

DUNOON TO GOUROCK FERRY SERVICE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides Members with some of the background relating to the Dunoon to Gourock ferry service, along with plans for the future.
- 1.2 The Scottish Government announced in December 2018 that the Dunoon to Gourock ferry service would transfer to Calmac, becoming part of the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services network. It was also announced by the Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, Mr Paul Wheelhouse MSP, that the service would continue to operate as passenger-only.
- 1.3 The Gourock Harbour Infrastructure & Vessels Project (GHIVP) group has now met on three separate occasions. The group is formed of representatives from Transport Scotland (TS), CMAL, Calmac and Argyll and Bute Council. TS leads this meeting; Council officers have been invited to the last two meetings. The project aims to achieve: delivery of new vessels along with harbour infrastructure upgrades at Gourock and, where appropriate, Dunoon and Kilcreggan. Whilst the group will consider upgrades at both Dunoon and Kilcreggan to suit berthing requirements, the Council as asset owner, will be responsible for all related decisions and delivery of any proposed schemes.
- 1.4 As Gourock is currently unable to accept vehicular traffic and is therefore unavailable as a back-up (or port of refuge) for the Rothesay to Wemyss Bay ferry, Calmac has approached the Council with a view to using the link-span at Dunoon if/when the need arises. Discussions are ongoing between Council officers and Calmac staff.
- 1.5 To a large extent, Council plans to re-develop Dunoon, and possibly Kilcreggan, must remain on hold until TS and CMAL can advise of their plans for the new ferry vessel. In the meantime, Council officers will continue to liaise with TS, CMAL and Calmac.
- 1.6 It is recommended that members consider this report.

DUNOON TO GOUROCK FERRY SERVICE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report provides Members with some of the background relating to the Dunoon to Gourock ferry service, along with plans for the future.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members consider this report.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Scottish Government announced in December 2018 that the Dunoon to Gourock ferry service would transfer to Calmac, becoming part of the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services network. It was also announced by the Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, Mr Paul Wheelhouse MSP, that the service would continue to operate as passenger-only.
- 4.2 The Scottish Government has stated that it is committed to delivering a passenger-only ferry service between Gourock and Dunoon with improved reliability and resilience.
- 4.3 The above Scottish Government decisions, and resultant plans by Transport Scotland, are likely to impact on the Council's marine infrastructure at Dunoon and, possibly, Kilcreggan.

5.0 DETAIL

- 5.1 The Gourock Harbour Infrastructure & Vessels Project (GHIVP) group has now met on three separate occasions. The group is formed of representatives from Transport Scotland (TS), CMAL, Calmac and Argyll and Bute Council. TS leads this meeting; Council officers have been invited to the last two meetings. The project aims to achieve: delivery of new vessels along with harbour infrastructure upgrades at Gourock and, where appropriate, Dunoon and Kilcreggan. Whilst the group will consider upgrades at both Dunoon and Kilcreggan to suit berthing requirements, the Council as asset owner, will be responsible for all related decisions and delivery of any proposed schemes.
- 5.2 The GHIVP group has been tasked with the following:-

- To operate a resilient passenger-only service from Gourock to Dunoon and Kilcreggan.
- To decide whether a link-span is required to operate vehicle-passenger ferry services from Arran and Bute, as an alternative mainland port.
- To identify and deliver an appropriate and proportionate infrastructure solution/option for Gourock Harbour.
- To ensure service continuity and public transport integration at Gourock Station and onward travel.
- To deliver the E-hub commitment at Gourock in line with Scottish Government policy on active travel and decarbonisation.
- To design and deliver new vessels (Class type requirements) which operate and align with the harbour infrastructure to ensure a reliable and resilient service.

5.3 TS has stated that delivery of new vessels will be dependent upon the type of design, including size and classification. Delivery of the size of vessel anticipated on the route would typically be estimated at up to 36 months.

5.4 In the meantime, the link-span at Gourock is reaching the end of its serviceable life; as such, the load carrying capacity of the link-span has been reduced by CMAL to allow use by passengers only. CMAL is currently considering medium-term options and reviewing the feasibility of returning the loading capacity of Gourock link-span to vehicle loading during 2020.

5.5 As Gourock is currently unable to accept vehicular traffic and is therefore unavailable as a back-up (or port of refuge) for the Rothesay to Wemyss Bay ferry, Calmac may approach the Council with a view to using the link-span at Dunoon if/when the need arises. Discussions are ongoing between Council officers and Calmac staff re options.

5.6 To a large extent, Council plans to re-develop Dunoon, and possibly Kilcreggan, must remain on hold until TS and CMAL can advise of their plans for the new ferry vessel. In the meantime, Council officers will continue to liaise with TS, CMAL and Calmac.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 Transport Scotland is committed to providing the necessary infrastructure for the provision of a new passenger ferry service between Dunoon, Gourock and Kilcreggan. Council officers will continue to liaise with the Gourock Harbour Infrastructure & Vessels Project (GHIVP) group.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1	Policy	None directly arising from this report
7.2	Financial	The Council's decision to increase in piers and harbours' fees & charges ensures that future income is sufficient to maintain and develop the Council's marine assets for future years – including Dunoon and Kilcreggan.
7.3	Legal	None directly arising from this report
7.4	HR	None
7.5	Fairer Scotland Duty	
7.5.1	Equalities – protected characteristics	None directly arising from this report
7.5.2	Socio-economic Duty	None directly arising from this report
7.5.3	Islands	See risk below
7.6	Risk	Completed works will reduce requirement to repair and maintain existing infrastructure
7.7	Customer Services	Overall improvement in travel experience and quality of journeys.

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