

Item: 14

Development and Infrastructure Committee: 14 November 2023.

Inter-Island Air Services – Proposed Summer 2024 Timetable.

Report by Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the proposed inter-island air services timetable for summer 2024.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That the inter-island air services timetable for summer 2024 is scheduled to operate from 19 February to 26 October 2024 inclusive.

2.2.

That the draft timetable in respect of air services to be operated by Loganair Limited during summer 2024 was presented to the Air Services Consultative Forum for consideration on 13 September 2023, with main comments and representations from transport representatives outlined in section 4 of this report.

2.3.

The proposed timetable, attached at Appendix 1 to this report, which is mainly consistent with that operated in previous years, including the following amendments:

- Eday Friday morning flight which was trialled during the winter timetable has been extended to operate during the summer with the exception of June, July and August which will remain a dedicated flight for North Ronaldsay.

2.4.

That, in advance of the Council's budget setting process for 2024/25 being concluded, any decision on the proposed timetable in respect of inter-island air services will be subject to an adequate service revenue budget being established.

It is recommended:

2.5.

That, subject to an adequate service revenue budget for 2024/25 being established, the timetable in respect of inter-island air services, to be operated by Loganair Limited during summer 2024, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, be approved.

3. Background

3.1.

The inter-island air service operates to the six Outer North Isles under a Public Service Obligation which establishes the minimum frequencies and capacity and sets the maximum fare levels provided to each of the isles.

3.2.

In December 2020, the Inter-Island Air Services Public Service Obligation Contract 2021 to 2025 was awarded to Loganair Limited following a tendering exercise, with a commencement date of 1 April 2021.

3.3.

The six Outer North Isles Community Councils each appoint a Transport Representative to represent their respective communities on the Inter-Isles Air Service Consultative Forum.

4. Air Services Consultative Forum

4.1.

The draft timetable for summer 2024 was considered by the Air Services Consultative Forum on 13 September 2023, and the key issues discussed are outlined below.

4.2.

The proposed summer 2024/25 timetable presented to the Forum is mainly consistent with previous years, with the exception of the Friday morning drop to Eday.

4.3.

It was noted that flight reliability in Eday should now be improved following the appointment of five new Airfield Attendants. The new recruits are currently going through the necessary fire training before commencing in post.

4.4.

It was also noted that from a resilience perspective and to provide more frequency to the Outer North Isles, a third aircraft is recommended and has been discussed with Scottish Government.

4.5.

A separate meeting with the transport representatives from Eday and North Ronaldsay was arranged on 6 October 2023 to discuss the proposal to extend the Eday Friday morning flight. It was noted that the passenger carryings on the North Ronaldsay flight showed general under-usage and therefore there was capacity to share the flight with Eday.

4.6.

The additional flight was welcomed by the Eday transport representative following the loss of the early morning ferry as the vessels no longer overnight in the isles. It was however noted by the North Ronaldsay transport representative that their life-line service is by air and they do rely on tourism over the peak summer period. For this reason, the Friday morning flight during the period June, July and August will remain a dedicated flight for North Ronaldsay.

4.7.

It was agreed that passenger carryings will be monitored over the summer period in connection with this trial as to whether it would be continued or extended. It was also noted that the booking policy will remain consistent with that operated over the winter period whereby the first four seats remain priority for North Ronaldsay passengers up until 24 hours prior to departure. The remaining seats are available for passengers travelling to North Ronaldsay or Eday.

4.8.

Consistent with the priority booking policy, the Eday return flight scheduled on a Wednesday has also applied the priority seating whereby the first four seats are deemed priority for Eday passengers up until 24 hours prior to departure. The remaining seats are available for passengers travelling to Eday or North Ronaldsay.

5. Proposed Timetable

5.1.

The inter-island air services timetable for summer 2024 is scheduled to operate from 19 February to 26 October 2024 inclusive.

5.2.

On 13 September 2023, the proposed timetable was considered by the Air Services Consultative Forum following circulation of the draft timetable to the communities in June 2023.

5.3.

The proposed timetable, attached at Appendix 1 to this report, incorporates the following amendments:

- Eday Friday morning flight which was trialled during the winter timetable has been extended to operate during the summer with the exception of June, July and August which will remain a dedicated flight for North Ronaldsay.

6. Corporate Governance

6.1.

This report relates to the Council complying with governance and procedural issues and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

6.2.

In accordance with the Scheme of Administration, the determination of timetables in respect of inter-island air services is delegated to the Development and Infrastructure Committee.

7. Financial Implications

7.1.

The proposed timetable, attached as Appendix 1, represents a continuation of the existing level of service provision.

7.2.

The Inter-Island Air Service revenue budget for the current financial year, 2023/24, stands at £1,198,800 and gives an indication of the resources required to maintain this level of service. An overspend in the region of £401,250 is currently being forecast as the probable outturn position for financial year 2023/24. As per the Contract terms, an incremental increase was applied to the Inter Island Air Services PSO Contract in line with RPI. However, the Council's budget setting process for financial year 2023/24 allowed for no budget uplift to reflect the terms of the contract. In addition, Avgas costs have increased significantly so additional payments are paid on a monthly basis as per the contract terms.

Inter-Island Air Service PSO Contract	2023/24
Contract Rate	£1,510,050
Additional Avgas (estimate)	£90,000
Full Year Budget 2023/24	£1,198,800
Anticipated shortfall	(£401,250)

7.3.

The budget issues outlined at section 7.2 above cannot be absorbed by the service area from within other budget areas, as they are too significant.

7.4.

In advance of a service budget being established as part of the Council's annual budget setting process for 2024/25, the level of service provision is subject to an adequate budget being made available and this will be considered as part of the budget setting process for financial year 2024/25.

8. Legal Aspects

8.1.

The Civil Aviation Act 1982 enables the Council to establish and maintain aerodromes.

8.2.

On 21 December 2020, the Inter-Island Air Service Contract 2021 to 2025 was awarded to Loganair Limited with a commencement date of 1 April 2021.

8.3.

The contract between the Council and the operator states that the operator shall carry out the services in accordance with the timetable agreed with the Council.

9. Contact Officers

Gareth Waterson, Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, extension 2301, Email: gareth.waterson@orkney.gov.uk

James Buck, Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master, extension 2600, Email: james.buck@orkney.gov.uk

Laura Cromarty, Service Manager (Transportation), extension 3638, Email: laura.cromarty@orkney.gov.uk

10. Appendix

Appendix 1: Inter Island Air Services Timetable – Summer 2024.

Summer 2024 - Inter-Island Air Services Timetable. Monday 19 February - Saturday 26 October 2024 inclusive

	LM	Monday							Tuesday							Wednesday							A	B
		700	702	703	704	705	706	707	701	708	709	719	710	711	707	700	713	714	715	716	710	711		
Kirkwall	dep	07:35	08:40	09:40	10:50	15:30	16:30	17:30	07:35	08:30	09:30	10:30	15:30	16:30	17:30	07:35	08:40	09:40	13:35	14:45	15:30	16:30	17:30	17:30
Eday	arr																			14:55				17:40
Eday	dep																			15:02				17:47
Stromsay	arr									08:39						08:49								
Stromsay	dep									08:46						08:56								
Sanday	arr			09:53			16:43			08:51			15:43			09:01					15:43			
Sanday	dep			10:00			16:50			08:58			15:50			09:08					15:50			
Westray	arr		08:55								09:45						09:55							
Westray	dep		09:02								09:52						10:00							
Papa Westray	arr		09:04			15:45					09:54	10:45		16:45			10:02					16:45		
Papa Westray	dep		09:11			15:52					10:01	10:52		16:52			10:09					16:52		
Westray	arr					15:54							16:54									16:54		
Westray	dep					16:01							17:01									17:01		
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52			11:07			17:47	07:52			11:02		17:47	07:52			13:52					17:47	17:57
North Ronaldsay	dep	07:59			11:14			17:54	07:59			11:09		17:54	07:59			13:59					17:54	18:04
Papa Westray	arr				11:24												14:09							
Papa Westray	dep				11:31													14:16						
Eday	arr	08:09																						
Eday	dep	08:16																						
Stromsay	arr			10:05			16:55						15:55								15:55			
Stromsay	dep			10:12			17:02						16:02								16:02			
Kirkwall	arr	08:26	09:26	10:21	11:46	16:16	17:11	18:11	08:16	09:11	10:16	11:26	16:11	17:16	18:11	08:26	09:21	10:24	14:31	15:12	16:11	17:16	18:11	18:21

	LM	Thursday							Friday							Saturday					Saturday Refit (24/02/2024 -16/03/2024)					Sunday			
		701	708	709	717	710	711	707	701	718	731	719	710	711	707	720	721	722	723	724	722	723	724	725	726	727	725	726	727
Kirkwall	dep	07:35	08:30	09:30	14:20	15:30	16:30	17:30	07:35	08:40	09:40	14:20	15:30	16:30	17:30	08:30	09:30	10:30	15:00	16:00	08:00	09:10	10:20	14:00	15:00	16:05	10:30	16:00	17:30
Stromsay	arr		08:39							08:49			15:39				09:38								15:09				
Stromsay	dep		08:46							08:56			15:46				09:46								15:16				
Sanday	arr		08:51			15:43				09:01			15:51				09:51								15:21				
Sanday	dep		08:58			15:50				09:08			15:58				09:59								15:28				
Papa Westray	arr											14:35															10:45		
Papa Westray	dep											14:42															10:52		
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52			14:37			17:47	07:52			14:52			17:47			10:47	15:17	16:17	08:17						11:02	17:47	
North Ronaldsay	dep	07:59			14:44			17:54	07:59			14:59			17:54			10:54	15:24	16:24	08:24						11:09	17:54	
Eday	arr								08:09												08:34					16:15			
Eday	dep								08:16												08:41					16:22			
North Ronaldsay	arr																									16:32			
North Ronaldsay	dep																									16:39			
Sanday	arr																						10:33						18:00
Sanday	dep																						10:40						18:07
Westray	arr			09:45								09:55				08:45						09:25							
Westray	dep			09:52								10:02				08:52						09:32							
Papa Westray	arr			09:54	14:54		16:45					10:04		16:45		08:54			16:34			09:34		14:15			16:15		
Papa Westray	dep			10:01	15:01		16:52					10:11		16:52		09:01			16:41			09:41		14:22			16:22		
Westray	arr						16:54							16:54										14:24			16:24		
Westray	dep						17:01							17:01										14:31			16:31		
Stromsay	arr					15:55																	10:45				18:12		
Stromsay	dep					16:02																	10:52				18:19		
Kirkwall	arr	08:16	09:11	10:16	15:16	16:11	17:16	18:11	08:26	09:21	10:26	15:16	16:11	17:16	18:11	09:16	10:11	11:11	15:41	16:56	08:51	09:56	11:01	14:46	15:41	16:56	11:26	16:46	18:28

- Eday: Monday AM drop during school term only. Bookings on the Eday drop will be subject to availability from 12:00 the Friday before departure until 18:00 on Sunday.
- A: Operates school term only. Wednesdays 21 Feb - 27 March; 17 April - 3 July; and 21 August - 9 October 2024. The first four seats are prioritised for Eday passengers up to 24 hours before flight.
- B: Operates during school holidays. Wednesdays 3 & 10 April; 10 July - 14 August and 16 & 23 October 2024. The first four seats are prioritised for Eday passengers up to 24 hours before flight.
- Eday: Friday AM - does **NOT** operate during June, July & August. The first four seats are prioritised for North Ronaldsay passengers up to 24 hours before flight.
- Saturday Refit: Additional frequency by air provided while the Orkney Ferries ONI vessels are on winter refit.
- Sunday: Flight drop off/pick up on request. Bookings can be made on the Sanday flight, shared with North Ronaldsay, from 12:00 on Friday until 12:00 on Sunday.

PLEASE NOTE - The operation of the Stronsay Sunday service is subject to availability of ground crew on the island. Currently (Oct 2023) there are NO crew available.