

FERRY INDUSTRY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING MINUTES

17 OCTOBER 2019

Attendees

Frances Pacitti (FP) – Chair
Alf Baird (AB)
Allan Comrie (AC)
Erica Clarkson (EC) – by phone
Brian Fulton (BF)
Brian Gordon (BG)
Roy Pedersen (RP)
Amy Phillips (AP)
Calum Robertson (CR)
Gordon Ross (GR)
Alison Wills (AW) Minutes

Apologies

Michael Craigie (MC)
Kevin Hobbs (KH)
Ranald Robertson (RR)

1. Introductions

FP welcomed the attendees, having recently returned to the role of Chair. The group were thanked for taking the time to attend and their input and advice was most welcome. These meetings would be helpful for emerging transport policy to ensure that industry views are properly represented. Apologies were submitted and accepted.

2. Minutes of Previous meeting

There had been a delay in circulating the draft Minutes, which would be circulated more promptly in future. Amendments had been requested and these would be drafted and recirculated for approval prior to publishing. It was noted that the minutes should reflect the discussion of the meeting, acknowledging that parties who were unable to attend may hold contrary views to those discussed.

3. General Update

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 has received assent, including new footway parking and double parking restrictions. The Programme for Government had been published, containing strong environmental commitments for all forms of transport. The MV Loch Seaforth had been purchased and the preferred bidder for the Northern Isles ferry contract had been announced.

The group discussed environmental concerns, such as fuel burn, emissions and power/fuel ratios. It was noted that technology is quickly and continually improving and future hydrogen or hydrogen plus electric ferries, which produce only water vapour as emissions, could provide future vessels with a clean and inexpensive fuel suitable for long distance operations.

4. National Transport Strategy/ Strategic Transport Projects Review/Islands Plan, and considering how those activities feed into “Ferries Plan 2”

A presentation was given on the National Transport Strategy (NTS). This is a catalyst for change, setting out the vision for our Scottish transport system over the next twenty years, while noting the need for flexibility and adapting to technology advances. The presentation touched on strategy development, vision, priorities,

delivery, accountability and evidence. The Strategy is currently out for consultation until midnight on 23 October 2019. All were encouraged to submit their views.

A presentation was given on the National Islands Plan. Around 1000 responses from organisations and individuals had been received via the online survey and the live events. It was noted that the Proposed National Islands Plan had been laid before parliament on 3 October 2019 and was currently undergoing a 40 day scrutiny period as allowed by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2019. The final National Islands Plan will be published by the end of this calendar year. Further analysis of the consultation data and of the feedback received from stakeholders on the Proposed Plan could provide information on areas for prioritisation.

A presentation on the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) was given. The aim of the review is to conduct a Scotland-wide, evidence based review of the performance of the strategic transport network across all transport modes, whilst fundamentally supporting Scotland's Economic Strategy, including inclusive growth. Outcomes and priorities will be defined in the emerging NTS, and in so doing, to make recommendations for potential transport investments for Scottish Ministers to consider as national investment priorities in an updated 20 year (2022-2041) Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland. A consultative exercise was ongoing and input would be appreciated, with the final details yet to be finalised. Wider regional stakeholder consultations were ongoing and one-to-one interviews were taking place. An invitation to participate was extended to group members.

Options would be appraised by checking public acceptability, including flexibility and adaptability, and preparing for new technology such as autonomous vehicles. Scenario planning could show how robust the interventions would be, taking for example economic growth and equalities into consideration.

Comparisons were made between strategic ports within Scotland and abroad, and it was noted an international maritime strategy for development should be considered in order to promote connectivity leading to future economic growth in Scotland.

Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) fares policy was discussed. It was noted that lower fares had brought benefits to many island communities however there are negative impacts and changing strategic contexts and fares policy will be reviewed as a part of the next Ferries Plan.

The STPR is expected to be published in early 2021. Publication of "Ferries Plan 2" is expected by the end of 2022.

The presenters were thanked for their informative presentations and the group thanked for their time and input.

5. AOB/Date of next Meeting

No other business was raised. The next meeting would be in February, date to be circulated.