

Island Liaison Partners: Update Paper

Purpose

1. To provide a brief update on Island Liaison Partner activity since the previous update provided at to the Islands' Strategic Group meeting of 28 August 2019.

Backward look

2. Recent activity undertaken by ILPs has included:

- **Islands' Plan** – we provided input into the draft Islands' Plan, including drafting sections on rural healthcare. We continue to liaison with the Scottish Government's Islands' Team on ad hoc matters.
- **Community Planning** – we represented Donna Bell (Argyll and Bute Location Director) at the Community Planning Management Committee in Helensburgh in September and at the CPP meeting Arrochar in December, feeding back to Donna on relevant matters.
- **Community Food Organisations (CFOs)** – following discussion with Stuart Green we used our contacts to highlight the potential financial support available to providers of food for good causes in the smaller islands that do not have formal CFOs but can still potentially assess funding via an existing community organisation.
- **Internal Scottish Government Liaison** – we have provided advice to a number of policy teams on island impact assessments and issues relating to island communities more generally.
- **Colonsay Community Council** – a number of actions (with Argyll and Bute Council on airport staff cover and with Transport Scotland on the definition of 'lifeline services') were progressed following attendance at the community council in October.
- **EU Exit** – while a 'No Deal' exit on 31 January appears unlikely, a potential 'hard exit' at the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020 remains a significant possibility. The impacts of this could be similar in some respects to a 'no deal' EU Exit. Information on Scottish Government preparation for potential 'No Deal' exit from the EU on 31 October 2019 is available at ['Overview of 'No Deal' Preparations'](#). Resilience arrangements are stood down, but remain ready to be reactivated, should that be required.

Forward look

3. We are mindful that it is almost 18 months since our role description was proposed and agreed at the Islands Strategic Group meeting at end of August 2018.

We feel there's been some value in our role, even though it has perhaps been more limited than initially envisaged due to the need to juggle competing priorities.

4. Since our roles were first agreed, the Scottish Government has established a dedicated Islands' Policy Team, now 7 strong, and mostly island based with responsibility for acting as a bridge between SG and island communities. Given this, we propose that over the next few months we liaise with Donna Bell and Argyll and Bute Council officers to consider whether the role continues and, if so, what the approach to future engagement may be.

5. In addition, the group will wish to note that Dannie Onn is due to retire from the Scottish Government in early February and will therefore be finishing in his role as liaison partner.

Island Liaison Partners
January 2020