

Minute

Development and Infrastructure Committee

Tuesday, 18 May 2021, 14:00.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Graham L Sinclair, Andrew Drever, Norman R Craigie, Robin W Crichton, David Dawson, J Harvey Johnston, Rachael A King, W Leslie Manson, Stephen Sankey, James W Stockan, Duncan A Tullock and Heather N Woodbridge.

Councillors Alexander G Cowie, John T Richards, John A R Scott, Gwenda M Shearer, Magnus O Thomson and Owen Tierney, who had been invited to the meeting.

Clerk

- Angela Kingston, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Gavin Barr, Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.
- Gareth Waterson, Head of Finance.
- James Buck, Head of Marine Services and Transportation.
- Karen Bevilacqua, Solicitor.
- Laura Cromarty, Transportation Manager.

Observing

- David Hartley, Communications Team Leader.
- Rebecca McAuliffe, Press Officer (for Item 1).

Apology

- Councillor Stephen G Clackson, who had been invited to the meeting.

Not Present

- Councillor Barbara Foulkes, who had been invited to the meeting.
- Councillor Steven B Heddle, who had been invited to the meeting.

Chair

- Councillor Graham L Sinclair.

1. Inter-Island Fare Structure

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Marine Services and Transportation, the Committee:

Noted:

1.1. That, as part of the financial settlement from Scottish Government for financial year 2021/22, a service specific grant of £7.855 million was allocated to cover the existing deficit gap to operate services, to provide Sunday winter services across the Inner and South Isles and to implement a revised fare structure across inter-island ferry services for the year ahead.

1.2. That, following many years of campaigning by the Council, the announcement of a substantial increase in Scottish Government funding for inter-island ferry services was very welcome, albeit it had yet to be baselined.

1.3. Options in respect of a revised fare structure across inter-island ferry services, as outlined in section 5 and detailed at Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, with the preferred option being Option 7, namely to provide a 38% reduction on the current fare structure with a 25% concessionary rate for elderly and disabled passengers, as summarised in Appendix 2 to the report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.

On the motion of Councillor Heather N Woodbridge, seconded by Councillor James W Stockan, the Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

1.4. That Option 7, which represented a 38% reduction on the existing adult and vehicle fare structure, with a further 25% discount for elderly and disabled passengers, be approved as the new fare structure for inter-island ferry services, to be implemented by Orkney Ferries Limited during June 2021.

1.5. That the sale of multi books of tickets by Orkney Ferries Limited should cease from June 2021, with the exception of the books of 50 tickets, the sale of which should be extended until 31 March 2022.

1.6. That, from June 2021, the discount on the books of 50 tickets should reduce from 50% to 45%.

1.7. That the expiry date for books of 50 tickets sold from June 2021 be reduced from 500 days to 365 days, with the exception of any extensions defined by COVID-19 measures.

1.8. That existing books of 50 tickets should be accepted until the point of expiry, or until extension dates defined by COVID-19 measures.

1.9. That continuation of availability of books of 50 tickets beyond 31 March 2022 be reviewed, by February 2022, following consultation with isles Community Councils and island communities using those services.

1.10. That the concessionary rate applied to passengers be amended from 60 years and above to 65 years and above, increased in increments over a period of five years from 60 to 65, to bring the concession into line with the Local Concessionary Travel Scheme operated by the Council.

1.11. That the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure should undertake a review of the revised passenger and vehicle fares for inter-island ferry services, post COVID-19 and once fully established, to consider the impact on residents, visitors and businesses, and thereafter submit a report, to the Development and Infrastructure Committee, detailing the findings of the review.

1.12. That, following implementation of the new fare structure in respect of passengers and vehicles for inter-island ferry services, the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure should undertake a review of the commercial tariff, and thereafter submit a report, to the Development and Infrastructure Committee, detailing the findings of that review.

2. Strategic Transport Policy Initiatives

Orkney Inter-Island Transport Study Outline Business Case

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Marine Services and Transportation, the Committee:

Noted:

2.1. That, in 2015, the Council, in partnership with Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, commissioned the Orkney Inter Island Transport Study, to develop and appraise options for the future of the inter-island transport service.

2.2. That, in Autumn 2016, a Strategic Business Case was completed, which included capital and revenue options for all 13 islands connected by air and ferry services, and a timeline for progressing specific elements of the Strategic Business Case to Outline Business Case stage, which would determine a preferred option and the means by which it should be funded, procured and delivered.

2.3. That, at a seminar held on 12 January 2021, Members were provided with an update on the emerging conclusions from the Outer North Isles and Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Outline Business Cases Phase 2 work and to receive feedback prior to presenting to the communities.

2.4. The objectives and main findings of the Outline Business Cases for the Outer North Isles and Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre, as detailed in sections 4 and 5 respectively of the report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, with details of a further period of engagement with the communities attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

2.5. That the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure should undertake a further period of engagement with the relevant communities and key stakeholders in respect of the Outline Business Case Phase 2 and thereafter submit, to the Development and Infrastructure Committee, the final Outline Business Case report detailing the recommended vessel and infrastructure requirements for the Outer North Isles and Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre.

3. Conclusion of Meeting

At 16:02 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Graham L Sinclair.