

**Item: 8**

**Development and Infrastructure Committee: 1 April 2025.**

**Inter-Island Air Services – Proposed Winter 2025/26 Timetable.**

**Report by Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable  
Regeneration.**

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## **1. Overview**

- 1.1. The draft timetable in respect of air services to be operated during winter 2025/26 was presented to the Air Services Consultative Forum for consideration on 22 January 2025, with main comments and representations from transport representatives outlined in section 4 of this report.
- 1.2. The inter-island air services timetable for winter 2025/26 is scheduled to operate from 26 October 2025 to 15 February 2026 inclusive, noting that an enhanced air service and additional aircraft is still being considered by the Council.
- 1.3. The proposed timetable, attached at Appendix 1 to this report, is consistent with that operated in previous years. Should an enhanced service using a third aircraft be taken forward during winter 2025/26, a revised timetable will be presented back to this Committee for consideration and approval.
- 1.4. In advance of the Council’s budget setting process for 2025/26 being established, the timetable in respect of inter-island air services, will be subject to an adequate service revenue budget being established. A service pressure bid was submitted to coincide with the Contract award from 1 April 2025.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
  - i. Approve the timetable in respect of inter-island air services, to be operated during winter 2025/26, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, subject to an adequate service revenue budget for 2025/26 being established.
  - ii. Note that, should an enhanced inter island air service be taken forward during the Contract period, the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration would submit, an amended timetable for consideration by the Development and Infrastructure Committee.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. The inter-island air service operates to the six Outer North Isles under a Public Service Obligation (PSO) which establishes the minimum frequencies and capacity and sets the maximum fare levels provided to each of the isles.
- 3.2. In November 2024, the Inter-Island Air Services PSO Contract 2025 to 2029 was awarded to Loganair Limited following a tendering exercise, with a commencement date of 1 April 2025.
- 3.3. The Contract was awarded on the existing level of service provision until the outcome of external funding was known, whereby if successful an enhanced service including a third aircraft should be taken forward. This is being explored further by officers at present.
- 3.4. 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 winter 2025/26 was considered by the Air Services Consultative Forum on 22 January 2025, where it was noted that the existing aircraft are working to almost maximum hours, leaving no opportunity to expand or enhance services.
- 4.2. It was noted that there used to be flights between Sanday and Stronsay every day. This had been lost on a Monday and Friday due to a request made to accommodate a teacher however the connection was never used. Following discussion, it was agreed that the service should be reverted to reinstate the link. The change has been accommodated in the timetable, outlined at Appendix 1.
- 4.3. Transport Representatives noted that pupil numbers are increasing in Eday and North Ronaldsay which will have an impact on the Monday morning shared flight with North Ronaldsay. The increase in pupil numbers reinforces the need for an additional aircraft where services can be dedicated by island as opposed to shared services.
- 4.4. The Service Manager (Transportation) noted that the PSO Contract has been awarded on the basis of the existing level of service provision however if funding discussions were successful with Scottish Government, that services would be enhanced by introducing a third aircraft to the network.

**For Further Information please contact:**

Laura Cromarty, Service Manager (Transportation), extension 2638, Email [laura.cromarty@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:laura.cromarty@orkney.gov.uk)

**Implications of Report**

**1. Financial:**

The proposed draft timetable for 2025 is consistent with that operated in previous years. However, the Contract from 1 April 2025 provides the opportunity to enhance services should external grant funding be made available.

The Transportation Service notified an unavoidable service pressure in respect of the additional Contract costs, in advance of the budget setting process for financial year 2025/26, and this request has been approved and included in the draft General Fund budget.

The tender submission for the first full year of operation, based on the existing level of service provision was £1,705,310 following deduction of revenue, which is an increase of £69,510 to the existing budget.

The level of service provision detailed in this report is subject to an adequate budget being made available as part of the approval of the final revenue budgets for financial year 2025/26.

**2. Legal:**

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

On 16 December 2024, the Inter-Island Air Services Contract 2025 to 2029 was awarded to Loganair Limited with a commencement date of 1 April 2025.

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.

**3. Corporate Governance:** 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.

**4. Human Resources:** None related to the report recommendations.

**5. Equalities:** The provision of a suitable inter-island air service is key in connecting some of our most remote fragile island communities.

**6. Island Communities Impact:** The timetable is specifically in relation to isles-based services which is a positive impact for all residents and helps to reduce the barriers that existing with access to services and goods.

**7. Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:

Growing our economy.

- Strengthening our Communities.
  - Developing our Infrastructure.
  - Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
    - Cost of Living.
    - Sustainable Development.
    - Local Equality.
    - Improving Population Health.
  9. **Environmental and Climate Risk:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
  10. **Risk:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
  11. **Procurement:** The inter-island air service is a Public Service Obligation Contract which is competitively tendered, prescribing the timetable to be undertaken by the operator.
  12. **Health and Safety:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
  13. **Property and Assets:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
  14. **Information Technology:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
  15. **Cost of Living:** It is noted that a high proportion of low-income families are resident in the outlying islands. The inter-island air service helps to connect communities and provide a key lifeline connection for some of our most remote island communities.

### List of Background Papers

None.

### Appendix

Appendix 1 Inter-Island Air Services Draft Winter Timetable 2025/26.

Winter Inter-Island Air Services Timetable. Sunday 26 October 2025 - Sunday 15 February 2026 inclusive



DRAFT

FLIGHT NUMBER	LM	Monday							Tuesday							Wednesday										
		700	700	702	703	703	704	705	706		707	701	708	709	705	710	707	701	711	709	712	714	705	706	715	707
Kirkwall	dep	D	E		D	E															A			B		
Kirkwall	arr	07:35	08:00	08:25	08:45	09:10	10:30	15:00	15:10		16:10	07:35	08:25	08:35	15:00	15:10	16:10	07:35	08:25	08:35	09:20	14:25	15:00	15:10	16:00	16:10
Stromsay	arr				08:59	09:19									15:19				08:34							
Stromsay	dep				09:06	09:26									15:26				08:41							
Sanday	arr				09:11	09:31									08:38				08:46					15:23		
Sanday	dep				09:18	09:38									15:30				08:53					15:30		
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52	08:17				10:47								16:27	07:52										16:27
North Ronaldsay	dep	07:59	08:24				10:54								16:34	07:59										16:34
Westray	arr			08:40															08:50							
Westray	dep			08:47															08:57							
Papa Westray	arr			08:49			11:04	15:15							08:59	15:15			08:59				15:15			
Papa Westray	dep			08:56			11:11	15:22							09:06	15:22			09:06				15:22			
Westray	arr							15:24							15:24								15:24			
Westray	dep							15:31							15:31								15:31			
Eday	arr	08:09	08:34																		09:30	14:35			16:10	
Eday	dep	08:16	08:41																		09:37	14:42			16:17	
Stromsay	arr							15:35							08:50									15:35		
Stromsay	dep							15:42							08:57									15:42		
Kirkwall	arr	08:26	08:51	09:11	09:31	09:51	11:26	15:46	15:51		16:51	08:16	09:06	09:21	15:46	15:51	16:51	08:16	09:06	09:21	09:47	14:52	15:46	15:51	16:27	16:51

FLIGHT NUMBER	LM	Thursday							Friday							Saturday				Saturday during ferry refit (10 Jan - 7 March 2026*)					Sunday				
		701	708	709	716	705	710	707	701	701	711	709	709	730	705	706	707	702	719	720	721	722	723	724	725	726	727	728	729
Kirkwall	dep	07:35	08:25	08:35	12:15	15:00	15:10	16:10	D	E		D	E																
Kirkwall	arr						15:19		07:35	08:00	08:25	08:45	09:10	14:00	15:00	15:10	16:10	08:25	09:30	10:30	15:10	08:00	09:10	10:20	14:00C	15:00C	16:10C	13:45	15:05
Stromsay	arr						15:26				08:34															15:09C			
Stromsay	dep										08:41															15:16C			
Eday	arr																										16:20C		
Eday	dep																										16:27C		
Westray	arr			08:50							09:00	09:25											09:25						
Westray	dep			08:57							09:07	09:32											09:32						
Papa Westray	arr			08:59		15:15					09:09	09:34	14:15	15:15					08:49		15:25		09:34		14:15C			15:20	
Papa Westray	dep			09:06		15:22					09:16	09:41	14:22	15:22					08:56		15:32		09:41		14:22C			15:27	
Westray	arr					15:24								15:24											14:24C			15:29	
Westray	dep					15:31								15:31											14:31C			15:36	
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52			12:32		16:27		07:52	08:17				14:32					09:47		15:42	08:17					16:37C	14:02	
North Ronaldsay	dep	07:59			12:39		16:34		07:59	08:24				14:39					09:54		15:49	08:24					16:44C	14:09	
Eday	arr								08:09	08:34												08:34							
Eday	dep								08:16	08:41												08:41							
Sanday	arr		08:38				15:31				08:46										10:43			10:33		15:21C		14:15	
Sanday	dep		08:45				15:38				08:53										10:50			10:40		15:28C		14:22	
Stromsay	arr		08:50																		10:55			10:45				14:27	
Stromsay	dep		08:57																		11:02			10:52				14:34	
Kirkwall	arr	08:16	09:06	09:21	12:56	15:46	15:51	16:51	08:26	08:51	09:06	09:31	09:56	14:56	15:46	15:51	16:51	09:11	10:11	11:11	16:06	08:51	09:56	11:01	14:46C	15:41C	17:01C	14:43	15:51

A: Operates 12 November 2025 - 14 January 2026 (Eday Wednesday departure time subject to change due to operation of service during daylight hours)

B: Operates 29 October - 5 November 2025 and from 21 January - 11 February 2026

C: These flights will operate 30 minutes earlier on 10, 17 and 24 January 2026

D: Operates 27 October - 24 November 2025 and 23 January - 13 February 2026

E: Operates 28 November 2025 - 19 January 2026

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

EDAY: Friday AM the first four seats are prioritised for North Ronaldsay residents up to 24 hours before flight.

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.

The operation of the Stromsay Sunday service is subject to availability of ground crew on the island. Currently (March 2024) there are NO Stromsay crew available. Please check with Loganair.

North Ronaldsay 07:35/08:00 and 16:10 departures - these flights operate during the hours of darkness and due to associated legislation, times may change to operate during daylight hours. Loganair will inform all booked passengers of the flight time change in advance. In the event that the flights are changed, the departure times from Kirkwall are as follows:

Evening Flight	Mon-Fri	Morning Flight	Mon/Fri	Tue-Thu
3 November 2025 - 23 January 2026	14:00	10 November - 24 November 2025, 23 January - 6 February 2026	10:10	
		11 November 2025 - 5 February 2026		09:40

\* Dates may be subject to change if ferry refit period is extended.

		Monday							
FLIGHT NUMBER	LM	700		702	703	704	705	706	707
Kirkwall	dep	07:35	08:24	08:40	09:10	10:30	15:00	15:10	16:05
Stronsay	arr				09:19				
Stronsay	dep				09:26				
Sanday	arr				09:31			15:22	
Sanday	dep				09:38			15:29	
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52				10:47			16:22
North Ronaldsay	dep	07:59				10:54			16:29
Westray	arr			08:55					
Westray	dep			09:02					
Papa Westray	arr			09:04		11:04	15:15		
Papa Westray	dep			09:11		11:11	15:22		
Westray	arr						15:24		
Westray	dep						15:31		
Eday	arr		08:34						
Eday	dep		08:41						
Stronsay	arr							15:34	
Stronsay	dep							15:41	
Kirkwall	arr	08:16	08:51	09:26	09:51	11:26	15:46	15:51	16:46