

Progress on re-opening of Glenforsa

1.0 SUMMARY

The following is a short summary of progress in the reopening of Glenforsa airfield for Easter 2013.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

That Councillors note the progress detailed within this paper in relation to the new operation of Glenforsa airfield.

3.0 BACKGROUND

Following an aircraft incident on the airfield which took place on the 23 September 2012 an internal investigation was carried out to ascertain what lessons could be learned and how Safety Management Systems at the airfield could be improved. Following this investigation it was agreed that consideration be given to a short term model that would allow for Glenforsa to be opened in Easter 2013. The short term model includes the implementation of Glenforsa aerodrome handbook and the introduction of formal recording procedures in place for noting hazards. Self help fire fighting media in the form of fire extinguishers along with a first aid kit will be installed at the airfield.

Further analysis of the strategic and economic importance of Glenforsa airfield will require to be carried out, including consultation, prior to making a considered decision on whether a leasing model could be taken forward in the long term to secure a safe and sustainable future.

4.0 DETAIL

The Station Manager and Crew Commander from Oban Airport will be visiting Glenforsa airfield this month to carry out training with Council Employees on airfield inspections and to construct an emergency point adjacent to the airfield.

A full airfield check of the grass strip will also be carried out as per normal prior to the full spring/summer opening. Seven Argyll and Bute Council staff based on the island of Mull will be trained in total. Training will also be provided to a number of private parties whom have also expressed an interest in receiving training. **Appendix A** details the training that will be provided.

The day to day inspections are not anticipated to raise any issues with staff as they work at present within the vicinity of the airfield on a regular basis. The staff will work on a rota basis to carry out inspections and this will provide cover for annual leave etc.

All staff trained on airfield inspections have access to a mobile and work station and will relay ground conditions on a daily basis to Oban airport. All prior permission requests from pilots to land at Glenforsa will be taken via Oban airport.

Self help fire fighting media will also be installed adjacent to the grass strip.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The short term model for reopening Glenforsa airfield at Easter 2013 is underway and the airfield will effectively operate as normal. Following reasonable bedding in period for the above model consideration can be given to advertising the post of Glenforsa attendant if required.

Further analysis of the strategic and economic importance of Glenforsa airfield will require to be carried out, including consultation, prior to making a considered decision on whether a leasing model could be taken forward in the long term to secure a safe and sustainable future. It is anticipated that consultation with the general aviation sector and community on Mull can be carried out during the summer months of 2013 with views also sought internally from Council officers in relation to legal implications.

The above will assist on how a lease can be structured to secure a safe and sustainable future for Glenforsa airfield.

For further information and clarification contact Moya Ingram Strategic Transportation Manager, Manse Brae 01546 604190.