

Arran Recovery Group 11 th September

Summary:

- No Covid-19 Cases, Arran will get fast test kits. Upload Test and Protect App now.
- Governance: Agreement in principal. Pictures required for wider discussion.
- Demand/Supply in balance. Concern over ferry resilience Autumn and Winter.
- Resilience: Unclear when folk without accommodation (Ferry failures) becomes a Civil Emergency or a local problem and what the processes are.
- Possible external support for wider transport strategy to meet local needs.

Welcome and Introduction:

Recapping on ARG achievements for another meeting, I thought I would share:

- Arran's plan to achieve balance between the requirements of Community, Economy and Environment is visible at senior levels within Local and Scottish government.
- Clearer understanding of demand and supply across community and business and supported HSPC with numbers to help capacity sizing.
- Identified, corrected or improved where necessary health and support messaging.
- Supported AFC to dramatically increase ferry capacity ahead of other Island Groups.
- Conducted biggest qualitative survey on Arran to date (906 participants 35K responses) to provide community, economy, business input to the Recovery Plan.
- Created a draft plan: Arran Recovery and Beyond to outline a 10-year plan.
- With NAC, commissioned an economic baseline for Arran to identify short term financial support for Recovery as well as longer term requirements.
- All this was/is useful but without a robust Governance process it could all become short-term interventions. Next and perhaps biggest task is to ensure the work to date and the collaborative process to create it, becomes imbedded within Arran's DNA, connecting us to the initiatives within our Local Authority and Government.

HSPCS:

RB updated on current activity levels in Arran health system. Both A+E attendances and GP appointments are getting busier e.g. 420 GP appointments per week compared to 360 at this time last year. Point The Major Incident last week also impacted on activity levels in the hospital and A+E had over 80 attendances including the major incident.

Arran Test and Protect have seen over 250 patients and carried out over 350 tests. There are still no positive cases on Arran. Protect Scotland App has been launched and RB encouraged everyone to download the app.

Flu campaign will begin in September and details are in the Banner today. All those eligible will receive a letter and should take this to the nearest site for the vaccine. Point of Care testing machines for COVID would be provided for Arran. No date yet and urgent work being carried out on governance arrangements and training. Distance Island allowance and Recruitment and Retention Premium policy now being investigated for Arran posts. RB will provide update as things progress. Query whether this could be wider and include Care Home staff and Education. RB unsure if NAC scheme or similar exists.

SG announced changes to lockdown measures. These had changed to 6 people from 2 households from Monday 14th sep, both inside and outside. Under 12s not included in numbers. Cases continue to rise.

Governance:

TB updated the group on the work of the Governance subgroup. The draft proposal has been submitted for input and agreement within this group before further distribution. It was agreed that providing the background statement was essential to let folks know where we are starting from.

There was general agreement on the principal and the detail as far as it goes but it is understood this is a draft and will be added to as the discussion develops.

The communication task needs to ensure we separate two things.

- a) What we are trying to do (Governance process that decides and progresses short- and long-term priorities)
- b) How it is done: Partly through the work of the Senior Islands Manager. This role needs to be measured on clear “additional” deliverables.

Next Steps: 1) Communication group try to tell the proposal (excluding the details on the Senior Islands Manager) in pictures. SG and friends.

2) Update NAC on the latest developments. TT

3) Communicate to the wider constituencies. Use other ARG members to help.

Demand:

Excellent piece of work by Cameron and Sheila to start to put a more scientific approach to forecasting with a detailed statement of capacity by sector by month and then applying a demand assessment based on input from a service providers. This process is only looking at our tourist sector at the moment. It will improve with time and practice and the co-operation of the accommodation providers as they understand how the it supports the request for Ferry Capacity. This can be extended to other Ferry users, both commercial and community. Ultimately, CalMac could take on the overall process and use it as other commercial organisations do. to forecast their (our) demand.....OK, I know, I am getting carried away. In the meantime, a great start.

Jude brought up the question of: “Is the 20% increase in tourist volume by 2030 still desirable or realistic”). Indications are that demand is not falling and perhaps the reverse. However, clearly, we need to look at the downside of increased tourism, like road traffic and how we can/should mitigate it. More on this.

In summary, Demand shows slightly ahead of last year for the Autumn and the same again for the Winter. Very difficult to predict in this environment when large swaths of potential demand are being effectively closed down on the mainland.

Continued request for full service through Clonaig to support demand/supply imbalances and provide additional resilience if there are failures in the Ardrossan Brodick route

Continued request for movement in the 80/20 bookings split, to move to 90/10 at the weekends to allow accommodation providers to take bookings.

Supply:

BC update the group on the latest Ferry position. This is outlined below.

- Weekends still showing usual seasonal high demand booked more than 30-72 days in advance.
- Winter timetable published. 2 vessel service operating from 2nd - 19th January.
- Awaiting confirmation of vessels operating on 4th January. CI annual maintenance scheduled from 5th Jan.
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- COVID distancing restrictions continue until government changes.
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- Clonaig service will operate until the 24th October and then we revert to Tarbert once a day. Expect that MCA approval will be confirmed for passengers to remain in vehicles during that time.
- Capacity projection numbers for Ardrossan route suggest:
 - Oct at 130% of 2019 actuals
 - Nov at 171% of 2019 and
 - Dec at 202% of 2019 actuals recognising no service 25th and 1 sailing 26th
- Contract issued for work at Gourock to commence 5th October with completion before end December.

Discussion followed around the local emergency (Waverley) and the lessons learned from that. In general, the outcome delivered by the Emergency Services, Health Service, Community and CalMac was very good and everyone who participated in delivering this outcome should be congratulated. There was discussion around some of the confusion in the process and how lessons would be learned and applied, and this would be useful for the group to understand.

Resilience: The context and relevance of the above discussion (apart from it being a major Island event) related to the problems we had last year with cancelled services and the possibility of folks being stranded on the Island without accommodation. TT to discuss with Dougie, at what point these issues would become civil emergencies and that process kicks in Or If there is a gap between Civil Emergency and general disruption, what is the process to resolve.

This topic also relates to the ongoing request for continuation of the Clonaig service through the winter as this could mitigate the situation described above.

Repeat request to the AFC to move 80/20 capacity split to 90/10 at the weekend to support Island business.

The Demand forecast v supply for Autumn and Winter is not complete although the general direction is the roughly the same demand or slightly more than last year. Until we get a clearer picture on this, the conclusion is that demand and supply is in

balance, with the exception of weekends capacity, which is constraining booked demand by 10%.

A.O.B.

Communication: Sheila suggested a VoxPop proposal to get members of the ARG to deliver a 5-minute statement on what they are doing and why it is important and that provides the community the ability to respond...Great idea, let's try it.

Transport: Linda brought up again the lack of bus transport on the Island particularly as problematic as we enter Autumn and Winter. Alastair picked up the issue last meeting to see if he could get some help with an Island wide transport strategy that took into account all the issues raised from community and visitor access to the need to drive the green agenda. This is progressing and we will hear more.

Next Survey: Ran out of time for this topic but as I am sure you aware our ARG plan has it in for September. Let's discuss this separately and have a recommendation for the next meeting.

Thank to everyone for their active participation

Tom