

Bruny Island Ferry Reference Group

Meeting #6

Date: 20 September 2018

Time: 8:30-10:30am

Venue: Jane Finn Room, Health Centre Alonnah

Attendees: Trevor Adams, Bernice Woolley, Lindon Haigh, Richard Clarke, Mathew Fagan, Paul Victory, Cr Mike Percey, Chris Ireland, Alison Turner

Welcome and previous minutes

The Chair opened the meeting at 8:35, welcomed members, welcomed guest Mr Chris Ireland from the Kettering Community Association who is attending as a result of proposed infrastructure changes, and noted Kim Evans, Tony Ferrier, Paul Davis and Siobhan Gaskell as apologies.

The Group discussed the minutes from the previous meeting, including some suggested amendments that had been received out of session. The amendments related to clarification regarding the extent of information from meetings that members can share in the community. A further amendment was proposed during the discussion and agreed.

During the discussion some community members of the Group also advised that they have been asked why meetings are not public and why some information is confidential. The Group noted that this is necessary because part of its role is to be a sounding board and a forum in which concepts, ideas and suggestions can be tested, noting some of which might not be progressed or some may progress in a different form. That said, the Group also confirmed that it would welcome representatives of different groups/clubs/associations connected with the Island at meetings from time to time to discuss specific issues.

In light of the proposed amendments, the Group also discussed whether there is a need where votes are taken in the future for members to make their position clear, ie support, oppose or abstain.

Paul Victory moved motion that the minutes, as amended, be accepted as a true and accurate record of events. The motion was seconded by Richard Clarke and carried.

Progress update – infrastructure

The Department of State Growth advised that work to draft formal plans for infrastructure changes at the terminals, cost the plans and determine timing and a work schedule is ongoing. Correspondence has been received from SeaLink regarding the importance of, and need to, progress infrastructure changes in a staged way during the 2018/19 financial year. SeaLink also provided the Group with an overview of its request to the Department regarding the staging of works during the year.

The Group discussed the importance of the infrastructure changes and not losing the early momentum that was seen during August in particular. The Group resolved to communicate with the Tasmanian Government its strong support for the infrastructure changes to occur in the 2018/19 financial year, which will address some long-standing safety issues in and around the ferry terminals. In this regard it was agreed that a letter from the Chair would be drafted, with Mathew Fagan and Lindon Haigh to assist with finalising the content.

Progress update – SeaLink implementation plan

SeaLink provided members with a copy of a draft letter that will be direct mailed to all residents and landowners within the coming week. A copy of the letter will also feature in the upcoming edition of Bruny News. Members discussed the wording of the draft as it related to the booking system and that it should align with the language used on the SeaLink Bruny Island website. It was agreed that any additional feedback on the drafting would be provided to SeaLink within 24 hours.

With respect to progress with other operational issues, the Group was advised that:

- The Moongalba would be coming off the domain slip that day, with a crew training schedule starting immediately;
- There had been some mechanical faults with the Mirambeena over recent weeks;
- Transition activities are progressing well, with thanks to the team from the Bruny Island Ferry Company; and
- SeaLink's office set-up (in the Gateway Information Centre at least in the short term) and longer term planning is well underway.

The release of the new fares schedule that will apply from 1 November this year was also acknowledged and discussed at length under the next agenda item.

Community feedback/issues

The Group had an extensive and constructive discussion about fares, following the release of the schedule that will apply for visitors from 1 November. Community members on the Group indicated this has been a significant issue in the community this week. SeaLink confirmed that they have had a number of discussions over recent days with various individuals, businesses and groups, including oyster growers and freight/transport providers.

Community members advised that the majority of feedback received over recent days related to the impact on family, friends and carers of permanent residents, on-island freight and transport businesses, and the cost of living on the island generally. SeaLink acknowledged the feedback and confirmed it is working closely with on-island freight, transport and other businesses.

With respect to the impact of visitor fares on permanent residents, SeaLink representatives restated the commitment to establishing a package of benefits for island residents, which is something that is already done on SeaLink's other services around the country and has been flagged at earlier meetings. There was some discussion and suggestions from members regarding what might be included in such a package. SeaLink indicated its desire that the package be "right" for this community and as such is seeking further input from community members on the Group to seek the views of other community members regarding how the package might be constituted. This will be discussed again at the Group's next meeting.

SeaLink representatives also reiterated the company's strong commitment to community support, with its sponsorship program *CommunityLink* to be advertised and all Bruny Island community organisations welcome to apply. Further information about the program will be provided to members to share with their community networks.

Community members of the Group sought confirmation from SeaLink about the arrangements for both account holders and ferry users with R and BI stickers. SeaLink confirmed that account holders who have already made contact with the business will be 'in the system' and can continue to travel on the ferry from 23 September as they have done previously.

With respect to those people with R and BI stickers, SeaLink restated their commitment to honour existing stickers for the first 90 days of operation. During that time residents and landowners are

invited to complete and submit proof of residency or land ownership documents to SeaLink to receive new and updated stickers. This can be completed online¹ or by filling out a form included with the letter being to residents and landowners or that can be picked up from the SeaLink Office located at the Gateway Information Centre at Kettering. For any sticker holders who change/replace vehicles within the 90 day period, SeaLink will seek to provide a temporary arrangement until the longer term system is finalised.

In relation to the sailings for which the new *Light* fares will apply from 1 November, SeaLink confirmed that this information has been published on its website.

Bernice Woolley advised the Group that she had received a copy of a letter from Inala to SeaLink and would circulate to the Group for information. SeaLink further advised that they have made contact and a meeting has been arranged for the week beginning 24 September. More generally, SeaLink acknowledged that it is well aware of the timeframes in which tourist operators release pricing to the market/public, and is working with operators in this regard.

Communication

Community members of the Group indicated that the tone of some aspects of the SeaLink media release issued the previous weekend had not been well received in the community and has created additional work for these members to explain the situation.

Communique/Summary of Outcomes

The Group summarised key elements of the discussion at the meeting that ought to be reflected in the communique, including: the development of a package of benefits for Bruny Island permanent residents, engagement with on-island businesses regarding fares, impending communication with residents and landowners, and communication with the Tasmanian Government regarding infrastructure changes.

Other Business

Chris Ireland acknowledged the important role of the Group and indicated that the discussion regarding the need for infrastructure changes is reflective of the Kettering Community Association's concerns with safety of access along as well as to and from properties and the ferry terminal on Ferry Road. He indicated that the Association has been seeking a speed limit reduction in the township of Kettering for some time and sought the support of the Group for such a change. The Group agreed to support the Association in this regard, noting it may be somewhat outside its remit.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 9 October 2018 at Alonnah, commencing at 8:30am. Bernice Woolley advised she will be an apology.

The Chair closed the meeting at 10:37am

¹ <http://www.sealinkbrunyisland.com.au/register-as-a-resident-or-landowner>