

Ferry Committee Meeting

Monday 2nd August, 7pm

(Via Zoom)

Present: Joe Reade, Billy McClymont, Moray Finch, Sue Hawkes, Colin Morrison, Claire Simonetta, Davie Galbraith, Keith Robbie, Stewart MacDougal, Adrian Fitness, Finlay MacDonald.

Apologies: Sam Jones, Ben Wilson, Douglas Wilson, John MacDonald, Chris James, Andy Knight, Jim Lynch, Simon Thomasson, Morven Gibson

Catamaran, meeting with Graeme Dey and next steps.

- J.R spoke with the Head of Ferries, Airports and Canals at TS this afternoon. There is nothing positive to report from this conversation.
- The decision has been made and there seems to be no hope for catamaran project.
- J.R has explained that the committee would like to see evidence supporting their decision.
- The premise for the rejection is completely false. The key reason given by TS is that that the seller has not engaged with MCA throughout process.
- TS advised that the contractual process that CMAL are insisting on is the correct one.
- TS are unsure whether the committee will be given a copy of the Leadship report on which the decision was made. They will reflect on providing rationale surrounding decision.
- A.F stated that the people of Mull are entitled to know how the decision was made. The people of Mull need to know how government are treating decisions about their lifeline service.
- It is felt that CMAL have been incompetent and deliberately obstructive.
- The behaviour of CMAL was discussed at length.
- M.F suggested that our disappointment is made clear and that we believe that CMAL and Transport Scotland have let the island down badly, but as we will need to work with these organisations in the future, we will need to be careful with any criticism.
- F.M further stated that it is important that we highlight that his terrible conduct throughout the process in a way which will not damage future relationships.
- C.M agrees.
- M.F further stated that the community needs to be informed that we have been let down and should be given an opportunity to express opinion. This would also strengthen the case further down the line.
- M.F stated that CMAL and Transport Scotland's refusal to back up their decisions, exacerbates the situation.
- F.M stated that it is important that the Ferry Committee let the community know that the decision has been made based on a report that we are not allowed to see.
- J.R in agreement.
- J.R is hopeful that TS will provide further information this week and a conclusion can be drawn.

- J.R stated that the Ferry Committee has repeatedly asked for a meeting with Graham Dey and have managed to confirm a meeting for the next time he is in the area.

Specification of User Requirements - Draft for discussion.

- J.R has not had time to collate this information and circulate for discussion.

Communities Board

- J.R's application to Calmac Communities Board did not get through to interview. Two out of three of the vetting panel are David MacBrayne Directors, including CalMac MD Robbie Drummond.
- JR said that CalMac are selecting CCB members, and it appears that MIFC are viewed as trouble-makers.
- They have now completed their selection and there are now no representatives from Mull or Iona on the CCB.
- There is a representative from Coll who will probably end up covering Mull.
- J.R also stated that the decision as to who is chair of the board of the CBB is made by Caledonian MacBrayne.
- F.M stated that the fact that someone was willing to represent Mull and Iona and they were not even interviewed is scandalous.
- J.R agreed that these issues should be raised to the Transport Minister.

Date of AGM

- AGM will be held at the next committee meeting of September 29th.

Any Other Business.

- A.F stated concern that the ferry service is a life line for the communities on Mull and currently the island people are not being able to use the ferries due to excessive visitor numbers.
- J.R to write to Chris Wilcock to find out what is being done to resolve the matter.
- A.F enquired as to whether there was any word on progress of the new pier.
- B.M stated that Craignure Marine Infrastructure Liaison Group meeting has been scheduled for next Friday.
- J.R to attend.
- When Pippa Milne was in Craignure last month, Norman Hickson and J.R met with her and discussed the scheme drawn up by Norman. It was clear that this is the first time that they had seen the drawings in spite of the fact that these have previously been sent out.
- B.M stated that it was clear that the consultants had never been to Mull until the recent meeting with the community. It was very disappointing.
- A.F stated that West Coast Motors are never invited to any of the meetings or consultations which is ridiculous.
- J.R will make sure AF has a place on CMILG.
- B.M stated that they have said that it will be 5 years before the first turf is turned on the project.

- M.F offered vote of thanks to J.R for his recent endeavours.
- J.R stated that by the next meeting the Covid restrictions will have lifted further and so the next meeting may be able to be held in person at An Roth.
- Meeting concluded 8pm.