

Representation on Outside Bodies

1: Windermere Lake Action Plan Group

Myself, and Councillors Rathbone and Gardner were appointed on to this group at the AGM of the Windermere Admin. Group. The Chairman of the Lake Admin. Group has not called for a meeting, so there is nothing to report.

2: Windermere Ferry Admin. Group

I was reappointed to this group at the AGM of the Windermere at the AGM of the Windermere Ferry Action Group

The Terms of Reference is as follows:

To understand the condition of the vessel and the performance of the service

To be clear about the customer promise and to measure against that

To have an understanding of the general business activity & how the service will develop

To feed into the County Council's budget process and timescales.

There was one meeting on the 14th March.

The following points were discussed.

- i) Windermere Ferry Operations During Covid-19
- ii) Visitor Economy and Stakeholder Engagement/Communication
- iii) Fees & Charges
- iv) Proposal for the Future

Windermere Ferry Operations During Covid-19

During the Summer, the ferry ran 2 lanes to allow social distancing, but ran as normal from September, but runs as normal, but with a reduced service due to staff shortages. Payments were also cashless.

Between the 25 April and the 31 December 2021, the ferry was operational for 91% of the available running time. The Ferry has had a total of approximately 509 hours of out of service time of which 80 hours were due to mechanical failure and 14 hours due to staff shortages.

Visitor Economy and Stakeholder Engagement/Communication

Officers met with a Business Stakeholder Group including Cumbria Tourism and Local Businesses in early March to discuss the ferry operation and have been working with Cumbria Tourism to develop the Marketing strategy.

The passenger numbers using the ferry from April 2021 to Feb 2022 was 419,731, averaging 62,000 per month between June and August.

Fees & Charges

No changes have been proposed to the fees and charges for 2022/23. Below is a table of the current charges. The intention is to review the charges this year.

Proposal for the Future

The Windermere Car Ferry is reaching the end of its operational life, and with increasing maintenance and repair incidents, which time out of service and cost to the both in terms of capital costs and lost revenue. The lack of reliability, reduced passenger confidence, impaired response times for emergency vehicles and considerable disruption for residents means that the current diesel vessel, needs to be replaced and the preferred option is to progress with an electric ferry with a diesel engine.

A final business and design case is being prepared for formal approval towards the end of September/October.

Ian Wharton
April 29th 2022