at Mustering Area - Dunoon Pier

Argyll and Bute Council's Contracts Manager advised of plans which were being worked on to formalise the area. Mr McIntosh advised that better disabled access; realignment of the portacabin and the extension of the drop off zone featured within the plans, which are being taken forward by the Council's Development and Infrastructure Service. General discussion took place in respect of the obstructions caused, and in particular, by taxis. The Community Governance Manager agreed to draft a letter to the licensing authority regarding this issue on behalf of the forum.

The Community Transport Officer advised that there would be no bus service running during the festive season due to budget restraints. Mr Arnold agreed to look into the possibility of obtaining funding from Transport Scotland for the 2017 festive season.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the updates provided by the Council's Contracts Manager and Community Transport Officer.

6. TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

The Forum gave consideration to a report provided by Transport Scotland outlining works within the 3-year Programme Development. The report highlighted the route, location, work description and estimated value of proposed works within the Cowal area.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the contents of the report.

(Ref: Report by Transport Scotland, dated 9 December 2016, submitted.)

7. FERRIES UPDATE

Simon Richmond of Calmac provided an update in respect of this year's sailing figures advising that the figures for Summer 2016 had seen a 5% decrease, however the figures for the winter season this far are up by 7% which is encouraging. Mr Richmond provided further detail in terms of vessel maintenance and the festive season timetables. David Black of Calmac provided information in relation to the delays in the second stage of the Dunoon – Gourock Passenger Route contract. He advised that this section has been delayed since early September, with no indication from Transport Scotland of when this will be actioned. General discussion was had in this regard, with the Community Governance Manager agreeing to draft a letter to Transport Scotland on behalf of the forum, requesting information on the delay of the ITT document.

Alistair McLundie of Western Ferries updated the forum in respect of the passenger and vehicle figures, noting that these were similar to those of the previous year. Captain McLundie gave further information in relation to the replacement of the old link span and the protection of the old pier at Hunters Quay and the protection of the listed pier at Kilmun. Information was also provided in respect of the festive season timetables.

(a) Improved Port Facilities

The Community Governance Manager provided an update to the group from CMAL in response to the request to be included in the consultation on improved port facilities. Ms Elliott advised that CMAL were still in the process of producing plans for Gourock and that they were on programme for having these available to start discussions with stakeholders early in the new year.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed:

1. to note the updates provided; and
2. requested that the Community Governance Manager draft a letter to Transport Scotland on behalf of the forum, requesting information on the delay of the ITT document.

8. SCOTTISH WATER UPDATE

The forum gave consideration to a presentation providing an overview of the unscreened sewer outfall projects in the Cowal area, specifically in relation to the planned works at Kilmun, Strone, Innellan and Toward. Members of the forum were advised that the indicative programme may change due to service diversions, community events or third party restrictions but were pleased to note that the works at each location would be carried out in short lengths with lights manually controlled during busy periods where necessary.

General discussion took place in relation to septic tank issues in Toward and Kilmun; disruption to traffic and public transport and the private water supplies of residents in rural locations such as Clachaig.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed:

1. to note the contents of the presentation;
2. that progress reports in relation to the unscreened sewer outfalls projects are brought to each meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum until conclusion of the project; and
3. that SEPA be invited to attend the next meeting of the Forum to discuss issues specifically relating to septic tanks.

9. POLICE SCOTLAND

The forum gave consideration to an update from Sgt Richmond outlining the ongoing works of the local police unit, which included the Christmas Drink Drive campaign and maintenance checks on vehicles to ensure that they are road worthy in all weather. Discussion took place in respect of areas where speeding vehicles cause concern; the number of road accidents in the Cairndow area and the local policing plan including a number of efficiencies.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the update.

10. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE

The forum gave consideration to an update by Verina Litster of Scottish Fire and Rescue. Ms Litster spoke of the success of the recent Biker Down campaign, which took place in Oban targeting motorcyclists from all over the area. She advised that there were four people from the Cowal area in attendance. Ms Litster further advised that a new course would be run in the new year.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the information provided.

11. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

Discussion took place in respect of HGV and larger vehicles using the back streets of Dunoon in an effort to avoid the town centre. Concern was raised over the continued use of these streets, which were not designed to carry heavy volumes of traffic and the possible damage that this was causing. The Council's Contracts Manager advised that without specific traffic orders there was nothing that could be done to prohibit this. He suggested that it may be worth carrying out a survey on certain streets, with particular mention of Victoria Road, to ascertain which calming measures could be put in place to alleviate the issues.

Further discussion in relation to the Sandbank area was had with Mr McIntosh outlining the work of the Timber Transport Group.

12. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Forum noted that the next meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum was yet to be arranged.