

LOCHABER TRANSPORT FORUM

Minutes of Executive Meeting held

Tuesday 17th September 2019 – 10.00, the Duncansburgh Church Hall, the Parade, Fort William

Present - Brian Murphy
Benny MacDonald
John Barnes
Arthur Cowie
Flora McKee
Bryan Gregg

Apologies - Tony Dobson

- **Minutes of the meeting** held on 6th August 2019 were approved by the Committee.
- **Meeting of the Bus User's Group held on 26th March 2019.** As this was the last meeting of the group the minutes were approved by the Committee.
- **Matters Arising**
 - Under Matters Arising, Benny said there had been an email from Greig MacKay, Bus User's Scotland, saying he was concerned over the report which was also discussed at the open Forum Meeting in August that Stagecoach were using older coaches which are not suitable on the 919 service and in areas of Highland.
 - Under Development Worker's Report, Benny had heard again from Network Rail about the meeting on accessible rail stations. They apologised for the delay and will be in touch this week with arrangements.
Arthur gave some background to the number of times SATA have tried to get improvements at stations. They had good cross party support in Parliament but each attempt would only go so far and stop. Now the Transport Minister has a very large Portfolio so it's difficult to get changes made.
 - Under Correspondence, the problem of the morning train to Mallaig connecting with CalMac ferries was also raised at the August open meeting and Finlay MacRae, CalMac, said they will look into the complaints.
 - Under Correspondence, Benny reported the issue of Citylink coaches not stopping at Inchree and Bunree. He received a reply saying drivers should stop where it's safe and they will be asked to do so.
 - Under Recent Meetings, there will be another consultation of Fort William 2040 on 25th September in the Nevis Centre and Vikki Trelfer, HITRANS, has said the Active Travel Masterplan will be included for further discussion. Benny will send out details of the event to those on the Forum database.
- **Development Worker's Report**

Benny added the following to his report.

Citylink confirmed they will put out winter timetables at bus stops similar to what was done in May. Benny had copies of the Active Travel Map supplied by HITRANS.

There was general discussion on the closure of the CalMac ticket office in Fort William. The office also dealt with sales for Citylink tickets. Though Citylink tickets can be bought at the Visit Scotland office in the High Street there is now no place for passengers to find further bus info around the station. It would be very beneficial to have an integrated office for rail, coach, and ferry ticket sales and info.

John said Friends of the West Highland Lines will soon be meeting Serco to discuss the Sleeper Service. He said the new lounge Serco have for First Class Travel passengers within Fort William Station is underused. It was originally offered as a community asset but is very difficult to book.

- **Correspondence**

Benny received an email with feedback from the National Transport Review which is open for consultation with a closing date of 23rd October. It was agreed this should be emailed out to the full Forum contact list. Brian asked if Sustrans have responded in any way to the new charges for pedestrians and cyclists on Corran Ferry. Benny hadn't received any detail. There was discussion on when the new fares were to be implemented, a date of 22nd August was mentioned but Benny couldn't find any new details on the Council website.

- **Forthcoming Meetings**

The Fort William 20/40 event is mentioned above.

Benny had emailed the Forum Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2018/19 to the Exec. Committee ahead of this meeting. These were discussed and agreed by the Committee.

- **West Highland Community Rail Partnership**

The CRP AGM will be held on 21st September in Kilmallie Community Centre at 12.30.

- **AOCB**

Arthur will be meeting with David Devine, Transport Scotland, on 9th October and walking along Belford Road to highlight the need for more drop kerbs, etc.

Benny queried the work done on pavements at the new retail park. The pavement on the opposite side of the road had improvements around the pedestrian lights. Arthur confirmed the short length of pavement to be put in along the front of the Aldi store is planned for later.

John said the trip with the Intercity 125 train planned for this summer has been put back until next year. This was booked as part of the 125 years Anniversary of the West Highland Line but had to be cancelled because of the landslide near Arrochar.

- **Date of next meeting**

There will be an Executive Committee Meeting at 10.00 on Tuesday 29th October followed by the AGM at 11.00 and an open Transport Forum Meeting. The meetings will be held in the Duncansburgh Church Hall.

Meeting from 29th October 2019

Minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2019 were approved by the Committee.