

Agenda Item	7
Report No	LA-17-19

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Lochaber Area Committee

**Date:** 29 August 2019

**Report Title:** Corran Ferry Service Update

**Report By:** Interim Chief Officer Resources (Community Services)

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides an update on current developments with the Corran Ferry Service.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the report.

### 3. Implications

3.1 Resource – No implications.

3.2 Legal – No implications.

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – No implications.

3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – No implications.

3.5 Risk – No implications.

3.6 Gaelic - No implications.

## 4. Ticketing

- 4.1 As described in the Corran Ferry Service Update report LA/7/19 at the last Lochaber Area Committee on 10 April 2019 the current ticketing system requires to be replaced in order to safeguard service delivery by ensuring reliable ticket sales and fare collection for card and cash payments.
- 4.2 The associated new back-office software will modernise ways of monitoring ferry usage in future years as highlighted by Members at the last Lochaber Area Committee on 10 April 2019 (recorded in the committee minutes action sheet under section 4.vi).
- 4.3 Since the last Area Committee officers have continued to work on the solution for ticketing with colleagues in ICT and Procurement, and further engagement with suppliers. On the 02 July 2019 officers met with the current leading provider in the industry sector who currently provide the new ticketing system for CalMac (and are also in talks with a view to supplying Orkney, Shetland and Western ferry services).

There are a limited number of companies providing this service to the ferry industry, and this provider's innovative work with CalMac, as 'early adopters' of the new system, has helped to overcome some of the initial problems encountered.

- 4.4 Such a new system will allow cash payment. It will also allow use of ITSO compliant Smart Cards in line with Transport Scotland's aim for a more integrated public transport network.
- 4.5 ITSO Ltd is a non-profit distributing technical, standardisation and interoperability membership organisation with objectives to:-
- maintain and develop the ITSO specification for transport smartcards;
  - operate and manage an interoperable smart media environment; and
  - facilitate and support development of interoperable smart ticketing schemes that comply with the ITSO specification.

ITSO was established as a result of discussions between various UK passenger transport authorities concerning the lack of standards for interoperable smart card ticketing.

- 4.6 Transport Scotland government Saltire concessionary cards are ITSO compliant and chip-and-pin based, and the proposed new system is compatible with this, chip-and-pin cards being the current most advanced card payment technology.
- 4.7 These cards can therefore be used for on-line pre-payment and top-up, and to purchase existing discount options (replacing the current paper pre-purchased ticket books).
- 4.8 It will also be possible to set-up non-Saltire cards with individual bar-codes that will allow Commercial Customer accounts to be set up in a similar way.
- 4.9 The system can also incorporate mobile phone app pre-payment technology.

4.10 As mentioned in 4.2 above, the associated new web-based software is able to be interrogated to readily provide suitable carryings data reports with the ease and immediacy that is expected of a modern ferry service.

## **5. Passengers and Pedal Cyclists**

5.1 Insufficient capacity of resources had meant that the desire from previous work to introduce charging (and recording) of foot passengers was still outstanding.

This was highlighted by Members at the last Lochaber Area Committee on 10 April 2019 (recorded in the committee minutes action sheet under section 4.v) and Members requested that suitable ticketing arrangements are implemented in financial year 2019/20.

5.2 Since the last Area Committee officers have progressed this request and ticket machines are now installed. This has been greatly helped by the development of modern technology, with the machines solar-powered and linked to back-office software (for card-payments and ticket issue records) by mobile wireless technology.

There are two shore-side self-service ticket machines, one on each side of the crossing, located at the top of each slipway.

At the time of writing this report they are enabled to be operative from 22 August 2019. This was Tweeted to the public and a press release issued on 16 August 2019 with an indication of the basic fare to be charged (see below in section 5.3).

However, before implementation, fares, discounts and concessions will be agreed with Members.

5.3 The new proposed basic fares are:

Foot Passengers	£1.00
Pedal Cyclists	£1.50
Registered Disabled	Free

These, as with all Corran Ferry fares, will be reviewed annually in line with The Highland Council budget.

## **6. Slipways**

6.1 In undertaking the inspection of the Ardgour slipway structure, full principle inspections will now take place annually by an in-house officer, negating the need to commission an external consultant, the area Roads Team now having a dedicated technician for structures inspections.

## **7. MV Corran Refit**

7.1 The annual refit for the MV Corran is planned from 25 October 2019 and is expected to take six to eight weeks. The longer refit is due to the fitting of the planned steering system upgrade (budgeted since the steering system failure in July 2017).

Although this is an extended period and the relief vessel MV Maid of Glencoul has a smaller carrying capacity, the refit is planned to start after the Mull Rally event which takes place in early to mid-October, and the month of November is at the quieter time of year.

## **8. Corran Ferry Project Manager**

8.1 The Project Manager for the Corran Ferry started post in mid-May 2019 and has commenced work to progress the Corran Ferry Service Outline Business Case, which will determine future proposals for capital investment in vessels, slipway structures, service delivery methods and future fares.

8.2 Key contacts have been established and essential consultation with Council Members and appropriate stakeholders including Transport Scotland is underway.

At the offer of Transport Scotland this includes contact with officers at Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL), meeting them at Ardgour on 30 August 2019.

CMAL is a single-purpose-company delivering multiple west-coast passenger ferry services and we are grateful to have the opportunity to talk them.

8.3 A steering group has been set up to ensure links between the Local Community and Officers involved. This will ensure communications are maintained and everyone has the opportunity to be engaged within the project. It is intended that Members will act as a sounding board and will provide support and guidance to the Project Team on any issues critical to project success and the development of the Outline Business Case (OBC).

8.4 Appropriate project governance has been put in place in accordance with Council policy. The Head of Roads and Transport Services is Project sponsor and the Project Manager is working closely with the area Roads Operations Manager. The Steering Group will be an informal working group which will be part of a larger project governance structure that will involve Lochaber Committee and Harbours Management Board, the decision-making powers being deferred to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee.

**Designation:** Interim Chief Officer Resources (Community Services)

**Date:** 14 August 2019

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**Background Papers:** [Report](#) - LA/19/18 - Corran Ferry Service Options Appraisal  
[Report](#) - EDI/80/18 - Corran Ferry Service Options Appraisal  
[Report](#) - LA/7/19 - Corran Ferry Service Update