

Thanks again Alan. Here is a summary then of what I have been doing:

- 1 Making efforts to persuade those still wanting a vehicle service resurrected to drop this and concentrate on a passenger only service. I know your view Alan and I try and respect everyone's views on this but the decision has been made, whether we like it or not and, like you, I desperately want new ferries on the route as quickly as possible. I do agree with Neil Kay on the damage being done.
- 2 I have written twice to Paul Wheelhouse urging him to try and speed the process up. He has had a copy of the attached which CMI International gave to CalMac the best part of a year ago.
- 3 The response to those 2 letters is attached Alan and apart from the obvious flannel, they are now saying it will take 5, yes 5, years. The CMI option was that, once a decision was made, vessels could be in the water within a year. I have made it clear to TS that 5 years is just not on and have urged the minister to take advice from a marine consultancy to see if 5 years is correct, or not.
- 4 I met with Robbie Drummond of CalMac in January, at his request, and the key issue for me was that communications between TS, CMAL and CalMac don't seem to be that great, especially over vessel selection.
- 5 I have, as you know, been trying to get the council to change its policy and to fully support the passenger only position, so far without success but I do think what you agreed at the last area committee is helpful.