

**MINUTES of the FERRIES COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING**  
**held on Friday 7 March at 0900 hrs**  
**at Tiree Community Trust Building and on Microsoft Teams.**

[FOISA Status – Exemptions under Section 30 (Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs) Section 33 (Commercial interests) and Section 36 (Confidentiality)]

**Present:**

Angus Campbell - Chair (AC)  
Angus Campbell (AC2)  
Bill Calderwood (BC)  
David Herriot (DH)  
Donnie MacInnes (DMacI)  
Gail Robertson (GR)  
Jim Porteous (JP)  
Joanna Peteranna (JoP)  
Kirsty MacFarlane (KMacF)

**In attendance:**

Morag McNeil (MMcN) - CMAL  
Duncan Mackison (DM) – Chief Executive, CalMac  
Robert Morrison (RM) – CalMac  
Ailsa Stephen (AS) – CalMac  
Michael Scobbie (MS) - CalMac  
Chris Wilcock (CW) – Transport Scotland  
Gordon Macleod (GMac) – Transport Scotland

**Apologies:**

Murdo MacLean (MM)  
Kevin Peach (KP)  
Blair Moglia (BM)

**1 GOVERNANCE**

**1.1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies from Murdo MacLean, Kevin Peach, Joanna Peteranna

**1.2 Declarations of Interest**

GR declared an interest as a haulier and AC2 declared interest as working in consultancy for CMAL for electric ferry supplies.

**1.3 Minutes of meetings held on 6 December and Matters Arising**

The minutes were approved and there were no matters arising.

**1.4 Actions from previous meeting**

Matters marked as closed to be removed from the list.

Discussion around how to manage long-standing action items. Review of actions to take place with timeline for CHFS3 in mind.

**2 CMAL Update**

AC welcomed Morag McNeill and Kevin Hobbs to the call.

KH corrected a typo in the previously prepared CMAL Report – The Corran Ferry would be tendered alongside our SVRP (Small Vessel Replacement Plan) Phase 2 tender, and this should read as Phase 1. We are finalising Phase 1 now.

AC asked about the variety of ports across the network – CMAL, trust ports and councils. Is there a list in the public domain?

KH confirmed there is not, and it would be possible to provide a list of these, but it will not be possible at this time due to current workload. We are completing Islay vessel enabling works, phase 1 of the SVRP,

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Lord of the Isles replacement and two freight flexes. The request from Transport Scotland is that we sign up everything on this list before February 2026 because the allocation of money is available in the budget.

AC agreed to find another way to do this in the meantime.

KH agreed that CMAL are best placed to provide this and understand the workings of the ports, there is not time.

MMcN suggested that the Harbours team at Transport Scotland might know. Suggestion to ask CW for this information [Action].

BC asked about access at Troon.

KH replied, we have looked at the Gangway, but we were hoping that by now there would be positive feedback on how CalMac are managing it for those with accessibility issues. The conversation I had with DM and team is that they would solve this, even if it meant travelling customers by minibus. We can reduce the angle by extending the walkway, but only by one degree at high water. This would not help people much, especially if they struggle to walk. There needs to be communication that there is additional help for those who need. It meets accessibility rules, but that is not the point.

KMacF commented that it is positive to hear about funding for MV Lord of the Isles. In this part of the network [Coll], we are anxious to hear about the MV Isle of Mull replacement. The people on Coll, Tiree and Colonsay, who share MV Clansman and MV Lord of the Isles. We are not showing in the Islands connectivity plan (ICP) until Phase 3 or 4. There is a long lead-in time for these projects. Is it possible to start talking about bringing Coll, Tiree and Colonsay now? It will require significant infrastructure projects at all three ports.

KH replied, they are being spoken about in the background. There are several moving parts. Colonsay is ok – we have done work there which is not quite finished (some further dredging required). We have an internal project which is not visible to yourselves, but we are investigating what can be done for Coll and Tiree. There remain concerns about making the seabed deeper without undermining the piles. This work is in our planning team. We have said to TS that we need to actively speak about the vessels this year because of the vintage of these boats. They are approaching 40 years old in the major vessel fleet. They would exceed 30, but our preference is not by much.

He continued, it is highly likely that we can do something to Coll and Tiree to make it deeper. There is no reason why a few more Islay style ships couldn't do that route perfectly well.

KMacF thanked KH. CalMac do their best to ensure we have vessels and a certain amount of capacity, but they are not able to achieve the service, unable to come into port on account of weather. We have useable vessels, but the service isn't being delivered with them.

AC2 asked if there was an indication of delivery dates for the small vessels and frequency of delivery?

KH answered broadly, if a contract is signed before end of March, the shipyard will take around 9 months to create the detailed design. Steel cutting would not happen until between 9 and 12 months. A year to a year and a half afterwards is when a first vessel might be expected. A 4-month drumbeat between vessels is expected. Around 2.5 years until the first vessel appears. 2025 is the design phase, and mid-way through 2027 is the likely delivery of the first, with the others following.

DMacI asked about the timeline for Tiree's new office. When will work commence?

KH answered, September this year. The replacement of the building needs to take place so that it is fit for purpose, and whether we use / extend the current building. It also needs to marry together with the traffic management plan – extending marshalling areas etc to ensure we do not overspill onto the road network. The building will be around a year in construction.

DMacI asked about dredging at Tiree – supposing that it would be an ongoing issue.

KH said that CMAL are engaging with experts to look at this. It is difficult because this port is active, and we need the best expertise. Docking and undocking a ship, be it the propulsion or bow thrusters, all of that displaces sediment. Every 10 years for dredging is not unusual, and this may need it more frequently. If a port is infrequently used, it silts up more. Our concern is achieving depth and maintaining it without undermining the pier structure and fendering system.

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AC2 asked about the timeline for SVRP. Is there was a need for CMAL or CalMac to intervene in the small fleet to keep them going? Some have restrictions just now on where they can operate due to age and condition.

KH commented that TS have budgeted for obsolescence. This increased to £6m and just now we spend around £9.5m on average and it is for CFL to come forward and say where this should be deployed. Sometimes it's larger projects like engine repairs but there is a whole array of work needing done within resilience.

AC asked about the Turkey vessels. How confident are you that the ongoing issues will be dealt with and there will not be a knock-on delay to the rest of the vessels?

KH replied, you cannot be fully confident. World events – wars, earthquakes, Houthi insurgents, etc. It is difficult, but as everything stands now, we have a degree of confidence. The yard specialises in live fishing boats. They have three at sea-trial stage now and they should all be delivered before Easter. The type of people working on those ships will cascade to ours and we have had assurances that this will happen. A release of 650 staff from another vessel will some come to ours, which will speed everything up. We have worked methodically with the yard for accuracy. The two vessels for Uig are on the slipway just now.

MMcN added, we have no concerns about the yard of the quality of their work. These are world events impacting, but we are confident in the yard.

RM spoke of his recent trip to Turkey. Seeing work taking place across all the vessels was a very high level. It was reassuring and they were all being worked on with great attention.

AC thanked KH and MMcN for the CMAL update.

### 3

#### Joint Discussion

AC welcomed CW and DM to the meeting.

He continued, we see this as a continuation of our joint discussion, and we want to speak about CHFS3 and plans. He asked CW about a timeline for contract work – is there an outline?

CW replied, Gordon MacLeod is joining the meeting later. The Cabinet Secretary set out the next stage of this. We have had the Competition and Marketing Authority report and have discussed internally how to address the issues that it raises. The team is finalising the initial specification and sharing this with other partners. Gordon mentioned in the session with the Cabinet Secretary is that the intention is to share this with the Board also. There is a roundtable session in Glasgow at Atlantic Quay in a couple of weeks and a paper going to the Cabinet in May to seek a final decision my Ministers, which I expect would lead to a communication. There is a lot of work to be done and a long way to go until 1 October. We are confident that what needs to be done is all on track.

AC asked where the community voice sits in the new setup and how this will become apparent. There were quite encouraging words when we met with the Cabinet Secretary, but we are anxious to see. The fares increase, for example, was done without any reference to the effect on communities. Interested to see the timeline for this. Do you expect us to hear soon?

CW said that the draft specification has clear statement that there will be a Ferry Community Board, and the Operator will support the work of the board. We need to decide on the Board's remit and reflect some of the language of the Cabinet Secretary, combined with your paper. We will look at a revised structure for engagement more generally – a landscape that involves the FCB and other partners. We expect to have concluded this around May or June. Everything is subject to review, however.

AC asked if this approach had been shared with the operator and CMAL?

CW replied, its part of the collective discussions that we have been having. The FCB is a key part of shaping this and there is more work to be done on the wider structure with all tripartite members and the FCB feeding into that.

AC2 commented, given that there is not long between now and May to decide the role of the FCB, clarifying a timeline and what you need from us is important.

CW replied, an outline of the Board remit would hopefully have been detailed by now but once we are clear of other parts, such as the SVRP, then perhaps in April we can take off from where we started at the meeting at the Gleddoch in December.

AC asked about the ICIA – do you see this built into a new structure?

CW: No, I do not see this being specifically written in but would have to check with Gordon. CalMac have previously been one of the bigger users on ICIA. CalMac have done quite a few.

AC it would be good to see these, and how it works in practice as I've seen it for other public bodies.

CW said that CalMac had started a process on this, and TS are working on one relating to the ICP also.

BC asked if the contract will be operational, or a service contract. Will this define the service that needs to be provided, or will it include future vessel replenishment, budgeting, etc? How will we initiate replenishment – where will the ownership for this be?

CW said that there is quite a programme related to this – ordering 10 vessels in under 12 months. It does not stop there; we will be taking forward other projects. It won't be built into the CalMac Contract, but the ICP is what gives us the driver to set out the vessel and port plans. It is on us all, collectively, to ensure that we progress that and that the resources are behind it. We have been in a positive space, in terms of funding for the last 5 years. The contract is about delivery of services, and we did question whether specifics about new ships should be included – however, there is something in there about CalMac managing when this would be. We took into account the new vessels and had confidence that new vessels would be here by October. Some of those have shifted, but we will manage this within the flexibility we have in the contract. The key thing to push (and there is work in the background on procuring this) is community needs assessments. The CalMac contract should allow them to continue to run services, whilst also slotting in new objectives.

AC2 asked what the programme is for community needs assessments? We have not seen the Rosneath one published, let alone a plan for the rest.

CW confirmed that Rosneath assessment had been published already and there had been several engagements on it. The programme however is not as quickly progressed as we would hope. We want to group some of these – Northern Isles, Oban services and western Isles. Richard would be better to discuss this. Package does not mean they're grouped, just how this will be passed to consultants. It is helpful to reference the Dunoon and Rosneath work – this has given us some learning on what comes out of these reports and if the output is correct from consultants. Is there a step beyond what we have done to build into the engagement for the rest?

AC2 could not find the Rosneath one online – could a link be sent?

CW agreed [Action]. It may be headed as Gourock-Dunoon rather than Rosneath.

KMacF spoke about future service design. Bill's question – is it a service contract or an operating contract. Depending on where you are in the network, there is a feeling that the entire solution to the service has been focused on getting new ships and improving infrastructure. Clearly, this has not gone to plan and everybody appreciates that. We are having to cope in the meantime, and this has thrown the spotlight onto how the operator delivers the service and this is where frustration comes from. The timescale for getting any meaningful - or even minor – change is so long. The impact of these timescales does not seem to be appreciated at every level. What we are seeking from any contract going forward is an attitude of flexibility and responsiveness.

She continued, with the example of deck space pilot. She referred to a comment made by CW at a meeting about this pilot. Coll and Tiree have come up with similar results to show that the deck space pilot does not go far enough. This is an example of how the operator is trying to cope in the interim, with the situation we are facing. We need urgency, flexibility and open minds. The new ships and infrastructure will not be here by 1 October, so we must keep on coping.

CW clarified what was said at the pilot meeting – to say that the deck space pilot is not the full picture and there are aspirations for it to go further. The new contract does have space around driving service improvements. On a positive note, CalMac are already making strides to take forward those services – enhancement and change plan, new structures etc.

DM said that some activity will be covered later in the agenda. We have not received the full contract yet – only elements. When Gordon speaks later, he can describe what the plan is to release those documents. In the short term, we are working hard with our new Area Managers, Deputy Area Managers and are working hard on listening to communities. As you alluded to, the problem now is that we have a fleet of a particular state, and we must make decisions based on that. In terms of how that urgency and speed of response is driven contractually, that remains to be seen.

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AC added that a lot of people have real concerns that demand is not being met, or a system is not in place to manage it. Restrictions on certain people travelling is not an answer (speaking for myself). If we don't look at the timetable of new vessels with a wider perspective of what the economy and islands need is not maximising the use of these assets. The flexibility must be worked into the next contract.

KMacF asked, in terms of focussing on the word 'urgency' – to what extent can urgency and flexibility be determined by contract. Urgency is a mindset. Another issue that has adversely impacted several routes is commercial block bookings. Discussions have been going on for this route for nearly two years over something that is within CalMac's gift to manage.

DM agreed – there are behavioural and cultural sides that we are trying to address. I am hoping that people are starting to see a more responsive, local level of engagement and initiatives that support that. There are improvements that I am seeing but the difficulty is the shadow cast across by the difficult choices we have to make on a route-by-route basis, does increase the frustration.

AC asked if DM was confident that having the new structure in place has led to devolved decision making?

DM asked for clarity. Ultimately, a lot of decisions which ultimately are decided by timetable, vessel deployments etc. There is a network element to those.

AC confirmed – the hope of the Board is to have more people living and working in our communities. This would lead to better informed local decisions. There is a history of decisions made without all effects on the table. Do you see the new structure helping this?

DM agreed. We are understanding local impacts and discussing them in our decision-making process. There are more voices at the table telling us what the direct consequences will be of a decision to a local area. I certainly feel that we have that input to a better extent than we have had before. I don't think it meets the effect that the community would need, but with the limited choices we sometimes have, we are going in that direction. Now, it often feels that we move a problem around the network because of juggling resources.

He continued, reduced capacity on Mull for example, the detailed engagement with the community via the Area Manager has been enormous. It hasn't resolved the issue, but we very clearly understand the impact of it, and it has led to some mitigations being put in place that we may not have had otherwise. It's a more collaborative, local understanding of what needs to be done.

AC agreed. All communities need equal opportunity to feed back – not just those who shout loudest.

DM agreed. The challenge now is making calls and the decision-making process. Impact and lifeline impact, capacity, demand, events – it's challenging.

AC commented that the issue of what a lifeline service is not developed at this moment in time, but an interesting concept.

AC2 asked if there was anything within what has been seen of the contract so far that would conflict with any of the aspirations that the Community Board have?

DM answered no. We have not seen it all yet, but types of engagement and that kind of thing are stipulated and there is an obligation to do that. The broader piece about what the role of the FCB – it is referred to but I have not seen anything specific on what it looks like in the future.

JP said that, apart from the difficulty with the resilience and vessels, there are issues with the computer system which do affect the outcome of those decisions. This makes the impact on communities worse – I refer to the block booking issue. We have existing terms and conditions which in some cases are not being managed, and the statistical backup which makes it difficult for CalMac staff to manage it properly. These things can mitigate some of the decisions that need to be taken which adversely affect communities. We understand that CalMac has good intentions with it, however it can lead to a great deal of space lost which could otherwise have been used.

DM replied, you will have a more detailed update on that later today. I accept that it is not just the boats and difficult decisions there – there are ticketing system issues that I accept but things are improving, and I know there is still work to be done. We still have people extracting data from the system to make sure it's in a suitable format and that it's accurate – instead of getting a direct feed from the system which was anticipated originally. We shouldn't have teams of people working on the data to cleanse it.

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DH noted that under-22's are 10% more disadvantaged than they are currently in comparison to their mainland contemporaries. It was always an obstacle to have group buses treated in the same way that school buses are – sporting groups etc. Is this something we could build into the contract?

CW said that this was a strong message in recent council session with the Cabinet Secretary, to extend the under-22 travel to free ferries for islanders. That message has been clearly heard.

There was a discussion about a pilot taking place for minibuses. CW could recall a pilot.

CW said in any case, this would fall into a fares/policy sphere, and we would be able to have the flexibility to manage that. Again, affordability would be a challenge. Availability of funds needs to be there to support it.

DH explained that the reason for his point was in the Shinty club committee – some of the young people said that they might not be able to afford to play.

AC agreed – especially when you see that mainland children have this for free.

DH said that a minibus is currently treated as a commercial vehicle, but that would be an answer.

BC understood that there was a pilot but that it was quite restrictive. Schools had to have their own transport, and it did not matter if the transporter was carrying school pupils or not. If it was not a school vehicle, it did not qualify. The cost was that of a 'car' space effectively, rather than a bus. I asked last year what the usage had been of this and it either hasn't been collected or hasn't been used because of how restricted it was.

KMacF asked what must be written into the contract so that the operator fulfils an aspect of the contract relating to engagement. What might be an additional to that in terms of building a company's culture? We have noticed an improvement and have been approached by CalMac to offer us a meeting, instead of us reaching crisis point and reaching out to them. I would like to see the operator bringing islands together into these discussions where there are mutual impacts. i.e. berthing times in Oban and other areas impacted. She asked DM – is it worthwhile now for CalMac to reach out to all the committees you work with, with a survey to ask for feedback on the new engagement style?

DM agreed that this would be a good exercise. We have not got the model in place everywhere yet, but once everything is in place, Robert may have a view on this. Getting feedback on how it works in a structured way and then tracking it would be a good feature of how this is done. So yes – but not just yet. I'm delighted that you believe there's a degree of proactivity that was not there before.

He continued, in principle, bringing areas together on mutual issues – it relates to the overarching role of the FCB. How are these discussions facilitated and it's a feature we are often conscious of the crossovers between routes. I am hoping though that we do not need to think of this shortly with new vessels coming in – there is that caveat.

RM agreed. With the new Area Managers and pulling together groups within geography, I think that is a good way forward. Even for us, for the Community Board to have introductory meetings with each area and deputy manager.

MS added, there is an update later in the meeting but some of the things you mentioned are already work in progress. I met with the Transport Planning team this week and we spoke about how Area Managers can speak to local communities and elevate timetable planning discussion above timetables. We want more feedback coming in from the area management team and local knowledge within CalMac can be tapped into more than we have done. I hope this is of reassurance that we are thinking the same way as you.

AC said that the Community Board is an asset that is not being used fully. Doing some consultation work and effort is something that the FCB should be included in. There are so many occasions where you hear of meetings taking place without Community Board members having any knowledge.

KMacF asked if the community discussions should be enshrined in the contract to make sure that they happen? It would have been good to have Terry Williams and George Browne at today's meeting due to its location in Tiree. Getting a feel for the community and the economy – this is where the improvement will come, when the managers become familiar with all the areas that they manage.

AC agreed. We do not have the meeting across the network for no reason – we gain a lot from the local area and seeing what people face in different areas. It would be great to have the managers in the room when we visit these places.

RM confirmed that there are plans for introductory meetings, and we had been waiting until the full complement of managers were in place, but we can kick this off now [Action].

AC thanked all for the discussion.

#### 4 TS Update

AC welcomed Gordon Macleod to the meeting.

GMac began by returning to a previous presentation where BC gave feedback the benefits realisation plan, on statistics and KPIs. We are taking actions forward now and 86% of the requests are now actioned, or in the process of being actioned. One sticking point that we have the moment is how we come up with a sensible measure for unmet demand.

CW added that he previously gave a rough summary on timelines and the Cabinet decision may possibly have a statement, and then after that we have a round-table session coming up.

AC2 asked about benefits realisation plan. Is there an opportunity for us as a board to suggest initiatives that the operator can take forward as part of the new contract?

GMac confirmed – absolutely. We welcome any comments that you have.

AC2 said that, as a Board, we have not particularly discussed some of its content. As a board, anything that we can see as improving flexibility, innovation, crewing, optimising ports etc. These are all things that we have spoken about. Should these things be baked into the benefit realisation plan? He asked what format might work for submitting comments on this.

GMac replied, any feedback at all is fine. The benefits realisation is about high-level issues that you have spoken to us about before and issues from public consultation – greater reliability, support for community, etc. Some of the issues you mentioned are more operational and probably do not sit in the benefits realisation plan.

AC2 shared his personal view that it would be beneficial for the Board to pull together some initiatives offline and submit them back.

AC confirmed that although the opportunity was there for individual feedback, the Board as a group will want to submit something. If we had 10 days, would that be suitable?

GMac confirmed, end of the month would be good. It would give us time to incorporate into a specification and get costs from CalMac to give them time to assimilate all of that.

AC asked AC2 to lead on this process [Action].

KMacF mentioned the word 'transparency'. There is some discussion around transparency in terms of reporting by the operator – performance statistics and so on. One area of transparency that is not touched upon is how the operator can deliver flexibility. A last-minute crew being scrambled together at the last moment may mean extending the working day at short notice and asking crew to be flexible. All that is completely redacted from the current contract. Will we see more transparency on this? Not for the sake of knowing what terms and conditions are, but it is essential to inform decision-making and wish-lists by communities. We need to know what is possible or not possible to engage in a meaningful way with the operator.

GMac answered, there is certainly a desire to have flexibility and one of the things we are agreed with yourself is to put in the Area Operations Manager. I know there remains concerns on how this is settling in, but I believe CalMac have plans to complete this shortly. That local contact is the way that you will get a lot of that transparency. A measure for that – are there any suggestions to measure how it is improving?

KMacF: I do not refer to transparency from an area manager point of view, but more the running of the day-to-day service. For example, CalMac had crews in line for the Glen Sannox and possibly even for the Islay vessels but when we need flexibility on the network such as a spare crew, we hit a wall. MCA regulations or certifications seem to be the cause that heavily impacts delivery of the service where it is needed.

CW added, the crew hours of rest and lack of flexibility when running to such full timetables means that there is not much headroom to move. The timetables on the Little Minch – it would be interesting to know

how much flexibility there is there. If you are not fully using crew hours during the day for example, can you extend? The other element is having a resilience vessel. I know it wouldn't be able to react daily if you had a service outage, but it should get us to the point where we avoid long periods of time with disruption. He suggested perhaps CalMac hold a session with this group to dispel some myths and discuss what can or cannot be done. This does not mean opening Terms and Conditions for scrutiny but applying some principles to some routes.

AC said that it might suit the operator to work in that particularly restricted way, and it feels like when there is flexibility, the operator warns that this could lead to more demand – more caravans etc. When we talk about cost-neutral, who is this cost-neutral for? The operator or communities.

CW offered to get some detail on Little Minch vessels. If, with current crew capacity and cost in the current business case, they could do more returns, then that could indeed be turned on and off in a resilience space, or at a future point of demand. Fuel costs would be offset by additional carryings. It's when we need a whole extra crew, that is a different subject.

KMacF said that there is profound value in opening T&Cs for discussion. There are different interpretations of what flexibility, depending on where you are. If there is any legal or contractual leeway that can be built into the system, but there may be situations where an island hasn't had a ferry for days and it becomes a lifeline issue. A means of building situations into the contract to allow for more options in these scenarios. I would like for this to be explored.

JP raised the point of unmet demand. There is information in CalMac's computer system that could be put together with other pieces of information to get a conclusion on this. CalMac should analyse trends in this respect. On a particular route, you can see how many routes are fully booked and how far in advance they sell out. You can compare this with a similar, steady state. There used to be assumptions presented from the data – for example that 80% may be an indication of unmet demand. It's not 100%, but it does back up what we might be hearing from islands and ferry committees. E.g. on Islay, a ship was removed, and our tourism industry were losing accommodation bookings. This showed that the capacity was insufficient for the demand. CalMac is not in any way accountable for economic performance. The obligation is to provide the service as best they can and meet community aspirations. There is absolutely nothing about monitoring trends.

RM commented that we would be happy to arrange a meeting where we can discuss the leeway we have on certain routes. Often, as you will know, if a service is extended one day, it will have a knock-on effect to the next morning due to crew hours. There is very little room for manoeuvre, but we know that when we can extend a service or adjust it, it is always very much appreciated.

AC agreed that this might be useful as a future discussion. [Action – RM to pick up on this].

CW summarised; we are not working in a vacuum of information. We know there are issues, even if the data does not flow as we hope and we are aware of the challenges there. We do and continue to use the 80% mark as a warning for capacity issues. We use projections to underpin business cases for projects like the Islay class vessels which allowed us to push for two, rather than one. We are not standing still in a capped funding space and are delivering a 20% uplift to the fleet. A considerable investment into communities.

AC thanked attendees for their comments and for GMac and CW.

GMac said that the feedback is always helpful, and we will do our best.

## 5 MACS Update

Before GMac and CW left the meeting, AC asked what interaction they have with MACS. CW confirmed that TS do engage with his team regularly.

AC commented on the report submitted by Anne from MACs. He commented on the issues facing neurodivergent passengers. Would it be possible to see how this can be responded to by CalMac, it may already be in tract. [Action – RM].

## 6 Commercial Traffic Needs and Future Demand

## 7 Recruitment

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AC began, we had hoped to be at the interview stage before this meeting however we are not quite there yet. I will work with Robert on this. It would be good to get the new members in place now as these large changes are happening, to get their input.

### 8 Young Islanders Network – Update

AC welcomed Mac from the young islander's network.

Mac updated that during the winter there is not a great deal of YIN activity, but it starts to build as we head into the spring and summer. We are bringing in a new project about incentives for travel, liaising with different organisations – CalMac and MACS.

AC said that if anything comes up, please get in touch with the Board. We can work together on a lot of issues, and we have 22 travels at the top of our list.

GR complimented Mac on how well he did at the meeting on 5 June.

### 9 Chair's Report / Next Steps

AC mentioned that it would be good to have a discussion on some important topics, for the sake of minutes. We had a recent meeting with the Cabinet secretary for Transport, which was a good meeting. JoP and I also met with Jim Fairlie, Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity. We have an offer for another meeting before the end of the month also. This is likely to be in Oban. Before we proceed – how many people on the screen would be open to travelling to Oban for a meeting like this? On the 26<sup>th</sup>.

AC, KMacF and AC2 expressed interest. DH said he could perhaps attend but would need to check. BC also needed to check before confirming.

BC suggested going through the actions prior to each session to see if there are updates. We spent more time than usual on the actions today.

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*Meeting concluded with thanks to all for their contribution.*

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Friday 6 June 2025 – The Studio, Glasgow.**

#### **2025 MEETING DATES**

Friday 5 September

Friday 5 December

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No.	Action	Owner	Status
1	<b>RELIEF CREWING</b> BC noted that relief crewing may be incorporated into future Ferries Plan discussions however it was recognised that it was not practical to discuss it now and the cost may be prohibitive. It could be raised during recruitment for crews for 801 and 802. C/fwd.	AC	<b>Update 13/09/24</b> – Discussion to continue, with 801 and 802 in mind.
2	<b>ROUTE PERFORMANCE DATA</b> Possibility of separating route performance data for Coll & Tiree to be investigated.	RM	<b>Update 13/09/24</b> - it will be possible to do this although there may be some limitations around carrying data (can show passengers shipped but not necessarily landed). When statistics are published in the coming months, each port will be reported individually.  <b>07/03/25</b> - RM to check and provide written update
3	<b>CMAL REPORTING &amp; EXPENDITURE TRACKING</b> KMacF asked whether it would be possible to include a timeline on planned projects. A graphic to show plan, vs slippages. KH and BF confirmed resourcing was there to do this and agreed to try new ways of presenting this information.	KH/BF	<b>Update 15/08/24:</b> Our interactive map has experienced problems. We were populating it with all CHFS Ports (be it ours or 3 <sup>rd</sup> party) and all vessels. However, the programme was overwhelmed with data, and a more powerful alternative was found. We are now reconfiguring it all over again. Further details can be discussed at the meeting.
4	<b>FAIR FARES ENGAGEMENT</b> CW took action to go back to TS colleagues for an update on what the engagement there would be for the public on the fair fares piece of work.	CW	
5	<b>EBOOKING FIXES &amp; AR TURAS MEETING</b> CFL agreed to share a list of fixes [eBooking] with the FCB.	CFL	<b>Update 20/08/24:</b> We will shortly be able to publish to the FCB an update to the one previously delivered in March 2024. This update will explain the changes and fixes we have delivered through this year.
6	<b>CARRYING STATISTICS</b> Carrying statistics to be provided for the network, and/or a date by which they can be provided. No data has been provided since May.	MS	<b>Update 13/09/24-</b> Statistics are now available on the website for 2023 (annual report). Specific data requests can be made to CalMac, should you require information for specific routes, or vehicles. <a href="https://www.calmac.co.uk/article/7308/Annual-Carrying-Statistics">https://www.calmac.co.uk/article/7308/Annual-Carrying-Statistics</a> <a href="https://www.calmac.co.uk/article/7308/Annual-Carrying-Statistics">https://www.calmac.co.uk/article/7308/Annual-Carrying-Statistics</a>  <b>07/03/25</b> - MS agreed to take this forward with feedback on what is missing. What CFL collects, what is an obligation to collect, and what is not collected.

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7	<b>CHFS2 RECONCILIATION EXERCISE</b> CW agreed that CHFS2 has not been scrutinised or audited to the degree it should have. Before the end of the contract, it should be reconciled. CW agreed to pick up on this and take it away. A reconciliation and reflection on management of the contract, to cover resourcing levels, structure, etc.	CW	
8	<b>TEMPORARILY UNBOOKABLE MESSAGING – ONLINE</b> JP offered feedback on when booking is temporarily unavailable. Messaging to say that transfers are being made and it is worth trying again later. This may prevent people from giving up entirely when unable to book. DB agreed to take this away and explore how this can be done.	DB	<b>20/08/24:</b> Over the coming year we are investing in improvements to our customers' booking journey, particularly when they are making that journey online. The ability to show more meaningful messages to customers, depending on the status of the sailing they are trying to book on, is something we are currently investigating with our colleagues at eDea <b>07/03/25</b> - ongoing.
9	<b>THIRD PARTY &amp; LOCAL AUTHORITY NEEDS</b> BC asked if there was a resource that showed third party and local authority needs in one place. KH offered to provide a whistle-stop tour of the third-party ports, as a regular attendee at meetings with the three councils that own most ports.	TS	<b>07/03/25</b> - ongoing. MMcN suggested asking Chris Wilcock's Team at TS for this information
10	<b>FEEDBACK FROM CEO VISITS</b> KMacF asked if there was a collation of feedback received from the combined CMAL, TS and CalMac visits around the network. DM offered to take this offline and explore what an update on this might look like.	MS	<b>07/03/25</b> - MS agreed to take over action to capture visit feedback.
11	<b>FACILITATED WORKSHOP WITH TRIPARTITE AND SCOTTISH FUTURES TRUST</b> After agreement from all parties, it was agreed that a workshop should take place to workshop what the future of the FCB should be – structure, appointments, remit. JoP agreed to approach TS to propose this, as it aligns with the CHFS3 strategy.	JoP / Transport Scotland	<b>07/03/25</b> - ongoing
12	<b>COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENTS</b> CW offered to speak about how community needs assessments will work at a future FCB meeting. Action was taken to add this to forward agenda. CW suggested someone from his team come along to present to the Board.	CW	<b>07/03/25</b> - ongoing.
13	<b>INTERISLAND TRAVEL</b> KMacF asked if inter-island travel was now available everywhere, as she had only read of the 'Western Isles' now having this.	KMacF / CW	<b>07/03/25</b> - ongoing.
14	<b>FCB CONTACT DETAILS</b>	AS / RM	<b>07/03/25</b> - Update in meeting.

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	AS to liaise with RM and colleagues at CFL on purchase of domain for @FCB, or similar, email addresses. AS to liaise with GR and JoP on progress. Combined with previous action for FCB contact posters to be displayed on vessels with new contact information.		
15	<b>ROSNEATH COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT</b> AC2 asked for the link to this document to be shared.	CW	
16	<b>AREA MANAGEMENT TEAM INTRODUCTIONS</b> RM said that we do not yet have the full complement of Area Managers in position but can begin to introduce those that we do have in place to the Ferries Community Board.	RM	
17	<b>BEENFITS REALISATION – FCB FEEDBACK</b> The Board expressed an interest in pulling together some initiatives to be provided as feedback for benefits realisation plan. The opportunity was there for individuals to put forward feedback, but not the Board collectively. AC2 offered to lead on this and submit Board feedback.	FCB / AC2	
18	<b>ROUTE FLEXIBILITY</b> After discussion around restrictions to change timetables and extend services, considering hours of rest etc. The Board agreed that there would be value to having a discussion on what is possible on a route-by-route basis. RM agreed to investigate the opportunity for future discussion on this.	RM	
19	<b>MACS x CalMac RELATIONSHIP</b> The Board asked what relationship CALMAC have with MACS. Particularly as raised in the MACS report, issues facing neurodiverse customers. Are CalMac liaising with MACS on this issue? RM agreed to investigate.	RM	