

LOCAL COMMUNITY INVITED TO NEW DUAL FUEL FERRY MEETING

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Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) will host a series of public meetings to update communities on the design and build of the new dual fuel vessel for the Skye Triangle route and to discuss harbour infrastructure at Uig, Tarbert (Harris) and Lochmaddy.

Communities are invited to attend their local meeting:

Uig Community Centre, Uig – Monday 3rd April 2017, 19.00hrs

Harris Hotel, Tarbert – Tuesday 4th April 2017, 19.00hrs

Lochmaddy Community Hall, Lochmaddy – Wednesday 5th April 2017, 19.00hrs

Representatives from CMAL, Calmac Ferries Limited, Transport Scotland and the relevant local authority will attend the meetings.

CMAL, which owns ferries, ports and harbours across the west coast of Scotland, will present the latest progress report on construction of the new 102 metre dual fuel vessel, which is one of two currently being built and is earmarked to serve the Skye Triangle route. It will be capable of running on liquefied natural gas (LNG) and marine gas oil (MGO), helping to reduce carbon emissions. The vessel will carry up to 1,000 passengers and provide 646 metre vehicle lane capacity, which is approximately 25% increased carrying of a mix of cars, light vehicles, coaches and heavy goods vehicles.

The ferries have been designed to operate from the existing berths at Uig, Lochmaddy and Tarbert (Harris). However, CMAL is currently working with Highland Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to investigate what infrastructure improvements may be required at the three ports to optimise operations. CMAL owns the harbour at Tarbert (Harris), while Uig and Lochmaddy are owned by the local authority in each area.

Lorna Spencer, Director of Harbours, Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited said:

“The meetings are an opportunity for local communities to find out the latest information on the new ferry construction, as well as discussions around harbour infrastructure improvements.

“We know that the age and condition of the existing infrastructure at these harbours will benefit from investment to optimise operations. The larger size of the new dual fuel vessel and the ongoing need for investment in harbour infrastructure are key considerations for identifying the works required. We already know that harbour improvements are needed – the arrival of the

new vessel is accelerating the process.”

The work to identify harbour requirements will be completed by summer 2017. The two new dual fuel vessels are earmarked for the Arran and Skye Triangle routes, although the final decision on routes is subject to review by CalMac Ferries Ltd, CMAL and Transport Scotland. The first ferry (Hull 801) is expected to enter service in the second half of 2018, with the second vessel (Hull 802) following a little later.