

# Minute of the Special Meeting of Papa Westray Community Council held via Teams on Friday, 14 May 2021 at 19:30

## Present:

I Cursiter, A Hourston, B Hourston, F McNab, N Rendall and S Thompson.

## In Attendance:

- Councillor S Clackson.
- J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer.
- P Baker, Clerk/Island Link Officer (ILO).

## Order of Business

1. Apologies.....	2
2. Discussion on Ferry Issues .....	2
3. Any Other Competent Business.....	7
4. Conclusion of Meeting. ....	7

## 1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from I.Hourston and Councillor H.Woodbridge.

## 2. Discussion on Ferry Issues

### A. Ferry proposal - Pros regarding Link Span between Papa Westray and Kirkwall

Members felt that the pros for this proposal against the Roll on and Roll off/hard ramp service to Westray would consist of:

- Would not have an impact with the foot traffic of the plane service and minimal impact to the current fares and request for this service.
- There had previously been a majority vote by residents of Papa Westray for the Link Span between Papa Westray and Kirkwall and miss out the link through Westray.
- Most of the islands being served by Orkney Ferries are in a way of the ferries used to the link span direct to Kirkwall, however the quantity of sailings per week differ.
- Would reduce the time the ferry spent at the pier at Papa Westray for unloading the cargo (in comparison to the current routine of the crane unloading).
- Would better the safety aspect of unloading cargo from the ferry and reduce any damage that may have been caused (in comparison to the current routine of the crane unloading).
- There would be better understanding of the vehicle traffic that would be using the public road.
- Should Orkney ferries be in receipt of four new vessels to serve the islands, using the above service? Should any reduction in the fleet, to any unforeseen circumstances, the service to Papa Westray would not necessarily be cancelled due to not having a suitable vessel.
- Freight handling would become easier and deliveries and collections could be made to the island, to individual houses within one day, for instance a fuel tanker (only if there was at least one day of the week with a return sailing). Weight restrictions would not be as limited as the crane would not be required.

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should send a business letter to Democratic Services including the above details.

## **B. Ferry proposal - Cons regarding Link Span between Papa Westray and Kirkwall**

Members felt that the cons for the above proposal against the Roll on and Roll off service to Kirkwall would consist of:

- There would be significant hurdles to overcome regarding the haulage of goods. Members felt that a haulage company would not consider this proposal should the sailings still be limited to two sailings a week. This would mean that the haulier would have to leave a vehicle on Papa Westray until another sailing becomes available (based on the current sailings). The best use of a ro-ro service from Papa Westray to Kirkwall would be to have at least one or two days in which multiple crossings were available.
- The haulage of goods was a recurring concern within this meeting and members would like to request that OIC/Orkney Ferries have considerable thought and liaise with Papa Westray Community Council over any decision that is being made. The additional concerns are:
  - The additional costs that would be encountered by having to use a haulier. Would additional support be put in place to help with these?
  - Would there be significant time for deliveries to be made, for example a tanker, so it could return on the same crossing?
  - Would the pier at Papa Westray be suitable for a Link Span due to the amount of movement caused by the tidal issues, would this have any effect on the ramps etc.?
  - Will provisions be put in place at the pier to give shelter from the bad weather to allow the vessel to dock safely?
  - Will this option still be as limited in the bad weather as it is now?
  - Would this put additional work onto the loading crew at Kirkwall and if this does, would they be happy to undergo this change?
  - With regards to the staff on the dock at Papa Westray, would these jobs still be required?
- Would be considerably restricting for any business start-up that would need to deliver goods to Kirkwall. With this the sale of consumable goods from Papa Westray would not be an option, limiting new business ideas.
- When bad weather is expected and the route is disturbed, meaning the sailing would be cancelled. The ferry would be sailing the same route as it currently does, not altering the reliability in these circumstances.

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should send a business letter to Democratic Services including the above details.

### **C. Ferry Proposal, pros and cons regarding Roll on, roll off/Hard ramp between Papa Westray and Westray**

Members felt, the pros for this proposal against the Roll on and Roll/ Hard ramp between Papa Westray and Westray would consist of:

- The haulage company would have a choice of sailing and a sailing would be at least twice a day.
- Kirkwall would be accessible from Papa Westray on a day return option, including taking a vehicle. Would give islanders the option for shopping and sourcing goods and return the same day.
- With the frequency of ferries available this would open up job opportunities for:
  - Haulage Company on Papa Westray.
  - Produce that has been made on Papa Westray to be shipped to Kirkwall on the same day and the options for new businesses start-ups.
  - Folk on Papa Westray to have regular access to job opportunities in Kirkwall.
  - A career with the ferry services.
- Would give younger folk more freedom to meet with their peers.
- Should the pier be altered to house the vessel that would sail to Westray, this could potentially give recruitment to local folk and also attract visitors to the marina.
- Would provide the option to increase freight and visitors to Papa Westray for day trips and generally increase the tourist population.
- Would reduce the current issues that have to be dealt with now, for example transporting of skips and fuel containers.
- Gives an outlet opportunity for businesses to mainland Scotland and would not just be restricted locally.
- Would be supporting Westray haulage company should they consider.

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should send a business letter to Democratic Services including the above details.

## **D. Ferry Proposal, pros and cons regarding Roll on, roll off/Hard ramp between Papa Westray and Westray**

Members felt that the cons for this proposal against the Roll on and Roll off/Hard ramp between Papa Westray and Westray would consist of:

- Could open up for too many tourists to the island and them just spending the day rather than a holiday? This could lead to an increase in the traffic on the roads and as Papa Westray only has single lane roads, this could be an issue.
- Could lead to a reduction in recruitment - would there be a requirement for staff on the dock at Papa Westray?
- Haulage arrangements and the costs that would be involved with transporting cargo through Westray. Who would be responsible for the haulage?
- Would vehicles be able to travel unaccompanied and if so, who would take the vehicle through Westray?
- What vehicle capacity would the proposed vessel (Papa Westray-Westray) hold and would there be a guarantee for a return journey? If not, potentially get stuck in Westray.
- How would the pier be improved to counteract the bad weather and the tidal movements which would cause difficulties?
- A concern that Papa Westray would potentially lose its direct link to Kirkwall.
- The arrangements for the children to travel to and from school, along with the Doctor and the Minister. A concern that these arrangements could be affected.
- With the return link by car, this will give the opportunity for folk to use the high street in town and could potentially cause a strain on the community shop here on Papa Westray.
- With regards to pricing the crossing, would there be potentially two charges, Papay to Westray, Westray to Kirkwall and should an out of hours crossing be required, would the costs be increased?

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should send a business letter to Democratic Services including the above details.

## **E. Loose Cattle, Haulage and Feasibility**

After consideration of the discussion held between members, it was

Resolved that members felt that more consideration and thought was needed for the following issues:

1. It has been requested that the livestock (cattle) is to be transported to Kirkwall using trailers belonging to the individual. However, with the quantity that is required to be shipped from multiple farms on Papay exceeding the movement weight on board, set by Orkney Ferries, multiple trailers would be required per farm. The current movement weight on deck is three ton which could mean a maximum of three cattle, plus the trailer at one time. The capacity of trailers on board is only two, side by side, meaning farmers per the whole of Papa Westray will only be able to move six cattle per crossing in total.
2. The costs and availability of haulage should either of the proposals be implicated.

## **F. Newsletter to be circulated around Papa Westray for the residents explaining the pros and cons**

It was felt that there should be a newsletter circulated around Papa Westray advising residents of the pros and cons that had been raised at the meeting. Members felt that they would like to give the opportunity for residents to put forward their personal views to ensure that all scenarios were taken into consideration. Also, to ensure that all thoughts and decisions that are being put forward are for the future of Papa Westray and to help preserve the island life for future generations.

Members agreed that they would like to hold another consultation event regarding the proposals. At the time of the consultation, newly located residents to the island found it difficult to digest the information offered and having the pros and cons of each proposal may help folk understand the options more clearly. Members would also like to offer the chance to talk about the proposals should folk wish (following current restrictions).

It was suggested that, should a public meeting be required, this request should be offered with a request date of no later than two weeks following the issued newsletter.

It was also requested that a meeting take place with the Transport Manager and the Community Council to discuss the outstanding concerns. It was also recommended that it would be beneficial for the Transport Manager to visit Papa Westray pier when the ferry is delivering the cargo to view some of the present complications.

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To look into arranging an island event to capture all views of islanders.
2. To note the discussion above and that members were aware that a change is required; however they need to ensure that the correct change is of benefit to Papa

Westray and that any change is not going to disadvantage Papa Westray in any way, now or for future generations.

### **3. Any Other Competent Business**

The Clerk read out responses to the ferries queries which had been provided by Democratic Services, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided and that further consultation would be happening soon.

### **4. Conclusion of Meeting.**

There being no further business, the chair declared the meeting closed at 21:35.