

Item 11 - Question TimeResponse to Mr A Henderson

The Scottish Government announced in the Ferries Plan that they would consider introducing a Mallaig – Lochboisdale service when deciding on the specification for the next tendered Clyde and Hebridean Ferry Services contract. It announced a 3 year pilot service in 2013 which has provided two return sailings on Tuesdays and Saturdays between November and April. The Highland Council welcomed the introduction of this pilot and we have supported the service through the provision of a coach service between Mallaig and Fort William that connects with the ferry. We will continue to engage with HITRANS and the Scottish Government as this pilot progresses.

The winter pilot service is being provided by a vessel that is currently deployed elsewhere on the Caledonian Macbrayne network in the summer months but the Council recognises the tourism and wider benefits of this service and its extension to cover the summer months could bring to the Lochaber area. The Council will work with other stakeholders to make representations to Transport Scotland for its inclusion within the new Clyde and Hebridean Ferry Services contract with the service extended to cover the summer season.