

Minutes of Colonsay Community Council
Meeting held on 4th March 2019 at 6:30pm

Councillors Present: Keith Rutherford (KR), David Hobhouse (DH), Alex Howard (AH), Liz McNicholl (LM), Richard Buttrick (RB), Jane Howard (JH)

Members of community present: Dannie Onn, William Joll, Donald MacNeill (minute secretary)

Item	Discussion	Action/Decision
1. Apologies	Kevin Byrne, Helen Mann.	
2. Minutes of last meeting	Minutes of last meeting approved and signed.	
3. Declarations of interest	None Declared at this stage of the meeting	
4. Matters arising from previous minutes.	Dealt with on agenda.	

<p>5. Air Service</p>	<p>AH spoke to Moira Kerr, an independent journalist resulting in a feature in "The Herald".</p> <p>It is likely the service will be suspended on 15th May 2019 until the tender situation is resolved - or not.</p> <p>Contact was made with Mike Russell MSP who contacted Argyll and Bute chief executive Cleland Sneddon. Copies of the e-mail exchange between Mike Russell and Cleland Sneddon did not leave the Community Council optimistic about the future of the air service. There was considerable discussion and the following points made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is important we join forces with Coll and Tiree who share the PSO service. 2. The air service is now a "de facto" lifeline service, complementing the ferry service and allowing the high school children to come home at weekends. 3. LM stated :School children have a right to family life. "Children's Rights" under ECHR. It is A&B Council's responsibility to make sure this right is addressed. 4. Concern that any increase in fares would harm the uptake of flights. <p>It was decided JH would write to Mike Russell expressing our views. She is copied into the e-mail correspondence between Mike Russell and A&B Council.</p>	<p>JH to write to Mike Russell.</p>

<p>6.Calmac Meeting.</p>	<p>Response to meeting between Iain Erskine and members of the community on Monday 25th February. (Notes appended)</p> <p>JH who sits on the "Calmac Community Board" reported that Calmac will try and ensure Colonsay does not have The Arran on the Monday run. It was pointed out that it is the lateness of vessels arriving back in port prior to the Colonsay schedule which causes major problems.</p> <p>DH mentioned that Iain Erskine had suggested the Isle of Mull as an alternative.</p> <p>JH. There are no new ferries likely to enter service in the near future. The two being built look unlikely ever to be completed.</p> <p>JH also suggested that there is some doubt as to whether cancellations are always recorded for the correct reasons. Weather v operational.</p> <p>This led to discussion of "Dashboard" statistics which were felt to be disingenuous, and certainly not transparent.</p> <p>DH will write to Iain Erskine asking that they might be clarified and certain omissions remedied.</p>	<p>DH to respond to Iain Erskine.</p>
<p>7 Community Fund</p>	<p>RB has updated guidance notes for applicants to this fund. Community Council to respond and make recommendations thereafter the fund will be open for new applications.</p> <p>Formal letters of offers have been sent to successful applicants from last round.</p>	<p>CC to read Richard's guidelines.</p>

8. Island Champions.	An Island survey was sent out and from the responses received the following three areas were deemed of most concern. Ferries/Air Service Affordable Housing Access to medical services.	
9.Planning	Extension to No 2 Glassard.	
10. A.O.C.B.	William Joll asked if there was any update on the future of the roads. JH wrote to the council in September 2018 and was assured our roads were well maintained. It is rumoured that some repair work is scheduled for the summer. Users are encouraged to report faults on a regular basis.	
D.O.N.M.	Monday 8th April at 6.30pm.	

L

Proposed:

Seconded:

Date:

Appendix.

Record of informal meeting with Iain Erskine, acting Area Operations Manager for Calmac and members of Colonsay Community.

Monday 25th February
17:30
Calmac Waiting Room

Present: Richard Buttrick, David Hobhouse, Donald MacNeill, Seumas McNeill, David Binnie, Keir Johnston, Keith Rutherford and Liz McNicholl

Apologies from Alex and Jane Howard.

The meeting took the form of an informal discussion with members of the community raising points of concern and Iain Erskine responding.

Replacement Services.

DH raised concern that the solution to schedule “difficulties” which is being adopted regularly by Calmac, namely to re route via Kennacraig was not acceptable. DB raised issues with getting medical samples to Oban and KJ the impossibility of getting shop supplies re routed at very short notice.

RB told story of elderly neighbour for whom alterations to timings plus re-routing of service made driving to Glasgow much more difficult and incurred expense of overnight stops.

This was reiterated by DMN who pointed out the added stress involved in any journey when the timetable is liable to serious disruption at short notice.

DB remarked that on a recent trip to New Zealand the only part of the journey that did not proceed to timetable was Oban Colonsay.

DB suggested that it should be policy to sail on the day following a cancelled sailing as Colonsay has only 3 connections and missing one has enormous consequences.

Communications.

When the service is subject to repeated and regular disruption it is vital that passengers intending to travel are informed as quickly as possible. This is particularly important if a schedule is advanced due to the weather forecast. This is a decision taken by the master.

It was agreed that e-mails received from the Colonsay Port Manager were excellent but RB recounted the difficulties he had confirming alterations to timetable when mainland staff did not seem to be kept in the loop.

IE said that updates should be immediate.

It was unanimously agreed that the Monday service this winter was the worst it has ever been. This is seen to be because the vessel is late returning from a previous service and then does not have time to come to Colonsay.
This is not acceptable.

IE throughout gave possible explanations. DB felt this was more like a list of excuses and it was Calmac’s job to manage the circumstances equitably for all.

LMN questioned why the amended timetable which has been in operation means that train passengers have only 3 minutes to catch the boat.

IE said it should be scheduled to leave 15 mins, and it was important we reported anomalies such as this to Seumas.

DB Thanked Calmac staff both local and at sea for their help dealing with patients and pointed out that the ferry lifts were often out of order!

DH said that the proposed summer timetable was broadly accepted but the end date was not on the timetable on the website.

He also pointed out how much damage the later summer departure from Port Askaig on a Wednesday has caused local trade. Day trip numbers are heavily reduced. Calmac had promised to support and heavily advertise this service but there is little sign of this.

The dates for the local festivals have not been updated on the website.
All these points were supported by SMN.

DH Also wondered how safe the financial support of the festivals from Calmac was.
SMN pointed out that Colonsay asked for very little while having to suffer the loss of a sailing to accommodate the Tiree music Festival. Other Islands receive many more "Special" sailings.

DH asked that Calmac pay special attention to the ferry sailings which the farms use to transport livestock. Missing a sale can cause a loss of thousands of pounds and a huge amount of extra work and the Masters have been indecisive as to their intentions in recent years.

Dashboard.

Is a set of figures issued by Calmac detailing missed sailings, punctuality etc.

The figures are difficult to interpret.

They do not reflect human cost.

RB suggested they were prepared as a means for Calmac to prove they were meeting their contractual obligations, something that is open to interpretation.

IE asked how they could be presented to suit our particular needs?