

Note of the Open Meeting of Papa Westray Community Council held on Friday, 6 August 2021 at 19:30 to discuss the Orkney Inter Island Transport Study Recommendations

Present:

Mr I Cursiter, Mr A Hourston, Mr B Hourston and Mr N Rendall.

In Attendance:

- Mr P Baker, Island Link Officer/Clerk.
- 11 members of the public

Order of Business

1. Apologies.....	2
2. Discussion on OIITS Recommendations for Papa Westray	2
3. Conclusion of Meeting	4

1. Apologies

Resolved to note that no apologies had been received.

2. Discussion on OIITS Recommendations for Papa Westray

The Chair opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. He explained that the aim of the meeting was to further gather the public's opinion about the Phase 2 proposals put forward by OIC for Papa Westray's future ferry service. The previous public meeting had resulted in some concerns over how the previous consultation in 2018/2019 had not displayed the current findings (haulage reports) which could have helped lead to the majority of Papay folk preferring the option of a Linkspan Ro-Ro service direct from Kirkwall, rather than a hard ramp between Papa Westray and Westray.

This meeting was held the evening following the circulation of the information that was gathered regarding the haulage reports, and Papa Westray Community Council requested that residents join in open discussion as to determine thoughts and opinions before relaying all information to the relevant parties who will be involved in shaping the future proposals.

The Chair offered the floor to any public discussion and questions regarding the current finding. From the discussion, the following points were noted:

- The cost to the residents of Papay for putting a car (unaccompanied) to Kirkwall should the decision to pursue the Ro-Ro direct to Kirkwall be significantly higher than having a hard ramp to Westray. The sum of £117.00 would be the total for the vehicle and passenger, allowing for the costs of the ferry service direct to Kirkwall, also an overnight stay and return trip the following day by plane or boat via Westray.
- It was discussed and confirmed that Orkney Ferries' staff will not be authorised to drive off a vehicle or the owners of the vehicle make their own arrangements.
- Should the service be via Westray (hard ramp), the vehicles will still be unable to be unaccompanied. However, there would be a return service the same day, reducing the costs in comparison to the direct route to Kirkwall.
- Should the vehicle be unable to run/drive, Westray haulier does have a suitable trailer that will allow the vehicle unaccompanied travel.
- Should the decision be made and Papay receives the direct Ro-Ro service to Kirkwall, could Papay engage with other islands to share a haulier?

Following discussions, it was noted that the majority of the islands had haulage companies based on their islands or, for example, Shapinsay would use a Kirkwall based haulier. This would mean that Papay would have to source either its own haulage company, which figures show this not to be feasible, or rely on a Kirkwall based company. Kirkwall based haulier would require Papa Westray to purchase its own vehicles and trailers thus meaning Papay would be liable for any running and maintenance fees.

Following on from this, if Papay were to receive the hard ramp to Westray option, any deliveries that require a depot to be delivered to could use the Orkney Islands Council yard, free of charge. This would then be the collection place for the Westray based haulage company to collect and deliver the goods to Westray in preparation to ship to Papay. Should Papay folk wish to cross to Westray and collect, this arrangement would have to be investigated.

Members and the public were pleased to hear that Papay would receive the help and support from Westray's haulage company and that Westray's haulage company would also transport Papay's community shop goods at a reduced price to ensure costings were affordable.

Westray's haulage company would also be able to support Papay farmers with transporting livestock and could house them over night if required and, following on from the report, be significantly cheaper.

It was also noted that the Westray-based haulage firm would collect directly from Orkney aggregates, and that this would save on any delivery costs to the Orkney Islands Council depot yard in Hatston. This yard was currently run by JBT.

The above arrangements were very much similar to the current arrangements of Stronsay, Westray and Sanday.

With the above arrangement in mind, members and the public agreed that they would like to request that the current fees that apply for a ferry crossing from Kirkwall to Papa Westray, via Westray still remain the one fee, including cargo, should the hard ramp be introduced. It was felt that it would be fair to keep the current fees, for the Kirkwall to Papay, via Westray, the same to not disadvantage Papa Westray.

Following on from the previous consultation, it was resolved that, at the time, there was not significant information on display which led to the public voting for the linkspan between Papa Westray and Kirkwall (receiving 60% votes) as it was thought it would be more cost effective. However, since research into the costs of shipping/haulage, it had proven otherwise. Papa Westray would either need to supply vehicles to a haulage company at great expense or employ someone local with a HGV license to move the goods. As Papa Westray only shipped approximately 700 tons a year, neither of the two above options would be feasible or affordable for all.

Moving the proposal forward, it was resolved:

A. That there was a unanimous vote for the hard ramp option, and this was supported by Papa Westray Community Council.

B. That the Clerk would send an email to Democratic Services, for the attention of Orkney Ferries, Orkney Islands Council's Transportation Manager and Head of Transport, Stantec (the consultants carrying out the study) and the North Isles Councillors, explaining that the community council and the residents of Papa Westray, following the public meetings and outcome of the reports, were in favour of the hard ramp option between Papa Westray and Westray.

C. That the Clerk would send the detailed haulage report to the above named to evidence the decision.

D. That the Clerk would circulate an email around the residents of Papa Westray with a summary of the meeting and would include the link for the Phase 2 consultation so that residents could relay their feedback.

E. That the Clerk would ask Orkney Ferries "*could winter crossings between Papa Westray and Westray be affected as much as it currently is with the direct ferry crossing from Kirkwall?*".

Members and the public thanked Mrs L Sharp for the comprehensive report and the hard work and detail that were committed.

3. Conclusion of Meeting

With no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 20:30.