

### **Oban Airport**

On 25 November the CAA concluded its Licensing and Safety Audit. No Category 1 or 2 non compliance issues were found for Oban, Coll or Colonsay aerodromes. A number of Category 3 items (lowest scale) were identified which have the potential to affect safety and should be considered for remedial action.

Overall the DAA Audit Team commented that their audit had found that there had been no reduction in the Council's commitment to air safety over the last 12 months and that they would be recommending to the CAA that Argyll Air Services be now removed from the "Special Attention" designation and this has now taken place.

The next programmed CAA audit is scheduled to take place during February 2013.

### **Category 1 Projects SPT 2012/13**

The projects below have been identified within SPT 3year capital programme for potential capital funding 2012/13. The below is subject to SPT approval and is subject to capital finances available to SPT which for 2012/13 has been reduced.

**Improving Helensburgh Town Centre Transport Infrastructure £175k.** This is currently in as priority for 12/13. This is to complement the CHORD work that will be undertaken within Helensburgh by the Council during 12/13. SPT may allocate £350k match funding to undertake the following complimentary work to the CHORD project

- Signalised pedestrian crossing West king St (vicinity of existing old folks home)
- Improvements to bus stops
- Increase number of disabled bays
- Improvements to junctions/DDA compliance (better pedestrian crossing points)
- Traffic calming (utilising different materials i.e. not raised tables or speed humps)
- Improvements to signage/security
- Revised speed limits from 30mph to 20mph

**Bus Stop Infrastructure £70k** To undertake further enhancements to bus stop infrastructure in Helensburgh and Lomond area.

## **SCOTTISH FERRY SERVICES**

### **Draft Plan for Consultation**

The Council in formulating its response to the Draft Ferries Plan will consider and reflect the views of its island and peninsular communities that rely so heavily on ferry services.

The Council welcomes many of the proposals put forward in the consultation document and is particularly encouraged by the clear recognition of the need to improve services to the smaller islands communities currently served by CalMac, and those to Bute and Mull.

We recognise that not all the proposals in the plan can be implemented immediately and would be happy to work with the Scottish Government in establishing priorities and related implementation programmes within the funding available. In this regard we are encouraged that Government recognises that ferry services are the only effective means of access for many communities and their economic lifeline and while efficiencies should be promoted, these shouldn't be achieved by reductions in necessary levels of service.

The Council currently runs 4 ferry services and recognise that there could be merit in these being subsumed into the ferry network provided directly by Scottish Government through Transport Scotland.

Regarding our piers and harbours these currently run on the basis that they are financially self-sustaining taking into account the costs of maintenance, income from dues, and Government support funding. The Council own a large number of facilities many of which are no longer used for transportation, require continuing maintenance, and cannot be transferred to other parties. While we could be willing to consider Scottish Government taking responsibility for this estate, this would only be acceptable if all the estate were taken, and no cherry picking of income generating facilities were proposed leaving the Council with an unsustainable and unproductive residual estate.

## **2<sup>ND</sup> RAIL FRANCHISE CONSULTATION**

The issues raised by the Scottish Government's 2014 Rail Franchise Consultation are wider than initially anticipated. To provide the most informed and helpful response to the Consultation in the best interests of our communities we consider that some additional research and technical advice be obtained with the assistance of HITRANS and SPT.

### **FERRY CONTRACT 1923GI – GOUROCK TO KILCREGGAN FERRY SERVICE**

The core users of this service are workers from the Faslane and Coulport naval bases, who travel between Gourock and Kilcreggan, mainly Monday to Friday and SPT confirmed this through on-board survey. The surveys highlighted low patronage generally on Sundays and on Helensburgh sailings.

Tenders were invited for a contract with a timetable based around the requirements of the core users, operating between Gourock and Kilcreggan on Monday to Saturday, and operators were invited to consider an innovative approach to the tender by identifying any opportunities for additional revenue – such as serving Blairmore – in an effort to reduce the overall contract cost.

Whilst the tender price submitted was lower than that of the current contract, it was felt that, given the removal of the Sunday sailings and the link to Helensburgh – both of which have proved to be extremely lightly used – it did not sufficiently reflect this and a decision was therefore taken to further test the market by re-advertising the contract.

Tenders were invited for the same timetable as before and operators were again encouraged to include options for additional days and destinations, but with the seating capacity of the vessel now reduced from 90 to 60, in light of the further survey data, which had demonstrated a maximum of 48 passengers at one time. On this occasion, the lowest tender price received was from Clydelink Ltd. The price includes provision of a new build 60 seat vessel operating from Gourock to Kilcreggan throughout the day Monday to Saturday. "However the SPT Operations committee after lengthy debate decided to accept the tender from Clydelink with an addendum to continue but monitor the summer Gourock – Kilcreggan Sunday sailings for the coming year and open dialogue with Argyll and Bute Council and others with regard to any possible future Helensburgh alternatives"

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORT TENDERS – HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND AREA**

### **BUS**

#### **CONTRACT 8812d: Helensburgh – Garelochhead – Coulport (service 316)**

Tenders were invited for the replacement of the current contract for service 316 which provides two early morning and two late evening journeys on a Monday to Saturday, and a 2 hourly Sunday service between Helensburgh, Garelochhead and Coulport. Minor changes were made to the departure times of the Monday to Saturday journeys to improve intermediate connections.

Only Garelochhead Coaches submitted a tender price.

#### **CONTRACT LSO22C: Helensburgh/Vale of Leven – Royal Alexandra Hospital (service 340)**

Tenders were invited for a direct replacement of the current contract for service 340, which provides a Monday to Friday, two hourly daytime service and also two return journeys on a Saturday and Sunday between Helensburgh Station/Vale of Leven Hospital and Royal Alexandra Hospital.

The lowest compliant tender price was submitted by Wilsons of Rhu.

#### **CONTRACT W012: Alexandria – Luss, Alexandria – Helensburgh, Old Bonhill/Alexandria – Balmaha (services 305, 306, 309)**

Tenders were invited for contract W012, which provides service 305 between Alexandria and Luss, service 306 between Alexandria and Helensburgh, and service 309 between Old Bonhill and Balmaha, all of which operate on a daily basis. Contract W012 consolidates previous contracts LS021B and LS020D. The contract period 15 July 2012 until 26 March 2016 had been identified to coincide with the expiry of subsidised services supplied by Stirling council, which operate within West Dunbartonshire and neighbouring local authorities.

The lowest tender price was submitted by Loch Lomond Bus Services.

## **HIGH SPEED RAIL**

The object of this report is to advise of the publication of the Fast Track Scotland report promoting the inclusion of Scotland in the plans for the UK High Speed Rail (HSR) network. On 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012 the UK Government's Transport Secretary Justine Greening formally announced its intention to support the HS2 proposals to construct a high speed rail link between London and Birmingham by 2026. The Government also confirmed its support for HS2 to extend to Manchester and Leeds by 2033. The UK Government's proposals are set out in "High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future – Decisions and Next Steps". In the document, the UK Government has indicated that onward connections to Glasgow and Edinburgh would initially utilise existing "classic" lines. Journey times between London and Glasgow and Edinburgh would be cut to three and a half hours. The UK Government has restated that its vision is for a truly national high speed rail network serving all of the major cities of Britain. It acknowledges the benefits of future extension of direct lines to Scotland and "expects to work with" the Scottish Government on the latter's ambitions for high speed rail connections.

### **Outline of Proposals**

The Fast Track Scotland report lays out the updated business case for the inclusion of Scotland in the wider UK HSR network and the UK wide benefits this will bring.

The key points of the report are:

- Inclusion of Scotland in the HSR network strengthens the business case and BCR (Benefit Cost Ratio) of the project, and increases the economic and environmental benefits of the HSR network
- Significant additional capacity is required to alleviate the large forecast demand growth on long distance rail services
- The new HSR network will free capacity on existing routes for freight and regional rail services
- Inclusion in the HSR network would allow Scotland greater economic equity with other areas of the UK
- Inclusion of Scotland in the HSR network will support economic growth through agglomeration and wider regeneration in Scotland and Northern England
- To gain the full benefits any new HSR route requires to offer a faster journey time than aviation between the central belt of Scotland and London therefore requiring a new full HSR route to Glasgow and Edinburgh; and
- The remit of the UK government company tasked with developing the HSR network in England (HS2) should be expanded to include HSR links with Scotland.

The Fast Track Scotland report highlights the significant advantages to the rest of the UK of inclusion of Scotland in the UK HSR network and the benefits for all areas of Scotland including the central belt and the West of Scotland in particular.

The UK Government has approved HS2 to Birmingham by 2026, with onward connection to Manchester and Leeds by 2033. Under these proposals, connections to Glasgow and Edinburgh and currently planned to be by "classic" rail. The UK Government expects to discuss with the Scottish Government the latter's ambitions for High Speed Rail to Scotland.

## **Conclusions**

HSR is a key project for both the UK and Scottish Governments. For Scotland there are broad positive impacts in terms of modal shift, regeneration and wider economic development to be gained from inclusion in the UK HSR network.

## **SPT TRAVEL CARD UNIT**

There are approximately 520,000 National Entitlement Cards (NEC), providing access to the National Concessionary Travel (NCT) Scheme and the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme (SCTS), held by residents of the 12 Local Authorities comprising the Scheme area. SPT manages the card application (for the disability related cards), card renewal and card replacement processes for this group of NEC holders. In addition, SPT provides the call centre service for all NEC holders, less Young Persons, within the SPT area.

## **YOUNG PERSONS CONCESSION SCHEME (SCTS – JOINT COMMITTEE)**

The Young Persons Concession Scheme is administered and funded by Transport Scotland. This scheme is targeted at the 16-18 age group, and allows a reduction of 1/3 off bus fares, up to 50% off rail fares and 2 free journeys if you are a resident of an island.

There is a proposal to amend the ferry element of the young persons scheme – the proposal is that in lieu of the 2 free ferry journeys, it is proposed that the concession should be 1/3 off the cost of the adult fare, thus making the concession consistent with that available to young people on the mainland.

As stated above this scheme is administered by Transport Scotland and the Joint Committee has no direct involvement. The Joint Committee previously welcomed the introduction of the scheme recognising it had a valuable contribution to make in promoting public transport use among young people as well as supporting the aim of ensuring access to education and employment.

Should the Joint Committee support the proposed amendment it is proposed that the Chair of the Joint Committee writes directly to Transport Scotland highlighting the support and requesting that consideration to the proposal is given.

## **R.E.T**

### **Object of report**

To inform the Committee of the Scottish Government's recently announced proposal to extend the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) Scheme, and how this will now include additional ferry routes that operate within the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme ('the Scheme'). This report is also intended to inform of any potential impact on the Scheme.

## Background

RET is a theoretical means of setting ferry fares based on the cost of travelling an equivalent distance by road. The concept has been applied in reducing vehicle and passenger fares. The intention behind RET is that it reduces the economic disadvantage suffered by remote island communities, and that it will enable island communities to make a bigger contribution to the economy of Scotland. The current pricing mechanism by which RET is calculated is shown below.

RET pricing mechanism:

	<b>Passengers</b>	<b>Cars</b>	<b>VCs/Buses</b>
Core fare per route	£2.00	£5.00	£20.00
RET fare per route	£0.10	£0.60	£0.18 per metre (based on length of vehicle)

On 28 November 2011 the Scottish Government announced its intention to roll out the existing pilot RET scheme across a wider range of islands than currently under the RET scheme which was initiated in 2008. This roll out will include additional ferry routes that operate within the Scheme area. Under the original RET pilot, the Scheme has already benefited from lower car and passenger fares for Coll and Tiree although at the time of writing the proposed future pricing mechanism are unknown. Appendix A shows current fares and route miles for ferry routes operating within the Scheme area.

## Outline of Proposals

From spring 2012, the Scottish Government is proposing to make permanent the existing RET pilot on services to the Western Isles (outwith the Scheme). A new RET pilot scheme will start in October 2012 for services to / from Colonsay, Islay, Jura, and Gigha all of which operate within the Scheme area (map attached at Appendix B). This is likely to result in lower car and standard passenger fares and potentially additional demand for ferry services included in the Scheme.

In October 2014 a further RET pilot scheme will be introduced for Arran Services, and within the lifetime of the Parliament, the RET pilot scheme will be extended to cover Cumbrae and Bute on the Clyde as well as Iona, Lismore, and Mull which also operate within the Scheme area. Thereafter the Scottish Government has undertaken to consider the roll out of RET to local authority, commercial and mainland to mainland routes following the outcome of the Ferries Review.

## Conclusions

Overall the current RET pilot has been deemed a success in terms of economic activity on the islands included. The cost of ferry travel for residents, visitors and businesses has been significantly reduced and with reduced costs there has been an upturn in local economies which could stabilise populations, especially the working age population.

It should be noted, however, that the nature of the Clyde islands is different in terms of adjacent populations than the more remote Western Isles islands. The opportunity for spontaneous weather-dependant trips to be made is far greater on the Clyde routes than on the existing pilot RET routes. As such any monitoring of the impacts of the scheme will need to take this and a number of other factors into account, including :

- Vessel capacity;
- Island infrastructure, including roads and accommodation;
- Capacity of supported bus services;
- The impact on the island environment; and
- The impact on island economy / businesses.

There could also be additional costs for the ferry operator as regards the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme. As stated above any reduction in ferry fare costs is reflected in lower re-imburement from SPT to the operator, the short-fall would have to be met by RET scheme compensation and funded by Scottish Government.

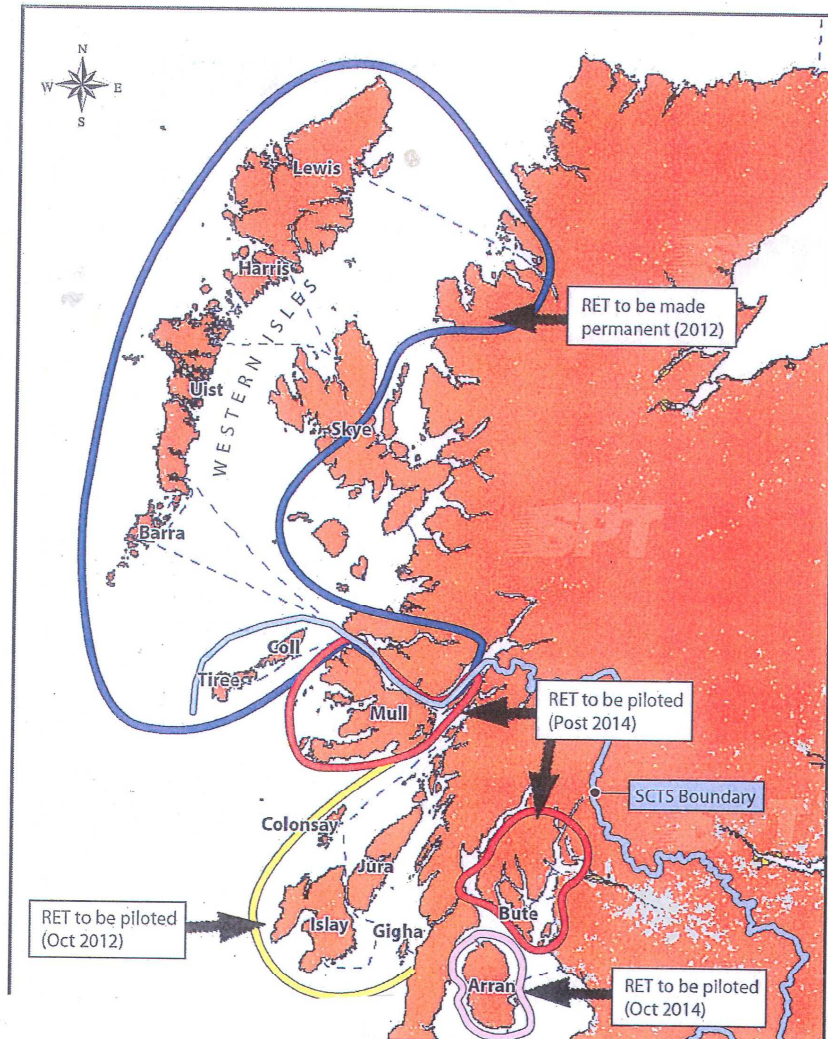
Given the potential for a significant variation in passenger numbers making use of the Ferry service when the (RET) pilot is introduced, and the unique interdependencies of the ferry to the bus service on the islands this announcement will also now need to form part of the review.

Appendix A

Operator	Route	Mileage (Approx)	Passenger (Single)	Passenger (Return)	Car (Single)	Car (Return)
ClydeLink	Yoker-Renfrew Ferry	0.10	£1.70	NA	NA	NA
Argyll & Bute Council	Easdale-Ellenabeich	0.20	NA	£1.70	NA	NA
Argyll & Bute Council	Jura (Feolin)-Port Askaig	0.60	£1.35	NA	£7.60	NA
CalMac	Colintraive-Rhubodach (Bute)	0.62	£1.25	£2.15	£6.75	£11.40
Argyll & Bute Council	Oban-Kerreira	0.80	NA	£5.00	NA	NA
Argyll & Bute Council	Lismore-Port Appin	1.00	£1.50	NA	NA	NA
CalMac	Iona-Fionnphort	1.00	NA	£3.20	NA	NA
CalMac	Largs-Cumbræe	1.18	NA	£3.40	NA	£17.95
SPT	Kilreggan-Gourock	2.00	£2.35	NA	NA	NA
CalMac	Fishnish (Mull)-Lochaline (Mainland)	2.20	£2.90	£5.00	£12.80	£21.75
CalMac	Gigha-Tavinloan	2.49	£2.95	NA	£10.25	NA
Western Ferries	McInroy's Point - Hunter's Quay	2.80	£4.00	£7.50	£10.90	£20.70
CalMac	Tarbert-Portavadie	3.30	£3.75	£6.35	£16.85	£29.00
CalMac	Tobermory (Mull)-Kilchoan (Mainland)	3.73	£4.65	£7.75	£23.80	£40.50
Argyll Ferries Ltd	Gourock-Dunoon (CalMac)	4.29	£3.40	£5.75	NA	NA
SPT	Kilreggan-Helensburgh	4.60	£2.35	NA	NA	NA
CalMac	Lochranza (Arran)-Claonaig	4.97	£4.50	£7.65	£22.75	£39.00
CalMac	Wemyss Bay-Rothesay	6.77	£3.50	£6.35	£14.05	£24.15
CalMac	Oban-Lismore	7.52	£2.45	£4.80	£25.50	£43.50
CalMac	Oban-Craigmore (Mull)	9.32	£3.95	£6.90	£29.00	£49.50
CalMac	Lochranza (Arran)-Tarbert	11.50	£4.50	£7.65	£22.75	£39.00
CalMac	Brodick (Arran)-Ardrossan	11.81	£4.65	£8.40	£29.50	£51.00
CalMac	Port Ellen (Islay)-Kennacraig	30.30	£7.65	£13.45	£43.50	£75.00
CalMac	Port Askaig (Islay)-Kennacraig	32.31	£7.65	£13.45	£43.50	£75.00
CalMac	Oban-Colonsay	36.60	£11.15	£18.90	£58.00	£98.00
CalMac	Oban-Coll/Tiree	59.71	£8.65	£17.30	£44.50	£89.00



Appendix B



Councillor Duncan MacIntyre  
25 January 2012