

Annex A

Note from Meeting between Fiona Hyslop, Minister for Transport and {redacted}, CEO Western Ferries

Held in St Andrews House 2N.05 13:30 – 14:15, Wednesday 11 October 2023

Attending:

Minister for Transport – Fiona Hyslop, MSP
Private Office – {redacted}
Western Ferries – {redacted}
Transport Scotland – {redacted}{redacted}

Agenda

1. Overview of Western Ferries from {redacted}
2. Stantec's Needs Based Assessment on the Gourock to Dunoon route.
3. Gourock/Dunoon vessel/port project
4. {redacted}

Notes

Introductions were made between {redacted} and Ms Hyslop. {Redacted} thanked Ms Hyslop for agreeing to meet with him to discuss Western Ferries services.

There was a short general discussion on weather issues relating to A83 Old Military Road closure. {Redacted} outlined resilience efforts of Western Ferries and a well-tested procedure that allows them to increase to a four vessel shuttle service at short notice. Ms Hyslop thanked Western Ferries crew and shore staff for responding so rapidly and aiding access to Argyll in difficult circumstances.

{Redacted} raised the question of obtaining early sight of the report on the Community Needs Assessment on the Gourock-Dunoon service to inform decision making on future routes/ferries for Western Ferries. {Redacted} advised that the Western Ferries Board would like sight of this to give confidence in taking its own decisions on future investment in replacement vessels.

Ms Hyslop advised that due to the sensitive nature of the Community Needs Assessment, there are no plans to share the report at this time and that this is currently being reviewed by CalMac in order to check factual accuracy and consider the implications of any changes on service levels. Ms Hyslop has not yet been briefed on the outcome and recommendations of the Community Needs Assessment and would not wish to give an unfair advantage to Western Ferries by providing early sighting on this. {redacted}

Action

1. {redacted} requested response from CalMac to recent enquiry – {redacted} to speak to CalMac.
2. Request to look into cost deductions on fares of bus replacement/ferries carried out by CalMac due to ticket machine not working.

From: {redacted}

Sent: Friday, March 8, 2019 7:47 AM

To: Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands <MinisterECI@gov.scot>

Cc: {redacted} {redacted} {redacted} {redacted} {redacted} {redacted}

Subject: Ministerial Meeting – {redacted}, Western Ferries (Clyde) Limited - 28 February 2019 - Note

Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands,

Please find attached a note of your meeting with {redacted}, Managing Director, Western Ferries (Clyde) Limited of 28 February 2019.

Attendees:

Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands
{redacted}, Managing Director, Western Ferries (Clyde) Limited.
{redacted}, {redacted}
Officials – {redacted} {redacted}

Main Discussion Points:

- Minister welcomed {redacted} and {redacted} to the meeting, advising that he values the commercial service provided by Western Ferries (Clyde) Limited (WF) and the positive economic impact this has on both the Gourock and Dunoon communities.
- {redacted} gave a brief overview of WF history, advising that the company operates the most frequent and reliable service in Scotland. He provided a comparison table which highlights key trends and operational performance data between his commercial service against the subsidised service operated by CalMac Ferries Ltd (CFL)
- {redacted} also spoke of the out of hours ambulance service which WF provide free of charge and the lifeline benefit that this offers. This was wholeheartedly endorsed by the Minister.
- {redacted} advised that he appreciated the clarity of position in relation to the future of the Gourock to Dunoon ferry service, which has now transferred to CFL as a passenger only service. The Minister confirmed the rationale behind the decision, citing value for money and the presence of WF vehicle carrying service as contributory factors. The Minister wants to encourage more active travel and he hopes to engage with local stakeholders in the future to achieve this.
- {redacted} advised that the current service provision is concerning, stating that, in his opinion, the 30 minute frequency of service is excessive and therefore presents an unnecessary cost. {redacted} The Minister advised that he wants to be well informed and will evaluate all evidence and engage locally before making any decision.
- Discussion turned to Road Equivalent Tariff (RET), with {redacted} stating that he would welcome it on the Gourock to Dunoon route. The Minister advised that an evaluation of RET is planned and that any future decision must take account of its findings as well as the outcome of the outstanding European Commission complaint regarding a possible RET scheme on the Pentland Firth.
- {redacted} wanted to discuss {redacted}.
- The Minister advised he is keen to hear more and wants to work collaboratively as he can see the economic benefit this commercial offering would present to the island and wider economy.
- {redacted}
- The Minister thanked {redacted} and {redacted} attending the meeting and welcomed further information in relation to {redacted}, which will, amongst a range of other factors, help inform future Ministerial decisions.

Actions:

Officials to draft a letter to {redacted} in relation to Transport Scotland's long term aspirations for {redacted}.

Yours sincerely