

# Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee

8th Meeting, 2021 (Session 6), Wednesday 1  
December 2021

PE1853: Introduce a lifeline ferry service from  
Campbeltown to Ardrossan

## Note by the Clerk

**Lodged:** 3 February 2021

**Petitioners** Councillor Donald Kelly and Councillor Douglas Philand

**Petition  
summary** Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to  
provide an all year round freight and passenger ferry service from  
Campbeltown to Ardrossan.

**Webpage** <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE1853>

## Introduction

1. The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on [1 September 2021](#). At that meeting, the Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government.
2. A summary of past consideration of the petition and responses to information requests are provided for the Committee's consideration.

## Background

3. During its consideration of this petition, the Committee received 4 written submissions.
4. As part of the Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services contract, CalMac Ferries Limited on behalf of Transport Scotland delivers a seasonal ferry service between Campbeltown and the Ayrshire coast.

5. In response to Covid challenges and to deal with significantly reduced capacity to Arran, a high demand route which shares the MV Isle of Arran vessel with the Campbeltown service, the 2020 service was temporarily suspended.
6. The Scottish Government's previous submission, it stated that it is not operationally possible to extend the current operating period of the Ardrossan – Campbeltown service as there are no available vessels.
7. The Scottish Government has committed to securing two new ferries (currently in construction) and indicated that the [Ferries Plan 2013-22](#) notes that the new vessel may provide the opportunity to consider a year-round Campbeltown service, subject to a robust business case and funding.
8. The petitioners stated that they had also discussed whether it would be possible to use an available vessel that isn't currently part of the CalMac fleet to provide this service.
9. When the petition was last considered, the Committee decided to write to the Scottish Government to ask whether it would be possible to use a non-CalMac fleet vessel to provide a year-round service from Campbeltown and Ardrossan.
10. The Committee also asked how any business case to deliver this service would be assessed.

## Scottish Government submission

11. In its submission, the Scottish Government sets out the process by which second-hand vessels are considered for use.
12. It explains that the Campbeltown to Ardrossan ferry service is provided through the Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services (CHFS) contract, procured by Transport Scotland and currently operated by CalMac Ferries Ltd (CFL). Vessels owned by Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) are made available to the operator of the CHFS contract to deliver the services.
13. CMAL employs a number of shipbrokers and engages with CFL to continuously monitor the second-hand vessel market and consider viable opportunities to bring additional vessels into the fleet. Ninety-nine vessels were assessed by CMAL in 2020 for this purpose.
14. It is noted that suitable second-hand vessels are rare but that the MV Utne was recently purchased, indicating a willingness to consider second-hand vessels as an option.
15. The construction of the MV Glen Sannox (referenced at paragraph 7) is expected to be delivered between 25 July 2022 and 25 September 2022 and

this may also provide an opportunity to provide a year-round service on this route.

16. In relation to any future business case for a year-round service, the Scottish Government states that the Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) will be prepared as the successor to the Ferries Plan 2013-22 and will be published by the end of December 2022. It is noted that the ICP will be closely linked to the outcomes of the Strategic Transport Projects Review.
17. The Scottish Government states that determining the long-term future ferry service requirements for Campbeltown will involve a Community Needs Assessment, in consultation with communities and other stakeholders, during 2022 for all CHFS and Northern Isles routes as part of the ICP. This will also take into account road and aviation options, where available.

## **Action**

The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

### **Clerk to the Committee**

## Annexe

The following submissions are circulated in connection with consideration of the petition at this meeting –

- [PE1853/A: Scottish Government submission of 19 March 2021](#)
- [PE1853/B: Petitioner submission of 16 April 2021](#)
- [PE1853/C: Donald Cameron MSP submission of 31 August 2021](#)
- [PE1853/D: Scottish Government submission of 18 October 2021](#)

The Scottish Parliament launched a new website at the end of Session 5.

All written submissions received on the petition before May 2021 can be viewed on the petition on the [archive webpage](#). Written submissions received on the petition after May 2021 can be viewed on its [new webpage](#).