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## MINUTES of MEETING of ARGYLL ISLANDS STRATEGIC GROUP held in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD on TUESDAY, 27 MARCH 2018

**Present:** Councillor Robin Currie (Chair)

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly  
Councillor Jean Moffat

Councillor Aileen Morton  
Councillor Elaine Robertson

**Attending:** Shirley MacLeod, Area Governance Manager  
Cleland Sneddon, Chief Executive  
Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Amenity Services  
Fergus Murray, Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transformation  
Stewart Clark, Marine Operations Manager  
Douglas Whyte, Team Leader – East, Community Services  
Alasdair Angus Calder, Housing Officer  
Councillor Jim Findlay  
Councillor Roddy McCuish

### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Anne Horn, Sir Jamie McGrigor and Len Scoullar.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

### 3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2018

The Minute of the meeting of the Argyll Islands Strategic Group held on 9 January 2018, was approved as a true record.

Councillor Currie enquired as to whether the Marine Operation's Manager had fed the concerns of the group in relation to Ferry Freight Fares to the Scottish Government. Mr Clark confirmed that he had, with the Chief Executive confirming that he had had an opportunity to raise the concerns with the Minister for Transport and the Islands at the recent meeting of the Convention of Highlands and Islands (COHI). Mr Sneddon advised that no decision had been taken as yet, and that the Scottish Government were in a difficult position due to financial constraints. Mr Sneddon further advised that COHI leaders had requested that the Scottish Government bring this piece of work to its conclusion soon.

### 4. OVERVIEW BY THE SCOTTISH MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND THE ISLANDS, HUMZA YUSAF MSP

The Chair, Councillor Currie advised that an invitation had been extended to the Scottish Minister for Transport and the Islands, Humza Yusaf, MSP to attend this meeting of the group. Councillor Currie advised that due to the extension of the consideration of Stage 2 amendments to the Islands (Scotland) Bill, and the Winter Resilience Bill being considered

by the Parliamentary Committee on Wednesday, 28 March 2018, the Minister had no option but to submit his apologies as he required to prepare for both sessions. The Area Governance Manager further advised that she was working with the Minister's office to establish a more suitable date for the Minister to attend a future meeting of the group, and advised that this would be notified to Members in due course.

Members noted their disappointment that the Minister had not been able to attend.

#### **5. UPDATE ON PILOT PROJECT FOR SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ISLAND LIAISON DIRECTORS**

The group gave consideration to a verbal update from the Chief Executive, who advised that the Scottish Civil Service were expected to announce the names of the three senior officers who will take on the role of Island Liaison Directors for Argyll and Bute islands, within the next few weeks. Mr Sneddon hoped to be in a position to introduce them at the next meeting of the group, where they would provide an update in respect of the role they will play over the next eighteen months, noting the need for the work to link directly to and enhance existing CPP structures and areas of work.

##### **Decision:**

The group agreed to note the information provided.

#### **6. UPDATE ON ISLANDS STRATEGIC GROUP**

The Chief Executive advised that there had been no formal meeting of the Islands Strategic Group since July 2017. He advised that the meeting which had been scheduled to take place in December 2017 had been postponed due to severe weather and had yet to be rearranged.

##### **Decision:**

The group agreed to note the information provided.

#### **7. ISLANDS (SCOTLAND) BILL - UPDATE**

The group gave consideration to a report and a verbal update by the Chief Executive in relation to the Islands (Scotland) Bill. Members noted that consideration of the amendments for Stage 2 of the parliamentary process had been extended, and was due to conclude on Wednesday, 28 March 2018. The Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transformation advised that there had been over 80 amendments lodged and outlined the process for revision and Stage 3 of the Bill with Members noting that Parliament will vote on the Bill at Stage 3.

Discussion took place in respect of island proofing; local plans and the National Islands Transport Group.

##### **Decision:**

The group agreed that a progress report be brought to the next meeting of the group.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 27 March 2018, submitted.)

## **8. FUEL POVERTY CONSULTATION - UPDATE REPORT**

The group gave consideration to a report providing an update on the Fuel Poverty Strategy response which the Council had submitted. It also provided an oversight on the issues relating to island areas; funding options and proposed an opportunity for island areas to access further grant funding. Discussion took place in respect of the impact the changing legislation will have on the percentage of homes affected by fuel poverty; the information that will be fed into the Warm Homes Bill and the participation by Argyll and Bute Council in the Scottish Government's Energy Efficiency pilot scheme.

### **Decision:**

The group:-

1. requested that a paper be taken to the September 2018 meeting of the Community Services Committee highlighting the Warm Homes Bill for Scotland;
2. requested that an update on the outcome of the fuel poverty consultation be brought to the August 2018 meeting of the group; and
3. requested that the Area Governance Manager draft a letter to the Scottish Government in consultation with the Chair, highlighting the concerns of the group in relation to the Fuel Poverty consultation.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 27 March 2018, submitted.)

Councillor Morton left the meeting at 12.30pm.

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## **9. TRANSPORT SCOTLAND'S VESSEL REPLACEMENT AND DEPLOYMENT PLAN**

The group gave consideration to a report outlining the progress which has been made against Transport Scotland's ferry service plans to the end of 2016. The report outlined particular points of note, which will have a bearing on the future of the Council's marine infrastructure.

### **Decision:**

The group:

1. noted that Council officers' are working closely with Transport Scotland, CMAL and Calmac to ensure that the goals and priorities identified in the Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan, in relation to the Council's marine infrastructure, remain achievable; and
2. agreed that this item be carried forward as a standing item on all future agendas.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 27 March 2018, submitted.)

## **10. AUDIT ON TRANSPORT SCOTLAND'S FERRY SERVICE**

The group gave consideration to a report providing Members with a review of the Audit Scotland Report on Transport Scotland's ferry services. The report highlighted the recommendations made therein and examined how the audit findings may have a consequential effect on services provided by the Council. It was noted that a meeting of the Islands Transport Group was due to be held on 28 March, which the Council Leader and Head of Roads and Amenity Services would be participating in. In regard the programme of engagement events planned for the National Transport Strategy, it was noted that the only event planned for Argyll and Bute was to take place in Helensburgh, the Leader was asked to raise this at the meeting on 28 March and request that a consultation genet take place on one of the islands within Argyll and Bute.

### **Decision:**

The group noted that Council officers' will continue to engage with their counterparts in Transport Scotland, CMAL and Calmac to ensure, where appropriate, that full cognizance is given to recommendations made in the report, and agreed that this item should be included on the agenda for discussion at the meeting of the group which the Minister for Transport and the Islands attends.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 27 March 2018, submitted.)

Councillor McNeilly left the meeting at 1.15pm.

## **11. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The group gave consideration to a report setting out future meeting dates until June 2019 in order to facilitate the development of a work programme and reporting schedule. The report also sought agreement to include a standard item on agendas, when meetings are taking place on islands, which would permit local groups to attend and present to the meeting on their most important local matters and issues.

### **Decision:**

The group:

1. agreed the following programme of meetings:
  - Tuesday, 29 May 2018 in the Council Chambers, Kilmory, Lochgilphead;
  - Tuesday, 28 August 2018 on the Isle of Gigha;
  - Tuesday, 30 October 2018 on the Isle of Lismore;
  - Tuesday, 8 January 2019 in the Council Chambers, Kilmory, Lochgilphead;
  - Tuesday, 26 March 2019 in the Council Chambers, Kilmory, Lochgilphead;
  - Tuesday, 28 May 2019 on the Isle of Luing; and
2. agreed that when meetings are taking place on islands there is a standard item included on the agenda for local groups to attend and present to the meeting on their most important local matters and issues.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Customer Services, dated 27 March 2018, submitted.)

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