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MINUTES of MEETING of COWAL TRANSPORT FORUM held in the TIMBER PIER BUILDING, DUNOON on FRIDAY, 10 MARCH 2017

Present: Councillor Alex McNaughton (Chair)
Lorna Elliott, Argyll and Bute Council
Martin Arnold, Argyll & Bute Council
Graham Revill, Kilmun Community Council
Cathy Morrison South Cowal Community Council
Archie Ried Strachur Community Council
Aileen Kerr, Hunter's Quay Community Council
Willie Lynch Dunoon Community Council
Iain McInnes, Lochgoil Community Council
Scott Goodwill CalMac
Simon Richmond CalMac
Keith Murray Transport Scotland
Sgt Paul MacPherson, Police Scotland
Paul Miligan, Scottish Water

1. APOLOGIES

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

Apologies for absence were intimated by:

Councillor Michael Breslin
Sgt Crawford John Richmond, Police Scotland
Callum Robertson, Argyll and Bute Council
Paul Farrell, Argyll and Bute Council
Douglas Blades, Argyll and Bute Council
Kevin McIntosh, Argyll and Bute Council
Stuart Mearns, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
Ben Tustin, SEPA
Jim Frame, SEPA
Gordon Ross, Western Ferries
David Sumsion, Arbour Architecture
Kevin McIntosh, Argyll & Bute Council

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE COWAL TRANSPORT FORUM HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2016

The Minute of the previous meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum held on 9 December 2016 was approved as a true record.

4. TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

The Forum gave consideration to a report by Transport Scotland which included information on planned work to alleviate flooding on the A83 at Tarbet as well as details of work being undertaken at the Rest & Be Thankful, Glenkinglas, Stone Point and south of Furnace.

The meet was also advised that the Minister for Transport and the Islands had written to CityLink in September 2016 asking them to confirm use of the bus turning circle at the top of the Rest & Be Thankful and confirmed that Transport Scotland and Argyll & Bute Council had committed to do winter treatments so that it would be available for use. City Link Board wrote back to say they still are not going to use it over the winter. The Minister wrote to Robert Andrew of Stagecoach on the 14th of November 2016 again on this matter however the response was will in the negative. Discussion followed and it was noted that the matter would be raised again with the Minister at a meeting scheduled for Tuesday 14th March.

The group also noted that a meeting between Transport Scotland, Argyll & Bute Council and Traffic Scotland to discuss the ongoing issue relating to Variable Message Signs has been arranged for the end of March 2017 with a view to resolving the matter.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the update provided by Transport Scotland.

5. FERRIES UPDATE

Simon Richmond of Calmac provided an update in respect of sailing figures; vessel maintenance and confirmed that the current contract has been extended to March 2018 pending the outcome of an ongoing review on whether the route is required to be tendered by the Scottish Government. It was also noted that there has been an increase in the number of incidents involving drunken passengers in recent months.

There was a general discussion on the issues raised including heating on the ferries and a request for information on the pattern of cancelled sailings.

There was no update from Western Ferries. Hunter's Quay Community Council advised the group that they had been unable to obtain a copy of the minutes of a meeting held on the 20th of July 2016 between Argyll & Bute Council Roads Department, Wester Ferries and other interested parties regarding the issue of congestion at Hunter's Quay and requested assistance in tracking down the information

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the update provided and to undertake the following actions:

1. Simon Richmond will provide information on the number and pattern of cancelled sailing to the next meeting.
2. The Chair will take forward the matter of the minute of the meeting on the 20th of July 2016 with the relevant parties.

(a) **Improved Port Facilities**

The Forum gave consideration to an update from CMAL in respect of the consultation on improved port facilities and noted that Simon Richmond will provide more information on the investment plan in due course.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the update provided.

6. PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

The Forum gave consideration to an update from Argyll and Bute Council's Community Transport Officer who advised during the following discussions that:

- The notification that the turning circle at the top of the Rest & Be Thankful is back in use would be issued next week
- The process of adopting the turning circle road is in hand and the TRO process has been initiated.
- Timetabling of the late afternoon bus to Lochgoil on a Friday is currently being looked at and may be tweaked to take into account of the ferry timetable.
- Proposals regarding the Mustering area at the pier have been drawn up and will be considered by the Area Committee in April.
- Tour buses should not use local bus bays for any reason. He confirmed that tour buses were not allowed to park in the bays and requested that any information regarding this matter be forwarded to him so that appropriate action could be taken
- Arrangements would be made to forward the historic photographs of illegal parking in the turning circle at the top of the Rest & Be Thankful to the Roads Department.
- Funding was not available from the Bus Investment Fund for the proposed Christmas Bus Service.
- MacGill's are investigating the anomaly in fares on the service running from Morrison's along Alexandra Parade and that an update will be provided at the next meeting.
- Operational scheduling reasons are being given to explain why the train in Greenock that connects with the ferry is always at Platform 1. The group asked that further investigations be made on the matter.
- School buses used exclusively for school children should display a large yellow sign in the rear window. Scheduled public services that also happened to carry children would not display this sign.
- Road safety education and making the bus stop more obvious is being undertaken in Innellan however there are currently no plans to move the bus stop location.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the information provided.

7. ROADS UPDATE

There was no update from the Roads Department and the group expressed its disappointment that no member of staff had been available to give an update to the meeting.

During discussion it was noted that there had been an unexpected road closure in Argyll Street to lay cables or similar and information on the communication strategy regarding road closures was requested. It was also noted that reinstatement work was of varying standards and information was also requested on the process relating to signing off reinstatement work

Outcome:

1. The Chair will contact the Roads Department to express disappointment that no member of staff had been available to give an update to the meeting.
2. The Roads Department is to be requested to provide information regarding the procedures relating to Road Closures and signing off reinstatement work.

8. SCOTTISH WATER UPDATE

The Forum gave consideration to a verbal update by the Regional Communities Manager of Scottish Water in relation to the progress of the unscreened sewer outfall projects in the Cowal area.

It was noted that communities were content with the communication plan put in place by Scottish Water and that the work had been planned to reduce the impact on traffic in the area. Information is available at www.scottishwater.co.uk/firhof. It was suggested that information regarding road/ lane closures should be sent to all community councils in the area and not just the particular community where the work was taking place so that journeys could be planned ahead accordingly. Dunoon Community Council offered to co-ordinate the distribution of information.

Graham Revill, Kilmum Community Council gave an update on his recent activities relating to mains water supply connection for Cladaig and advised the meeting that he would be shortly meeting the relevant Scottish Government Minister regarding the matter.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the contents of the update.

9. SEPTIC TANK ISSUES

The Community Governance Manager advised that unfortunately SEPA had been unable to attend the meeting today and had submitted apologies. She advised that the Unit Manager for West Highland and Argyll, Jim Frame would be happy to address specific concerns via email.

10. POLICE SCOTLAND

Sergeant Paul MacPherson of Police Scotland provided an update outlining the ongoing works of the local police unit, which included a three week antisocial driving initiative which had been successfully concluded. There was discussion around the issue of speeding in the area and dangerous parking in the Cammisreinach Brae area.

Outcome:

The Forum agreed to note the update. The Chair agreed to raise the matter of traffic warden coverage in the Cammisreinach Brae area internally with the relevant department.

11. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE

There was no update from Scottish Fire & Rescue.

12. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

- Strachur Community Council noted its discontent with the lack of answers regarding the VMS signs which was echoed by partners round the table.
- It was clarified that the A83 Task Force road widening project funding was to be spent in the 2016/17 financial year and the work will be completed by the end of the month.
- Keith Murray advised the group that this would be his last meeting as he was due to retire shortly. The Chair thanked him for his support and commitment to the work of the group and wished Keith well for the future.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Forum noted that the next meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum was yet to be arranged and that there may be some changes in the future due to the new Council which will be elected on the 4th of May 2017.

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