

Uig Harbour Redevelopment - COMMUNITY LIAISON GROUP

Minutes for liaison Meeting held on **Thursday 20th January 2022 at 1900Hrs**
 Meeting held virtually on Microsoft Teams due to current restrictions.

1	Introductions
	<p>Councillor Munro thanked everyone for attending the first meeting and opened the meeting with introductions from the members, contractor and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Calum Munro - Chair (CM) – Councillor – The Highland Council John Finlayson (JF) – Councillor – The Highland Council Garry Smith (GS) – Design Unit Manager – The Highland Council Andrew Maciver (AM) – Principal Engineer – The Highland Council Iain MacLennan (IM) – Project Manager – The Highland Council Steve Scott (SS) – Project Manager – RJ McLeod Sean Melville – Sub Agent – RJ McLeod Darrell Broom (DB) – Project Manager Skye Triangle Upgrades – Caledonian MacBrayne Kenny Boyd (KB) – Harbour Infrastructure Development Manager - Caledonian MacBrayne Donald Beaton (DB) – Uig Port Manager – Caledonian MacBrayne Stuart Macpherson (SM) – Head of Strategic Projects – HIE</p> <p>There were a number of other attendees at the meeting comprising of local businesses, stakeholders and residents.</p>
2	Apologies
	<p>Robert Osbourne – Contracts Manager – RJ McLeod Andi Dunkel – Skye Explorer Boat Trips</p>
3	Review of Previous Meeting’s Minutes
	<p>This is the first CLG meeting.</p>
4	Progress
	<p>Overview of project presented by SS, including progress made to date.</p> <p>The presentation will shortly be available on THC website (link detailed below): https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1523/transport_and_streets/832/uig_harbour_redevelopment</p>
5	Community Liaison

CM thanked SS for the presentation on the project and asked for any questions on the presentation or the project.

Angus Ross (AR) queried the dredging that as well as around the new pier was there to be dredging undertaken to the back of the pier. SS confirmed this was the case and demonstrated the area on the presentation slide.

JF summarised the benefits of the project and in particular the extended marshalling area and acknowledged the volume of materials to be delivered by HGV and if there was more that could be delivered by sea? He asked where jobs would be advertised and the community benefit from employment and details for a site contact.

SS responded that they are looking into the feasibility of delivering the piling materials by sea but that there were existing weight restrictions on the pier which could impact on offloading any vessels. To reduce the lorry movements on the local road network they were looking to open the disused Kingsburgh Quarry but may still need to source rock and concrete from other quarries on Skye. They are looking to see if it is feasible for mobilising their own concrete plant, but that the raw materials would still need taken to the site. SS advised that jobs would be advertised on local agency websites and appropriate community Facebook pages.

Martin Madigan (MM) asked about the material deliveries and the working hours on the project.

SS responded that the working hours were specified in the Contract and were for a Monday to Friday with a half day on Saturday. They may look to extend these which would involve consultation with THC's Environmental Health department.

MM queried if THC's Environmental Health would consult with the local residents.

IM responded that THC's Environmental Health would consult with the Councillors and the Ward Manager.

MM queried if parking charges would be applied on the new parking areas being created.

AM responded that the land is owned by the Highland Council and leased to CALMAC. For the existing Highland Council parking, if THC decide to implement parking charges at their car park and there are no parking charges within the CFL controlled car park, parking issues may arise which will have to be considered.

Billy Harley (BH) is concerned regarding the outage period as there is a lot of businesses reliant on the passing traffic. There will be a significant impact on the fragile community during this period. Was an economic risk assessment undertaken to determine the impact?

AM understood Billy's concerns and would check if an economic assessment was included as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment which was done for the project. AM advised that

he understood that no compensation is available to businesses as part of Harbour Act legislation, but would check with THC's legal team, and was aware compensation was available to businesses under Flood Act legislation

BH responded that only within the last 5 years has there been little unemployment and employment through the winter months and is concerned that a project of this scale will have a detrimental impact on the personnel and employees within the village.

AM responded that following the consultation period it was deemed that the least impact would be during the winter with the proposed outage period of Sept 2022 – Feb 2023

BH responded that removing the ferry service in the summer months would likely have the least impact on Uig as it doesn't have enough capacity in the summer.

JF responded that due to the size of the project and the personnel on site this may offset any accommodation concerns, it is possible that the quieter months might be busier.

BH responded that they have had no significant bookings for accommodation since the project started.

SS replied that there was only a small number of personnel on the project at present and this would ramp up over the coming months. At present they have hired a number of properties on Skye.

AR accepted the issues with the weight restriction on the pier and suggested landing craft for the delivery of materials. AR also queried the length of berth to be made available.

SS replied that there was to be in the region of 30m of berth available and that the refuelling area would be maintained. There is a requirement to provide mooring buoys and a vessel for shuttling between the moorings and the pier.

Alan Macrae (AMa) thought that closing the pier for 5 months was madness. Ullapool was only closed for 5 weeks. He questioned if the decision was based on engineering or money? He also asked if a statutory consultation has been undertaken on the effect on the island communities affected by the closure? Has a passenger only ferry being considered during the outage?

AM responded that the closure period had been defined following early contractor engagement with 2 Contractors, where initially a 12 weeks outage was estimated and this was increased to 21 weeks following the first tender received for the Uig project. The outage period of 21 weeks was also reviewed with the contractor at the first tender submission in 2020 which included a review with the designers and the outcome was that the outage period could not be reduced. With regards to the outage duration of 21 weeks, it is based on the engineering design for the ground conditions and the construction methodology. AM advised that he wasn't aware if Transport Scotland had undertaken an Island Impact Assessment but will check and confirm. AM asked if

CALMAC had any comment on the passenger only ferry.

DB replied CalMac had been consulting with communities in Skye, Harris and Uist and were considering options for a passenger only route, and will provide further information to communities in another series of consultations which will be planned to take place in February 2022.

AMa responded that he was convinced that there should be an island impact assessment and that the most cancelled route in Winter is the Ullapool/ Stornoway crossing. He looks forward to hearing about the island impact assessment and the passenger only proposal.

SM introduced himself as the Head of Strategic Projects within HIE and a resident of Uig. He supported BH in his request regarding an economic impact assessment, the planned outage would appear to have been proposed based on ferry traffic to avoid the busier summer months. SM confirmed that the area where the RJ's site offices was land that was owned by HIE but rented to THC for the project and was delighted that the oil tanks had now been removed. He asked if there would be consideration to a reduction in the speed limit through Uig given the volume of HGV movements associated with the project. He requested to see sight of the programme to determine if any community groups could benefit from having other contractors in the area. SM asked for an update on the New Terminal Building Contract.

AM replied that the new terminal building contract is now out to tender and due to be returned in the next couple of weeks where it would be assessed and then submitted to Transport Scotland for them to consider funding approval. He would hope that a decision is made and the building contractor could be appointed March / April 22.

SM asked if the contract would be let by THC and highlighted the additional disruption due to parallel contracts. SM highlighted that at present there was no Community Council and it would be ideal if this could be re-established but accepts that the earliest this would be likely could be in August 2022.

AM confirmed that the new terminal building contract would be awarded by THC following approval of funding from TS.

CM highlighted the economic and social impact of the new project and the long term benefits and queried the plans for the HIE land at the end of the contract.

AM stated that the leased land would be returned as per the lease conditions.

SM replied that HIE would look to retain the land for future development and that the use of the existing terminal building is still to be determined by CMAL.

BH asked about that access for trip boats and if there was any interim plan for people with assistance needs?

AM replied that temporary boat steps during the construction works was a contract requirement. AM confirmed that during the community engagement they reviewed the boat steps and investigated the feasibility for a hinged walkway pontoon. This was reviewed by consultants and it was determined that a hinged walkway pontoon could not be provided due to the wave climate which would be unfavourable for a pontoon and the reliability of maintaining a pontoon would be unsustainable in terms of maintenance and cost. Also, there were gradient issues associated with a hinged walkway pontoon which would result in a reduction in available berthing. AM confirmed that following the petition with regard to accessibility with the new boat steps, the Scottish Government's Public Petitions Committee wrote to THC and following advice from THC's principal equalities officer regarding the regulations, the maritime legislation and regulations do not apply for passengers of sightseeing or excursions and it also does not apply where it is deemed impossible to uphold the right to non-discrimination in a safe or operationally feasible manner.. THC are in contact with Skye and Lochalsh Access Panel and a meeting will be held with Skye and Lochalsh Access Panel, community trust, tour boat operator, harbour users and THC's consulting engineer to review if any changes can be effected. AM confirmed that the new boat steps would have additional landings provided.

BH was disappointed with the response regarding access and what could be done to replace the steps.

AM replied that THC's funding was restricted to £1.5M for the concrete repairs to the existing pier.

BH closed by stating that the community were at a disadvantage as they do not have the expertise in the local area to come up with a cost effective solution to address the issue.

CM said that the situation and options available may become clearer after AM has had further discussion with the Skye and Lochalsh Access Panel and a further meeting is arranged.

JF responded to SM on the community council issue and suggested the Community Trust to represent the community in the interim. Further discussion with HIE on development space vs parking. Asked about the frequency of the CLG meetings and that if the presentation could be shared for anyone not able to attend. Thanked everyone for attending and that it had been a positive meeting.

SM replied that he felt it was appropriate and transparent to mention the Community Council in the meeting.

MM suggested the communication regarding the forming of a Community Council needs to be better communicated and recommended an advert in the West Highland Free Press.

SS proposed a monthly meeting.

CM responded that it had been a positive meeting with relevant questions raised and thanked all for attending. The meeting was then closed.

8	Date of next meeting
	Propose Thursday 17 th February at 19:00 hrs via Microsoft TEAMS.