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MINUTES of MEETING of COWAL TRANSPORT FORUM held in the TIMBER PIER BUILDING, DUNOON on MONDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2018

Present: Councillor Alan Reid (Chair)
Councillor Jim Anderson
Councillor Gordon Blair
Councillor Bobby Good
Councillor Audrey Forrest
Stuart McLean, Argyll and Bute Council
Kevin McIntosh, Argyll and Bute Council
Martin Arnold, Argyll and Bute Council
Gordon Ross, Western Ferries
Captain Alistair McLundie, Western Ferries
Simon Richmond, Caledonian MacBrayne
Iain Slorach, Caledonian MacBrayne
Iain McNaughton, Sandbank Community Council
Iain MacInnes, Lochgoil Community Council
Cathleen Russell, Colglen Community Council
Archie Reid, Strachur Community Council
Debbie Donald, Cairndow Community Council
Paul Paterson, Kilfinan Community Council
Iain Catterwell, Argyll Timber Transport Group
Alex Smith, Police Scotland

The Chair ruled, and the Forum agreed to vary the order of business.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were intimated by:

Willie Lynch, Dunoon Community Council
Callum Robertson, Performance Manager Argyll and Bute Council

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were intimated.

3. FERRIES UPDATE

(a) Transport Scotland Ferry Response Letter

The Group considered a letter from the Head of Ferries Policy and Contract Management at Transport Scotland regarding the current ferry provision in Dunoon and a written update detailed below:

Local Engagement

Transport Scotland is committed to ensuring that the views of the residents of the Cowal Peninsula are listened to, which is why we attend the Clyde Ferry Stakeholder Group, organised by HITRANS.

During the most recent meeting of Wednesday 12 December, which was attended by various local stakeholders, elected officials, Argyll Ferries Ltd, Western Ferries (Clyde) Ltd, a range of issues were discussed, including performance of the Gourock to Dunoon Ferry Service.

Transport Scotland receives regular feedback on the views of the local community during our monthly contract review meetings with Argyll Ferries and looks to address these where practicable.

Future of the Gourock to Dunoon Ferry Service

Following the announcement in the Scottish Parliament on 12 December 2018, the Gourock to Dunoon ferry service will transfer to CalMac when the current contract ends in January 2019, becoming part of the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services network.

From the 21 January 2019, CalMac will provide a passenger-only service, in line with the current timetable arrangements, and consideration will be given to improved harbour facilities for passengers.

Discussions will also be held with key stakeholders on the introduction of electric vehicle hubs at both ferry terminals, as well as developing the ferry service to encourage active travel users.

We carefully considered all of the available options in the context of value for money, as recommended in the recent Audit Scotland report. We concluded that cancelling the tender and transferring responsibility for a passenger-only ferry service to CalMac was the most appropriate course of action. This will ensure that the communities continue to benefit from a range of travel options, including a more reliable, efficient and sustainable passenger ferry service into the future.

Further consideration will now be given to vessel and service requirements going forward, in consultation with local stakeholders and trade unions, with a view to ensuring that the ferry service fully meets the needs of the community and passengers.

Gourock to Kilcreggan service

Scottish Ministers welcomed SPT's recent award of a contract to operate the Gourock to Kilcreggan ferry service to a new operator. We are aware that this has seen a significant improvement in the service and that more people are now using the service. Once we are satisfied that the new contract represents the true cost of providing a reliable service, Scottish Ministers will be in a position to consider a transfer of responsibility further.

Outcome

1. The Cowal Transport Forum agreed to write to the Transport Minister and Transport Scotland outlining the key challenges facing the service and suggested solutions, and requesting further details on the impact the decision would have on the service and whether there were any planned improvements for the service.
2. Council Officers to clarify if they anticipate any changes are required to the shore side infrastructure as a result of the decision by Transport Scotland.
3. The Forum expressed disappointment at Transport Scotland not attending the meeting.

Simon Richmond agreed to investigate concerns raised regarding the lack of a bus replacement on occasions when the ferry service was cancelled.

(b) Dunoon to Gourock Ferry Services

Argyll Ferries

Simon Richmond, Caledonian MacBrayne informed the Group that it was business as usual and they hadn't been given any further update on future plans.

Caledonian MacBrayne Services

Simon Richmond from Caledonian MacBrayne informed the Group that work on the slip at Colintraive is now completed and work was planned to start in Rothesay on the 24th January for 16 weeks which would result in one boat berthing at Gourock during this period.

Outcome

Councillor Blair suggested that Caledonian MacBrayne look to apply to Windfarm Trusts for a contribution to toilet facilities for Colintraive.

Western Ferries

Gordon Ross informed the Group that infrastructure works were still ongoing with an estimated completion date of Easter 2019 and that year to date for 2018 Western Ferries ran 22,000 sailings and cancelled 48 sailings.

4. POLICE SCOTLAND

(a) **Road Safety Concerns Regarding Deer on the Carriageways**

Gordon Ross raised concerns regarding deer on carriageways at night and asked Police Scotland if anything can be done to help minimise the problem.

Alex Smith responded that from a policing perspective they can only offer advice in terms of using deer whistles and reducing speed. Mr Smith added they were wild animals and therefore not covered by any policing legislation.

Cathleen Russell informed Mr Ross that a Deer Action Group had been formed and were currently in talks with land owners to investigate what could be done to reduce deer numbers in the area. Mrs Russell suggested that concerns be raised with the Chair of the Deer Action Group.

Outcome

Mrs Russell to provide contact details for Duncan Hunter (Chair of the Deer Action Group) and pass to the Senior Area Committee Assistant.

(b) **What Legislation is Currently in Place to deal with Motorists Driving Under the Speed Limit**

This item was raised by Gordon Ross.

Alex Smith responded that whilst no specific legislation exists careless or dangerous driving legislation could be used if appropriate to deal with anyone driving below the speed limit.

(c) **Motorbike Noise Pollution**

Debbie Donald on behalf of Cairndow Community Council and Alex Smith, Police Scotland held a conversation regarding what could be done to tackle motorbike noise pollution in the Cairndow area as the noise and speed issues were a serious concern for the local community.

It was noted that Police Scotland can stop motorcyclists and check if exhausts meet the legal requirements.

5. MINUTES

The minute of the previous meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum held on the 26th September 2018 was approved as a correct record subject to an additional paragraph at item 7. Timber Transport Group, intimated by Iain McNaughton, Sandbank Community Council:

"Irrespective of the Timber Transport Forum and timber haulage community views Iain MacNaughton of Sandbank Community Council reiterated that the Community Council remained convinced that the issue posed a health and safety risk which could be addressed by the application of mitigating measures such as timber lorries reducing speed when within Sandbank and more assiduous cleaning of vehicles."

6. TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

(a) VMS Update

George Fiddes, Transport Scotland provided the following email update:

The VMS signs are operational and were used during the recent landslide events. There were some minor issues when the VMS boards had 'tripped off' but on these occasions they were quickly rectified by BEAR Scotland. As part of the de-brief exercise for the recent landslide event, options have been identified to improve the operation of the signs and the messages displayed. This has been discussed at the Council liaison meeting with ABC staff.

Outcome

The Group:

1. Requested clarification if the signs only operate when there is an issue.
2. Requested further details concerning why the signs weren't operational during the recent A815 closure.
3. Requested clarification as to whether Argyll and Bute Council had access to the signs to post messages.
4. Requested that the Strachur Bay VMS be anchored in position as the wind is causing it to turn to face the opposite direction.

(b) A83

George Fiddes from Transport Scotland provided the following email update:

The A83 Taskforce meeting was held on the 15th November in Inveraray and was well attended by Council representatives. The Taskforce brings together a range of organisations and local stakeholders including: community representatives, business groups, tourism groups, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park and other groups / individuals who have an interest in the efficient operation of the A83. At the A83 Taskforce meeting held on 15 November 2018, Michael Matheson MSP announced that he had instructed officials to:

(i) explore how Argyll and Bute can be prioritised within the second Strategic Transport Projects Review. This means that the recommendations from STPR2 for Argyll and Bute can be one of the first reported; and

(ii) review the potential for additional physical landslide mitigation measures at the Rest and Be Thankful and to report back to him by mid-February in advance of the next Taskforce meeting in March.

Outcome

1. Iain MacInnes informed the Group that he was still waiting for an agreed meeting with Jim Smith and asked if this could be explored.
2. The Group noted that it was important for Transport Scotland and BEAR to look at the totality of the area in regards to landslide prevention and should not be limited to reactive work at the Rest and Be Thankful.
3. The Group agreed that it would be useful to have a record/map of all the hillsides within Argyll and Bute that pose a risk of subsidence to a public road.
4. Debbie Donald requested that the Safer Roads Foundation report be kept on the agenda.

(c) Butterbridge Car Park

George Fiddes from Transport Scotland provided the following email update:

This is a Trunk Road layby and not a car park. The area of land to the rear of the layby is privately owned. Stockpiling of material has taken place to the rear of the layby in recent months, in agreement with the landowner. This stockpiling was to enable the construction of bunds next to the A83 Trunk Road through Glen Kinglas. If members of the Cowal Transport Forum have any queries with regard to the use of the area of land to the rear of the Trunk Road layby at Butterbridge, then I suggest that they contact the landowner directly. It is also worth noting that there are other Trunk Road laybys further along the A83 in Glen Kinglas also.

Outcome

1. Debbie Donald noted that safety concerns continue to be raised regarding Butterbridge Car Park which was exacerbated by the lack of a pavement.
2. The Group recorded its disappointment at Transport Scotland not attending the meeting and requested representation at the next meeting.

7. ROADS UPDATE

It was noted that Kevin McIntosh was now in a different role and moving forward Stuart Watson or Callum Robertson would be the representative attending the meetings.

(a) **TRO Updates - Dunoon Pier**

Kevin McIntosh informed the Group that Objections to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) at Dunoon Pier were still being processed by officers.

It was noted that plans for the mustering area to be formalised into a car park can't be progressed until the TRO is in place and there is more clarity around the future plans for the passenger ferry service.

(b) **Parking Restrictions- Bus Bays at Queens Hall; Tudor Rooms and Morrisons**

Kevin McIntosh informed the Group that the TRO at the Bus Bays at Queens Hall and an amendment to the TRO regarding the Tudor Tea Rooms and Morrisons were still progressing and that this process was lengthy and involved substantial resourcing.

Outcome

1. Cathleen Russell requested that Community Councils be added to the mailing list that receives notice of TRO's and Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO's), it was noted that this request would go to Stuart Watson.
2. Councillor Blair requested that Elected Members be provided with a Roads and Amenities Staffing update by the Head of Roads and Amenity Services to ascertain if there was enough staff to carry out the work.

(c) **Parked Vehicles on Paving Slabs Outside Argyll Hotel**

Kevin McIntosh informed the Group that funding was available to tackle illegal parking outside the Argyll Hotel. Estimates had been obtained and talks were ongoing with the owners of the Argyll Hotel to erect barriers at the area which would minimise illegal parking.

(d) **Road Markings- Bencorrum Brae; Wellington Street; and Old Police House, Kilmun; Tighnabraich Primary School, Kames Cross Roads**

Kevin McIntosh informed the Group that the laying of road markings was weather dependant and that it was subcontracted. It was noted that the areas highlighted by the Forum had either been completed or are on the list for completion when the weather allows.

Outcome

1. The Forum requested white lining be reinstated in Carrick where the resurfacing works were carried out.
2. The Forum requested temporary markings at the junction at Springfield, Colintrave.

(e) Speeding Issues at Sandbank Road

Kevin McIntosh informed the Group that the latest Sandbank Road speed survey results were currently with Police Scotland and that the average speed was below the speed limit.

The Forum held a conversation regarding methods used for conducting speed surveys and whether Community Councils could put up their own signage to help reduce speeds. Mr McIntosh informed the Group that a Community Council could request permission from the roads authority to erect signage but this would not change the speed limit of the road.

Outcome

1. The Forum requested that a copy of the speed limit policy be circulated to the Group.
2. Iain McNaughton requested a speed survey be carried out on the Sandbank Shore Road and the results be passed to Sandbank Community Council.
3. Debbie Donald requested a speed survey be carried out in Cairndow, specifically closer to the Hydro Cottages.

(f) Speed Surveys: Kirn, Cairndow, Sandhaven to Cothouse, Millhouse and Colintrave

It was noted that these areas remain on the department's workplan and would be acted upon in due course.

(g) Traffic Management in Tighnabruaich, Kames and Millhouse

Signage in the area was still to be looked at.

Outcome

The Group requested that this item be progressed by the Roads department.

8. TIMBER TRANSPORT GROUP

Iain Catterwell informed the Group that it was business as usual, they currently have a £1.5m spend and there was a new route in progress that would be finalised in 2019.

(a) Timber Transport on the B8000

Paul Paterson, Kilfinan Community Council raised the following concerns:

- Residents of Kilfinan had reported that their correspondence was not being replied to.
- There had been incidents of low loaders not using escort vehicles or width flags.
- The B8000 is a restricted road and residents feel the tonnage travelling through is exceeding this.
- Residents reported that the agreed time restrictions within the Timber Transport management plan were not being adhered to.
- Lorries are parking in passing bays.
- There had been damage to walls.

Iain Catterwell informed Mr Paterson that he would look into the issues raised but noted that he currently doesn't have any unanswered correspondence. Mr Catterwell added that the Timber Traffic Management Plan is an agreement but it is not legally binding and sometimes due to unforeseen circumstances, such as road works, the time restrictions cannot always be followed.

It was noted that it was the individual timber management companies' responsibility to engage with local communities before timber is taken out of the area.

Outcome

It was agreed to raise any specific issues regarding timber transport with Iain Catterwell for further investigation.

9. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

(a) Helensburgh - Carrick Castle Bus Service

Martin Arnold informed the Group that the amendment to service 302 was implemented in November 2018 and that he had not yet received an update or feedback from SPT regarding the request that the last service bus of the day should go to Carrick Castle and not terminate at Lochgoilhead but he would undertake to raise this again with SPT.

(b) Bus Stop at Rest and Be Thankful

Martin Arnold informed the Group that this area would continue to be monitored. West Coast Motors had reported that the abuse of this bus stop by touring coaches had declined. Martin advised that there were no plans going forward to erect a camera at the bus stop due to issues of

electricity and maintenance, and also legal problems. He also reported that there were no plans for a barrier due to concerns that this could fail to operate properly and there would be maintenance issues in such a remote area.

(c) **Alexandra Parade Bus**

Martin Arnold reported he had not received a response from McGills regarding the request to introduce a reduced fare on the Dunoon Ferry Terminal to Hunter's Quay along Alexandra Parade route. Martin would continue to chase McGills and report back to the Forum when an update was forthcoming

Outcome

To consider Alexandra Parade Bus at the next meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum.

(d) **Bus Stops, Toward: Update on Site Visit**

It was noted that a site visit to ascertain whether additional bus stops can be erected in Toward was still to be carried out. Martin Arnold confirmed he would take this forward with West Coast Motors.

(e) **Dial-A-Bus**

It was noted that following a suggestion by the Cowal Transport Forum there would be additional advertising to promote Dial-A-Bus usage in the new year.

(f) **Fountain Quay Bus Shelter**

Martin Arnold informed the Group that this item was currently on hold due to the sale of Dunclutha House by Argyll and Bute Council.

(g) **Cowal Games Buses**

Martin Arnold informed the Group that he would write to West Coast motors requesting that the late bus runs to Strachur next year on Cowal Games Saturday.

(h) **482 & 483 Services: Update from Traffic Commissioner**

It was noted that this item was now completed and can be removed from future agendas.

(i) **Kames Bus Stop**

It was clarified that following a recent Community Council meeting the request for this was for bus markings to be painted as close to the shelter as practically possible and the sign to be installed where the lines are painted.

Outcome

Public Transport and Roads department to progress the above request.

(j) 479 Dunoon to Rothesay West Coast Motors Service

Councillor Good informed the Group that West Coast Motors did not run the 479 Dunoon to Rothesay services three times in one month due to ferry cancellations. It was noted that this impacted on residents of Colintrave who use the service.

Outcome

1. Martin Arnold agreed to raise concerns with West Coast Motors regarding the 479 service and to seek clarification on the use of the bus stop at Clyde Street, shore side.

Other Issues

1. The Chair agreed to write to the West Coast Motors head office in Campbeltown expressing concerns over the lack of representation at the meetings.
2. The Area Committee Manager agreed to circulate to the Group the West Coast Motors Christmas holidays timetable.

10. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

The Group held a conversation regarding parking charges over the festive period and bus stops in the Sandhaven to Cothouse area.

Outcome

1. Cathleen Russell sought clarification on what the Council's policy is regarding the waiving of parking charges when certain events are taking place or at certain times of the year.
2. Councillor Blair requested that bus operators be reminded that there is a bus stop between Sandhaven and Inverreck and that the flooding issue at the Cot House bus stop be attended to.

11. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Cowal Transport Forum would be held on:

- Monday 11th March 2019

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