

## Scottish Ferry Services – draft plan for consultation

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**Committee** Strategy and Programmes

**Date of Meeting** 23 March 2012

**Date of report** 7 March 2012

### Report by Assistant Chief Executive (Operations)

#### 1. Object of report

- 1.1 To seek approval for SPT's draft response and covering letter to the Scottish Government's Draft Ferries Review Consultation. The response and letter are attached at Appendix 1 and a map showing ferry services in the SPT area is attached for reference at Appendix 2. The closing date for responses is 30 March 2012.
- 1.2 The Scottish Ferries Review Draft Consultation document is available online and can be found at:

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/files/documents/reports/i205024/i205024.pdf>

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Scottish Ferries Review is being undertaken by the Scottish Government to outline the ongoing strategy and future aspirations for the Scottish ferry network. This work is the culmination of 3 years of analysis of the full Scottish ferry network and infrastructure, during which time SPT has input directly into both the Steering Group as well as the Local Authority Group as the strategy has evolved.
- 2.2 SPT plays a significant role in the delivery of ferry services in the area including through investment in infrastructure, enabling connectivity, improving access and helping to deliver affordable ticketing. This includes supporting the Gourock-Kilcreggan service, ensuring bus/ferry interchange facilities, administering the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme, providing slipways for the Renfrew-Yoker ferry service and working with partners to improve facilities at termini such as covered walkways at Gourock and Ardrossan. In addition, SPT has a vital role in supporting bus services for mainland and island communities linked to ferry services. For example, SPT supports all bus services on the island of Arran, including local services, school transport and ferry connections. Changes to ferry frequencies and hours of operation will directly impact on SPT supported bus service provision.

- 2.3 The focus of the review is on how much communities pay for their services; the level and type of service provided; who is responsible for providing these services; what happens if the current provider fails to deliver a service; whether ferry services are accessible to all and whether services are provided in an environmentally friendly way. The Scottish Government has made a commitment to expand ferry services over the next decade but recognises there are major challenges, principally in relation to the need for significant investment in new vessels and infrastructure.
- 2.4 The 2013-2019 Clyde and Hebridean Ferry Services (CHFS) contract will be heavily influenced by the finalised Ferry Strategy which will be published in late 2012.
- 2.5 The Scottish Government has also indicated that it is willing to take responsibility for lifeline ferry services across Scotland and has confirmed Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) as the basis of its ferry fares policy. The aim of RET is to ensure that ferry users costs are equitable with those of mainland transport users. Whilst supportive of RET, SPT recognises that this represents a significant additional public subsidy which needs to be taken into account when investment decisions are made about ferry services. SPT has also given a detailed response to the changes to the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) scheme which is to be expanded to incorporate services to the Clyde Islands. This was reported to Committee and can be found at:  
[http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/sp270112\\_agenda9.pdf](http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/sp270112_agenda9.pdf)
- 2.6 The Scottish Government has stated that it wants to maximise the economic and social potential of remote rural and island communities and that a key part of this will be to provide more vessels and services across extended operating days. The particular investment challenges faced in relation to Firth of Clyde ferry services in coming years include:
- Replacing vessels over the coming years, including the Caledonian Isles which serves Ardrossan - Brodick by 2017. Also the Lochranza – Claonaig and Largs – Cumbrae services may require a combination of replacement or supporting vessels in the medium term (five to ten years);
  - Modernising, refurbishing and improving ferry infrastructure including at Gourock; and
  - Improving interchange connections to accommodate potentially increased ferry service frequency between Ardrossan and Brodick.
- 2.7 With increasing pressure on public finances, significant cost escalation in the ferry sector including fuel price increases, the need for significant investment in vessels and infrastructure, it will be vital to get decisions right and in the right policy and governance framework. Added to this mix, is a relatively complex set of industry arrangements with Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, local councils, public and private operators, separate infrastructure providers including CMAL for vessels and port infrastructure, private sector infrastructure providers such as ClydePort, and SPT all having a role to a greater or lesser extent.

### **3. Outline of proposals**

Against these challenging conditions and complex arrangements, SPT has responded to the review and has made a number of recommendations which will help to address a number of the key issues, as follows:

- To deliver the objectives contained within the Regional Transport Strategy, SPT requires to have a strengthened role in the provision of ferry services to ensure effective integration, connectivity, accessibility, public information and seamless smart ticketing opportunities.
- It may be appropriate for consideration to be given to incorporating the Gourock – Kilcreggan service as part of a “bundle” of services under the auspices of Clyde & Hebridean Ferry Services (CHFS) tendering to achieve optimal value for money.
- The Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Service (CHFS) contract should specify mandatory participation in SPT’s integrated ticketing scheme, where applicable. The CHFS contract should include provision for the operator to deliver a roll-out of smartcard ticketing infrastructure at ticket offices, ports and on vessels (validators/ticket machines etc) in compliance with SPT’s integrated ticketing scheme.
- There should be greater transparency on ferry service performance, cost, and revenue data generated by Firth of Clyde ferry services between the public operator and SPT.
- There should be early engagement and consultation with Transport Scotland, industry partners and representatives of ferry users on ferry policy, infrastructure investment and services along the Firth of Clyde.
- There should be greater SPT involvement in regional co-ordination of the ferry investment programme for the Firth of Clyde, working in partnership with other relevant bodies including Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited, Local Authorities and CalMac.

### **4. Conclusions**

Given the challenges facing ferry services nationally and across the Firth of Clyde, SPT has called for a strengthened role in the integration of ferry services. SPT has made a number of other recommendations including a mandatory requirement for ferry operators to participate in SPT’s integrated ticketing scheme. SPT has also called for greater transparency and availability of information on the performance, costs and future investment programme for ferry services to help ensure best value in decision making.

### **5. Committee action**

The Committee is asked to approve SPT’s response to the Scottish Ferries Services - Draft Plan for Consultation.

## 6. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>In line with RTS.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None directly but could be increased requirement for connecting supported bus services particularly on Arran.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None.</i>
Social inclusion consequences	<i>Potentially positive.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>None directly.</i>



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7 March 2012

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Dear Sirs

## **Scottish Ferry Services – Draft Plan for Consultation**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) welcomes the opportunity to respond to Transport Scotland's (TS) Draft Plan for Scottish Ferry Services. We have considered the consultation document in detail and have made comment on those questions with a direct relevance to Strathclyde, and particularly the Firth of Clyde, which are enclosed with this letter.
- 1.2 SPT looks forward to fully supporting TS in delivering the Scottish Government's ambitions for improved ferry services, particularly those services operating along the firth of Clyde. We would agree that our island and peninsula based communities 'make a substantial contribution to the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of our nation'. High quality ferry connections to these communities are vital and need to be fully integrated within the wider regional transport network.
- 1.3 However, SPT would also highlight that, as documented in our previous correspondence to the Scottish Ferries Review, we have concern about the pressing need for significant investment in vessels, ports and related infrastructure. For example, on the Firth of Clyde, there is a need to replace the ferry terminal at Brodick and also the need to replace the vessel Caledonian Isles which serves Ardrossan to Brodick by 2017. In addition, there is a need to modernise supporting ferry infrastructure, including at Dunoon. In addition to a replacement vessel for Ardrossan – Arran, the Largs – Cumbrae vessel will require a secondary boat in the medium term (five to ten years). SPT would welcome further discussions with TS on how such investments are to be prioritised, funded and integrated with the wider regional transport network during this challenging economic period.
- 1.4 In addition to the specific questions responded to, SPT wishes to make a number of wider points about the future of ferry services on the Clyde and we hope these will be taken into account in the final Plan. Namely;

- The need for strong, regional input into ferry service provision
- The importance of ensuring ferry service users can benefit from participation in SPT's smartcard ticketing rollout.
- The benefits of improved co-ordination of regional investment in ferry services and supporting infrastructure

1.5 These points are expanded upon below, and include recommendations as to how SPT could assist TS and the Scottish Government in realising our collective ambitions for a truly integrated transport system in the west of Scotland and the country as a whole.

## 2. The need for strong, regional input into ferry service provision

- 2.1 The Firth of Clyde has a well established network of ferry services. This includes the private and publicly funded services between Gourock and Dunoon, the busiest ferry crossing in Scotland. Four of the busiest mainland ferry ports, Ardrossan, Largs, Wemyss Bay and Gourock are located along the Clyde Coast, offering services to the islands of Arran, Cumbrae, Bute and the Cowal & Rosneath peninsulas respectively. Combined, these services annually carry 3,971,000 passengers, 1,000,700 cars and 62,140 freight vehicles – travelling on average 420,000 nautical miles per annum<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.2 The ferry network connects to the wider transport network through links with rail, bus services both commercial and supported, walking & cycling routes, and the regional road network. Travelling north from Glasgow, the A82 from Glasgow to Mallaig, provides the key access road linking ferry services to Oban, Kennacraig and Skye. Whilst the A77 links to ferry ports at Troon and Cairnryan for travel to Northern Ireland and also to the ports at Largs and Ardrossan with onward connection to Cumbrae and Arran respectively. Investment decisions about the ferry network and services will have a direct and often significant impact on other modes e.g. additional ferry capacity attracting greater patronage will impact on mainland rail and bus services and bus provision on the islands. Similarly, such decisions will impact on the capacity for and timing of freight deliveries.
- 2.3 An efficient and effective ferry network is essential to the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of the west of Scotland. Ferry services promote social inclusion on our island and remote rural communities by providing improved access to shops, facilities, social networks, employment and training opportunities. Island businesses rely on these services to grow and prosper, particularly those in the export, freight, tourism and leisure sectors. It is vital that the ferry network continues to be supported and enhanced in order to meet the needs of the west of Scotland.
- 2.4 SPT has a statutory responsibility for regional transport planning, including a key role to work with partners to develop the ferry network and optimise its integration with other modes. This includes a direct role in the provision of ferry services in its area – these include facilitating the Renfrew-Yoker service, subsidising the Gourock-Kilcreggan service, ensuring bus/ferry interchange at ferry termini, administering the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme and working with partners to improve facilities at termini such as covered walkways at Gourock

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Transport Statistics 2010

and Ardrossan. SPT is also a member of the Clyde Ferry Users Group (CFUG) whose role is to represent the needs and concerns of ferry users.

2.5 In addition, there are a number of other Clyde ferry services in operation:

- Gourock – Dunoon<sup>2</sup> service (supported) operated by Argyll Ferries
- Gourock – Kilcreggan (supported by SPT) currently operated by Clyde Marine Services Ltd
- Hunter’s Quay (Dunoon) to McInroys Point (Gourock) operated by Western Ferries (commercial)
- Wemyss Bay – Rothesay<sup>3</sup> (supported) – operated by CalMac
- Largs – Cumbrae (supported) operated by CalMac
- Ardrossan – Arran (supported service) operated by CalMac
- Renfrew – Yoker (commercial) operated by Silvers Marine UK

2.6 In its previous response to the Ferry Review in September 2010 SPT advocated a strengthened role for RTPs across the ferry network. This role would complement the current leadership taken by the Scottish Government. It would help to coordinate the planning and procurement of ferry services working more closely together with TS, SG, councils, communities, ferry operators and other transport operators.

2.7 Given the scale and scope of ferry services operating along the Firth of Clyde, SPT believes that there should be a greater degree of regional co-ordination on investment, decision making and service changes. Such regional co-ordination would allow for better decision making and more service innovation, while enhancing local accountability and reducing costs. Within this context, SPT would therefore welcome discussions with TS on the following recommendation;

**Recommendation: SPT to have a greater partnership role with Transport Scotland to improve the integration of ferry services operating on the Firth of Clyde, including input into service levels, fares and standards.**

2.8 SPT believes there is scope for cost savings, improved partnership working and delivery of better ferry services for passengers in Strathclyde, through a more co-ordinated approach to ferries. Improved co-ordination of ferry services would be in line with ‘A Catalyst for Change, the Regional Transport Strategy for the west of Scotland 2008-21, approved by Scottish ministers in June 2008, which sets out the strategic priorities of SPT and its partners over the lifetime of the Strategy to achieve the strategic outcomes of “improved connectivity, access for all, reduced emissions and attractive, seamless, reliable travel”. These outcomes are the main issues SPT are seeking to address with our policies including those relating to ferry services.

### 3. The importance of ensuring ferry service users can benefit from participation in SPT’s smartcard ticketing rollout.

3.1 One crucially important aspect to consider will be the role of ticketing across Clyde ferry services and the relationship with wider moves to encourage and invest in smartcard technology. SPT has an important role in this respect and is moving

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<sup>2</sup> within HITRANS area

<sup>3</sup> within HITRANS area

forward with plans for smartcard ticketing, initially on the Subway but with the opportunity to roll this out across the rail, bus and ferry network.

- 3.2 The Strathclyde concessionary Travel Scheme is also significant as it extends to Clyde Ferry Services and the combination of investment in Ferry services, introduction of smartcard and the need to ensure that island living remains sustainable mean that it is imperative that smartcard ticketing is built into the ticketing and fares strategy for ferry services.
- 3.3 Key benefits of an integrated smartcard system include greater transport integration, convenience, flexible fares structures, reduced operating costs and an improved public transport offer. Scotland should aspire to have such a system with a view to incorporating it across all public transport modes, including ferry services if applicable.
- 3.4 As TS is aware, SPT is at an advanced stage in developing proposals for smartcard ticketing and this includes taking forward two key proposals:
- Delivery of a new ITSO smartcard gates, barriers and ticketing system on the Glasgow Subway (operated by SPT)
  - Delivery of an integrated ticketing scheme for the SPT area facilitating new smart ticketing media.
- 3.5 As part of its proposals for smartcard ticketing, SPT intends to undertake a pilot of smartcard ticketing on the Gourock – Kilcreggan ferry service following the recent tendering exercise. SPT would welcome discussion with TS on how such a pilot could be rolled out to other Firth of Clyde ferry services.

**Recommendation: The CHFS contract and Gourock – Dunoon CalMac (Argyll Ferries) service contract should specify mandatory participation in SPT's integrated ticketing scheme, where applicable.**

**Recommendation: The CHFS contract should include provision for the operator to deliver a roll-out of smartcard ticketing infrastructure at ticket offices, ports and on vessels (validators / ticket machines etc) in compliance with SPT's integrated ticketing scheme.**

- 3.6 Should these recommendations be taken forward in the next CHFS and Cal Mac contracts, SPT consider there would be key benefits for passengers through better integration of services and a more 'seamless' journey experience similar to that enjoyed by users of the London Oyster scheme. The investment costs required are also likely to be recouped over time through more efficient operations, passenger growth and greater flexibility in ticketing, fares and promotion of services.
- 4. The benefits of improved co-ordination of regional investment in ferry services and supporting infrastructure**
- 4.1 SPT recognises the challenge faced in renewing the ageing fleet of vessels and port infrastructure. With a number of Clyde vessels and various shoreside infrastructure due for replacement or refurbishment over the coming decade, it will be a considerable challenge to lever the necessary funding, coordinate the planning, prioritise the routes and achieve optimal decisions about investment.



This is particularly the case given the need to move towards more environmentally friendly vessels in order to help meet the Scottish Government's national target for carbon reduction of an 80% reduction on 1990 levels by 2050.

- 4.2 SPT plays an important role in improving the quality and integration of the transport network through the planning, delivery and renewal of key regional transport infrastructure. Given the current challenging economic circumstances, SPT recognises that budgets for transport investment are likely to face greater scrutiny and pressure. Given this situation it is more crucial than ever that regional transport investment is prioritised towards projects, programmes, schemes and policies which deliver the best return for the taxpayer. In order for such prioritisation to be undertaken effectively it is essential that the availability of information on ferry service performance, costs, revenue and future investment planning is shared to enable informed, joined-up and value for money decisions about future services to be made.
- 4.3 As noted in sections 2.4 and 2.6, SPT works with partner councils, Transport Scotland and other industry and ferry user stakeholders to improve ferry services in the Firth of Clyde. However, given the financial pressures facing partners, the need to further integrate transport modes and make joined-up decisions and forward plan effectively, SPT would recommend the following;

**Recommendation: Greater transparency on performance, costs, and revenues generated by Firth of Clyde ferry services between the public operator and SPT.**

**Recommendation: Early engagement and consultation with partner councils, Transport Scotland, industry partners and representatives of ferry users on ferry policy, infrastructure investment and services along the Firth of Clyde.**

**Recommendation: Greater SPT involvement in regional co-ordination of the ferry investment programme for the Firth of Clyde, working in partnership with other relevant bodies including Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited, Local Authorities and CalMac.**

- 4.4 SPT's role in ferry services, while limited, needs to be considered in terms of its wider remit as a Regional Transport Partnership, with responsibility for the planning and integration of transport and its specific role in supporting bus services, providing demand responsive transport and working with our member councils who have responsibility for local roads. Indeed decisions about investment in ferry infrastructure and vessels also impact on trunk roads such as the A82 which links Glasgow to the western Highlands including ferry ports outwith the SPT e.g. Mallaig. So investment decisions have far reaching implications and are best taken on a transparent and joined up way.
- 4.5 It will be vital that each of these areas are considered as part of the finalised Plan and SPT has made some general comments below on how we believe the provision, planning and procurement of Clyde ferry services can be improved.

## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 I hope that you will consider that the above points raised, in addition to our enclosed responses to the questions within the draft review document. SPT

considers there is a strong case for greater coordination of Firth of Clyde ferry services and would welcome the opportunity to expand on the points made in this letter and our attached response. We hope the views expressed and comments made are relevant and that SPT's views will be useful to Transport Scotland as part of the wider consultation on the Draft Review. SPT would, of course, welcome any other opportunity to further contribute to the Ferries Review as the Strategy becomes finalised.

Yours sincerely

**Gordon MacLennan**  
**Chief Executive**

**Scottish Ferry Services: Draft Plan for consultation**

**Summary of Consultation Questions**

**Section A: About You**

**Q1. Are you responding on behalf of yourself or an organisation?**

- a. Yourself (Go to Question 2)
- b. Organisation (Go to Question 1b) **YES**

Q1b. What is the name of the organisation? **SPT**

**Now Go To Section C**

**Q2. Are you resident of a community currently served by the ferry network?**

- a. Yes (Go to Question 2b)
- b. No (Go to Section C)

**Q2b. What is the name of the community where you live? (e.g. Arran)**

**Now Go To Section B**

**Section B: About Your Travel**

**Q3. Have you travelled off your island/peninsula within the last 18 months?**

- a. Yes (Go to Question 4)
- b. No (Go to Section C)

**Q4. What is your most common mode of transport when you travel off your island/ peninsula?**

- a. Ferry (Go to Question 5)
- b. Air (Go to Section C)
- c. Road (Go to Section C)

**Q5. How frequently do you travel by ferry?**

- a. 5 or more days per week
- b. 2-4 days per week
- c. Once a week
- d. 1-3 times a month
- e. At least four times per year

f. Less frequently than four times per year

g. Don't know/varies

**Q6. When travelling by ferry, which of the following are your most common reasons for travelling? (tick up to two boxes only)**

a. Commuting to your usual place of work

b. Employer's business

c. Short-break/holiday

d. Visiting friends/relatives/other leisure

e. Shopping

f. Health related

g. Education

h. Other (please specify)

i. Don't know

**Section C: Routes and Services – Proposals by Community**

**Firth of Clyde**

**Arran**

**Our proposal is for**

- **the Ardrossan to Brodick service to be upgraded to a two-vessel service operating a more frequent shuttle service through to the late evening and;**
- **services between Claonaig to Lochranza would be reviewed following these changes to the Ardrossan to Brodick service.**

**We may be able to achieve this change during the next CHFS contract (2013-2019) or it may be that this change is only possible as part of the vessel renewal programme to be published as part of the Final Ferries Plan.**

**Q7. The community is asked for their views on these proposals.**

**Ardrossan – Brodick service:** This is welcomed offering more services and a longer operational day would help address the tourism aspirations of Arran as well as the demand created by a large adjacent mainland population. Vessel suitability and shore infrastructure will be a major consideration – particularly with regard to renewals at Brodick and the suitability of Ardrossan – particularly in the winter. Interchange connections both at Ardrossan and perhaps equally importantly at Brodick will require to be addressed as regards an increased service frequency. It is unlikely that additional subsidised bus services could be economically provided to meet the increased level of ferry service to Arran, but it may be possible to arrange for more cost efficient scheduling of bus resources to maintain the same number of bus departures, albeit at different departure times than at present. Furthermore, the capacity for the island to accommodate additional tourism might have implications not only for tourist venues/accommodation but also for roads infrastructure which would require to be closely monitored should demand increase.

**Claonaig to Lochranza:** Although Road Equivalent Tariff on Arran services, and the proposed Ardrossan-Brodick frequency, might reduce the relative attractiveness of the Lochranza-Claonaig service an alternative route from Arran should be retained. Such a route should be one robust enough to act as a diversionary route for some weather disrupted services. The additional services operating from Ardrossan to Brodick might generate additional traffic to the island and through journeys utilising an alternative ferry route could potentially increase. Consideration could be given to improving the robustness of the Lochranza-Claonaig service – potentially by making improvements to berthing facilities at Claonaig to improve accessibility in poor weather or by re-routeing the service to operate less frequently, but more reliably, between Lochranza and Tarbert (Loch Fyne). This proposal would improve reliability, interchange possibilities and improved access for non-car users – albeit at the cost of a longer journey and less frequent crossings. However, such a service pattern could dovetail with the proposals, within the Review, for an Ayrshire-Campbeltown ferry service particularly as Tarbert is better linked with Campbeltown via the A83 than Claonaig is via the B842.

**Bute**

- **Our proposal is to enhance the Colintraive to Rhubodach service, running the service through to midnight, thereby extending the operating day. The intention would be to include this proposal as part of the next tender for Clyde and Hebridean Ferry services in 2013.**

**Q8. We recognise that this is not the principal route, or the route that may most often be used for commuting purposes. The community is therefore asked for their views on this proposal and whether an extended service on this route would be well used.**

Whilst the Colintraive – Rhubodach service does not operate to or from the SPT area (indeed Bute is not within our area) the main mainland ferry terminal at Wemyss Bay is. Although the extended hours on the Colintraive route are welcomed, extended operating hours on the Rothesay/Wemyss Bay route would potentially have a far greater economic impact on the island. A possible solution to the working hours situation which effectively precludes later running vessels on the Wemyss Bay route could be to reduce the service in the early afternoon and withdraw one vessel at that time – the additional hours could be operated later in the day to extend the overall operating hours on the service. Whilst welcome it is worth noting that the Colintraive-Rhubodach service, particularly later in the evening will have limited benefit for non car users.

**Cumbræ**

- **Our proposal is to include a later evening service for one or two evenings per week. The intention would be to include this as part of the next tender for Clyde and Hebridean Ferry services in 2013.**

**Q9. The community is asked for their views on this proposal.**

SPT would support this but would advocate that additional services be operated on more than just two days per week. The service, particularly in the summer, is heavily weather dependant and rostering the operation of additional later services will impact on crew hours under the EU Working Time Directive. It might perhaps be better to reduce services in early/mid-afternoon and re-roster the service to operate later every evening particularly during the summer months. SPT would note that interchange with bus services at Cumbræ Slip would require to be maintained – this could either be on a commercial or potentially on a subsidised basis.

**Cowal Peninsula and Dunoon**

**Scottish Ministers were disappointed not to be able to continue the vehicle and passenger service. However, the current contract was the best that could be achieved under the circumstances (particularly the restrictions imposed by the European Commission).**

- **We are absolutely committed to providing a ferry service that meets the need of users and will continue to look at more options to improve the overall service and facilities.**

**Q10. The community is asked for their views.**

Whilst the Cowal peninsula is outwith the SPT area – there is interface with SPT bus services at Gourock. SPT recognises that the Gourock-Dunoon service is an ongoing issue for the Scottish Government and that the current service has yet to prove itself to be satisfactorily robust and fit for purpose. Major issues include vessel suitability, particularly in inclement weather, as well as berthing facilities. SPT is working with all parties to ensure that facilities at Gourock are fit-for-purpose not only for the Dunoon ferry service but also for the SPT subsidised service between Gourock and Kilcreggan.

### **Kintyre**

**Our proposals are:**

- **To retain the Kintyre to Portavadie service as is.**
- **To offer a vehicle service between Campbeltown and the Scottish mainland (for example Troon) one or two days per week.**

**This would be subject to two smaller vessels being introduced on the Arran route.**

**Q25. The community is asked for their views on these proposals.**

As stated in our response regarding the proposals for the related services to Arran SPT would support the introductions of an Ayrshire-Kintyre ferry route – initially on a limited basis (as suggested) and potentially utilising the additional Arran vessel during quieter periods of its operating week – albeit satisfactory vessels and timetables for both services would require to be established prior to the introduction of any new services. The Portavadie, and indeed the Lochranza services to/from Kintyre could be adapted to deal with differing demands as they emerge with the additional services to/from Arran and Ayrshire as well as any implications there could be from traffic heading to/from Islay.

### **Section D: Other Comments**

Q27. Please use the section provided for any other comments you have on the content of the Draft Plan.

### **Proposals**

As set out in the covering letter with this response, SPT believes there is considerable scope for an enhanced approach to the coordination of non-lifeline services ferry services in the Firth of Clyde area. In particular SPT would like to see a stronger role for SPT in the following areas:

### **Investment**

SPT would wish to see greater visibility about how and why investment decisions are made on ferry services. In particular, we would welcome more sharing of information on the business case for investment in new vessels and ferry infrastructure, including costs, performance data, fleet utilisation and proposals for ferry termini development. These should be taken forward in partnership with SPT to ensure maximum integration of all modes (rail, bus, private car, taxis, freight, W&C with ferry). SPT is aware of the challenge to be met in replacing the ageing fleet and the need for investment in new port facilities such as the redevelopment of Brodick pier. Such

decisions should be taken on the basis of early engagement with SPT to ensure the wider needs of the transport network are considered and met.

### **Services & Specification**

SPT would wish greater engagement in decision making about the specification of ferry services including the timetabling of services. There is an opportunity within the Plan to consider the most rational and best value approach to tendering ferry services in a planned and coordinated way.

In particular, SPT considers there is scope to incorporate the Gourock – Kilcreggan service and perhaps other Clyde Services as part of a “bundle” of services under the auspices of CHFS tendering to achieve optimal value for money.

In addition, there are opportunities to consider opportunities across a number of services including:

- Later evening sailing to Cumbrae
- Introducing a vehicle passenger service between Campbeltown and Ayrshire one or two days per week

### **Vessels & Infrastructure**

This is a major issue, not just in terms of vessels but also shore-side facilities. It is acknowledged within the consultation document that the overall average age of the fleet is of some concern and that a renewal strategy requires to be worked through within a short timeframe. This is also the case when considering shore facilities such as harbours, piers, termini and ramps etc. many of which are now requiring renewal or replacement. The capital costs of both vessels and infrastructure will require to be met within an increasingly constrained budget and will further require to be future proofed against potential climate change issues. It is imperative therefore that decisions about infrastructure investment are taken on the basis of transparency about costs, performance and partners’ future programmes.

### **Ticketing**

One crucially important aspect to consider will be the role of ticketing across Firth of Clyde ferry services and the relationship with wider moves to encourage and invest in smartcard technology. SPT has an important role in this respect and is moving forward with plans for smartcard ticketing, initially on the Subway but with the opportunity to roll this out across the rail, bus and ferry network.

The Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme is also significant here since it extends to Clyde Ferry Services and the combination of investment in ferry services, introduction of smartcard and the need to ensure that island living remains sustainable mean that it is imperative that smartcard ticketing is built into the ticketing and fares strategy for ferry services.

Key benefits of an integrated smartcard system include greater transport integration, convenience, flexible fares structures, reduced operating costs and an improved public transport offer. Scotland should aspire to have such a system with a view to incorporating it across all public transport modes, including ferry.

### **Demographics**

Population growth/change and the age profile on many of the island and peninsula communities will have to be considered in terms of future patronage and economic



activity in these potentially economically fragile locations. This will have implications for the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme, which SPT administers on behalf of its constituent councils.

### **Environment/Technology**

Technologies to provide more efficient methods of propulsion or to potentially reduce the overall need to travel could have implications for future ferry travel within Scotland. The design of vessels in terms of size, windage, propulsion systems, fuel efficiency etc. will also have to be considered. For this reason, SPT welcomes the recent move towards more efficient hybrid "electric" vessels as a positive start in the vessel/environmental process.

### **Interchange**

Of particular importance to SPT are the linkages and interchanges with other public transport modes both on islands/peninsula but also on the mainland for onward connections to education, health, work, leisure and shopping. SPT, in its role as the RTP for west central Scotland, seeks to link communities and services and recognises the difficulties in making these connections for more distant communities. A common approach to connections across modes and contracts/franchises should be adopted by all public bodies to ensure that the needs of public transport users can be met in a consistent and fair manner. Transport Scotland has a unique opportunity to ensure that these linkages can be met by both the Rail Franchise as well as within the Ferries contract.

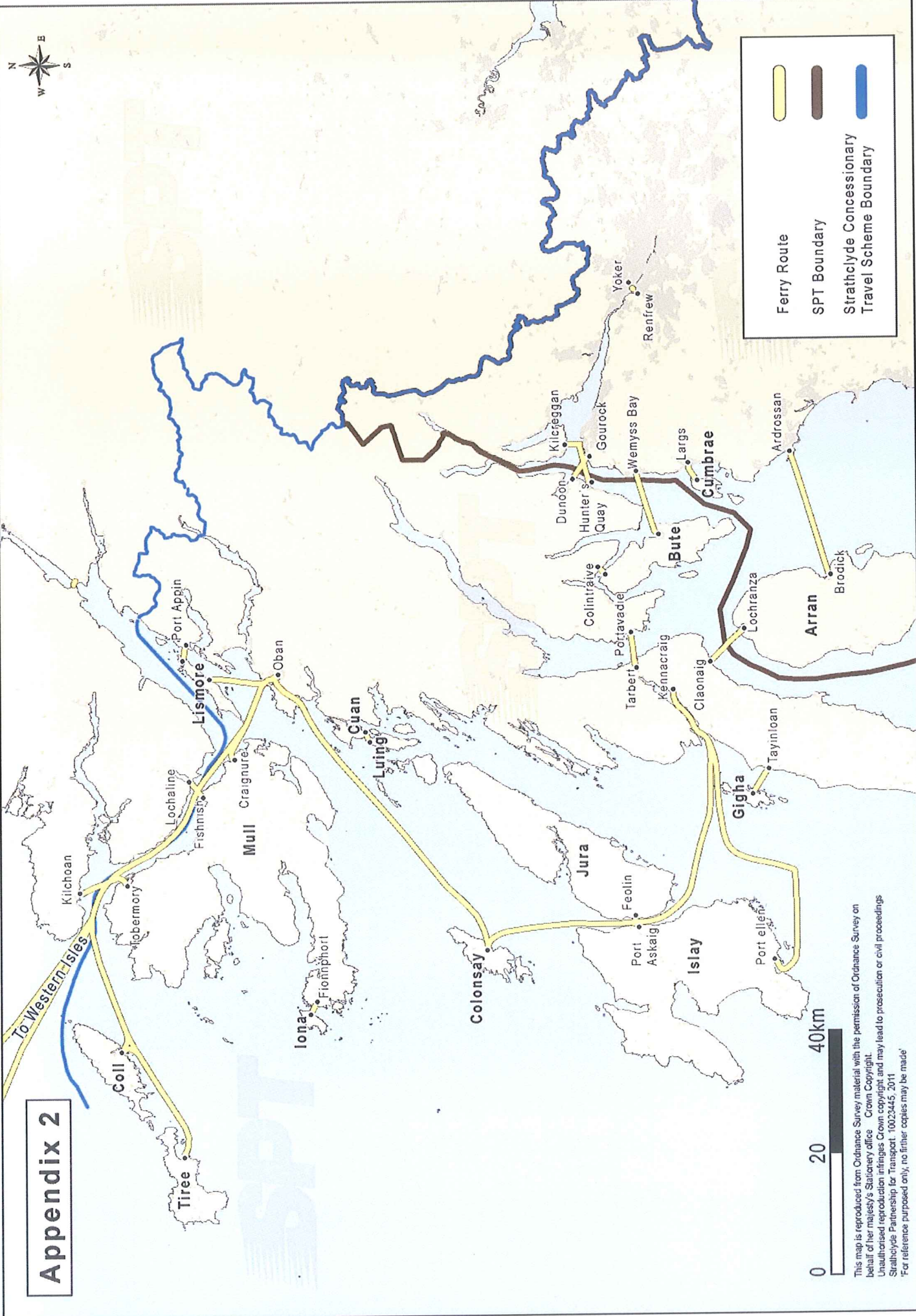
### **Policy**




We agree with the Transport Minister that investment in ferry services will maximise opportunities for increased employment business growth. The key issue will be how to sustain this funding in the longer term given that there is a need for sustained and considerable investment in vessels and facilities whilst at the same time the level of subsidy is likely to increase.

It is noted that the Scottish Government has indicated it is keen to take responsibility for lifeline ferry services nationally. While welcoming this approach SPT considers there is a great opportunity for greater regional input into ferry service which link naturally to the regional transport network and decisions over which will have an impact on what SPT does to sustain bus services, invest in roads infrastructure, support school transport, operate dial a bus help to support park and ride and provide support for port infrastructure and support existing ferry services.

We consider that there is currently incoherence about how ferry services are planned and provided and that more needs to be done to achieve a greater degree of coordination to ensure that investment in ferry services takes place in a planned, prioritised and efficient manner.

# Appendix 2



	Ferry Route
	SPT Boundary
	Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme Boundary

0 20 40km

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