

Item: 9

Development and Infrastructure Committee: 8 November 2022.

Inter-Island Air Services – Proposed Summer 2023 Timetable.

Report by Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the summer 2023 timetable for the inter-island air services.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That the inter-island air services timetable for summer 2023 is scheduled to operate from 20 February to 29 October 2023 inclusive.

2.2.

That the Air Services Consultative Forum met on 24 August and 24 October 2022 to discuss the proposed summer 2023, with its main comments and representations outlined in section 4 of this report.

2.3.

The proposed timetable, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, which is mainly consistent with that operated in previous years, and incorporates the following amendments:

- Sunday/Stronsay flights on a Friday afternoon and Monday morning swapped to accommodate a teacher returning to their home isle.
- Operation of Sunday service to Stronsay being subject to availability of ground crew on the island.
- Bookings on the Eday drop on a Monday morning being subject to availability from 12:00 the Friday before departure.

2.4.

That, in advance of a service budget being established as part of the budget setting process for 2023/24, the level of service provision is subject to an adequate budget being made available.

It is recommended:

2.5.

That, subject to an adequate service revenue budget being established for 2023/24, the timetable in respect of inter-island air services, to be operated by Loganair Limited during summer 2023, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, be approved.

3. Background

3.1.

The inter-island air service operates to the six Outer North Isles under a Public Service Obligation which establishes the minimum frequencies and capacity and sets the maximum fare levels provided to each of the isles.

3.2.

In December 2020 the Inter-Island Air Services Public Service Obligation Contract 2021 to 2025 was awarded to Loganair Limited following a tendering exercise, with a commencement date of 1 April 2021.

3.3.

The six Outer North Isles Community Councils each appoint a Transport Representative to represent their respective communities on the Inter-Isles Air Service Consultative Forum.

4. Air Services Consultative Forum

4.1.

The Forum met on 24 August and 24 October, with the latter meeting including new Community Council transport representatives following the recent community council elections. The proposed summer 2023 timetable was considered, and the key issues discussed are outlined below.

4.2.

The proposed summer 2023 timetable presented to the Forum is consistent with previous years. It was noted that the ability to extend the operating day or provide more frequency over the summer period was limited as the service was predominantly operated using one aircraft with essential maintenance carried out over the summer period. This was to allow both aircraft for use over the winter when the operating period was restricted during daylight hours only, with the exception of the North Ronaldsay service which had night landing equipment.

4.3.

It was noted that a third aircraft was recommended as part of the Outline Business Case report and was included in the funding request that the Council had submitted to Scottish Government with the view to take forward from 2023/24 financial year. The third aircraft could provide additional frequency to islands and also remove the sharing of flights experienced at present which limited capacity.

4.4.

It was noted that it would be beneficial to have a policy around the provision of an alternative service to North Ronaldsay in the event that the life-line inter-island air service did not operate. It was also queried when a meeting of the Orkney Local Emergency Co-ordinating Group (OLECG) would be formed in the event that an island had not been served by air or ferry for several days. It was noted that a meeting of the OLECG could be called if there were concerns raised by the service, community or elected members if for example, there were concerns in accessing key supplies or services.

4.5.

Taking into consideration the recent disruption over a five day period to the inter-island air service in September 2022, and following discussion at the Forum, it is proposed that, subject to approval from the Transportation Service, the North Ronaldsay Community Council Chair and/or Transport Representative may charter a vessel if there has been a period of disruption over a 72-hour period or more.

4.6.

The cost of the charter referred to above (up to 5 x sailings per annum to be used specifically when inter island air services are disrupted) would be met by the Transportation Service, noting that Loganair would be paid 50% over the period of non-operation. It was also noted that officers had met with Loganair to discuss resilience and the importance of ensuring a continued lifeline service to the outer north isles' community.

4.7.

A request was made to swap the Sanday/Stromsay flights on a Friday afternoon and Monday morning to allow a teacher to travel back to their home isle. As there were no concerns around the swap and Loganair confirmed that this could be accommodated, the change has been incorporated in the timetable, attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

4.8.

It was noted that, although Loganair is able to operate services on a Sunday to Stromsay, unfortunately, there were currently no ground crew willing and able to provide services on a Sunday at present. This has been noted on the timetable, attached at Appendix 1, to make members of the public aware.

4.9.

A request was made by a North Isles Councillor to amend the time bookings can be made on the Monday morning drop to Eday due to difficulty reaching staff at Loganair over the weekend. It is therefore proposed that bookings can be made from 12:00 on the Friday before departure if travelling from Eday. This change has been incorporated in the timetable, outlined at Appendix 1.

4.10.

A further request from the Sanday Transport Representative was made to schedule the Sunday on-request flight to Sanday on a permanent basis. It was however noted that the North Ronaldsay flight is popular over the summer months. It was agreed that passenger carryings will be monitored and considered again at the next Forum meeting.

4.11.

It should be noted that a Friday morning drop to Eday was incorporated in the winter 2022/23 timetable due to low passenger carryings on the North Ronaldsay flight. The additional link to Eday can be booked on the basis that the first four seats remain priority seating for North Ronaldsay, with any remaining seats available for Eday. This will be monitored over the winter 2022/23 period to determine whether this should be continued and/or extended to the summer period.

5. Proposed Timetable

5.1.

The inter-island air services timetable for summer 2023 is scheduled to operate from 20 February to 29 October 2023 inclusive.

5.2.

It is proposed that the timetable, attached at Appendix 1 to this report, in respect of the inter-island air services, be approved.

6. Corporate Governance

This report relates to the Council complying with governance and procedural issues and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

7. Financial Implications

7.1.

The proposed timetable, attached as Appendix 1, represents a continuation of the existing level of service provision.

7.2.

The Inter-Island Air Service revenue budget for the current financial year, 2022/23, stands at £1,198,800 and gives an indication of the resources required to maintain this level of service. An overspend in the region of £120,000 is currently being forecast as the probable outturn position for financial year 2022/23. This position is being closely monitored by officers and can be attributed to significant increases in Avgas costs each month.

7.3.

In advance of a service budget being established as part of the Council's annual budget setting process for 2023/24, the level of service provision is subject to an adequate budget being made available.

8. Legal Aspects

8.1.

The Civil Aviation Act 1982 enables the Council to establish and maintain aerodromes.

8.2.

On 21 December 2020, the Inter-Island Air Service Contract 2021 to 2025 was awarded to Loganair Limited with a commencement date of 1 April 2021.

8.3.

The contract between the Council and the operator states that the operator shall carry out the services in accordance with the timetable agreed with the Council.

9. Contact Officers

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10. Appendix

Appendix 1: Inter Island Air Services Timetable – Summer 2023.

Summer 2023 - Inter-Island Air Services Timetable. Monday 20 February - Sunday 29 October 2023 inclusive



		Monday							Tuesday							Wednesday								
	LM	700	702	703	704	705	706	707	701	708	709	719	710	711	707	700	713	714	715	A	710	711	A	B
Kirkwall	dep	07:35	08:40	09:40	10:50	15:30	16:30	17:30	07:35	08:30	09:30	10:30	15:30	16:30	17:30	07:35	08:40	09:40	13:35	14:45	15:30	16:30	17:30	17:30
Eday	arr																			14:55				17:40
Eday	dep																			15:02				17:47
Stronsay	arr			09:53						08:39							08:49							
Stronsay	dep			10:00						08:46							08:56							
Sanday	arr			10:05			16:43			08:51			15:43								15:43			
Sanday	dep			10:12			16:50			08:58			15:50				09:08				15:50			
Westray	arr		08:55							09:45							09:55							
Westray	dep		09:02							09:52							10:00							
Papa Westray	arr		09:04			15:45				09:54	10:45		16:45				10:02						16:45	
Papa Westray	dep		09:11			15:52				10:01	10:52		16:52				10:09						16:52	
Westray	arr					15:54							16:54										16:54	
Westray	dep					16:01							17:01										17:01	
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52			11:07			17:47	07:52			11:02		17:47	07:52			13:52					17:47	17:57
North Ronaldsay	dep	07:59			11:14			17:54	07:59			11:09		17:54	07:59			13:59					17:54	18:04
Papa Westray	arr				11:24																14:09			
Papa Westray	dep				11:31																14:16			
Eday	arr	08:09													08:09									
Eday	dep	08:16													08:16									
Stronsay	arr					16:55						15:55											15:55	
Stronsay	dep					17:02						16:02											16:02	
Kirkwall	arr	08:26	09:26	10:21	11:46	16:16	17:11	18:11	08:16	09:11	10:16	11:26	16:11	17:16	18:11	08:26	09:21	10:24	14:31	15:12	16:11	17:16	18:11	18:21

		Thursday							Friday							Saturday					Saturday Refit (25/02/2023 -11/03/2023)					Sunday				
	LM	701	708	709	717	710	711	707	701	718	709	719	710	711	707	720	721	722	723	724	722	723	724	725	726	727	725	726	727	
Kirkwall	dep	07:35	08:30	09:30	14:20	15:30	16:30	17:30	07:35	08:30	09:30	14:20	15:30	16:30	17:30	08:30	09:30	10:30	15:00	16:00	08:00	09:10	10:20	14:00	15:00	16:05	10:30	16:00	17:30	
Stronsay	arr		08:39							08:39							09:38									15:09				
Stronsay	dep		08:46							08:46							09:46									15:16				
Sanday	arr		08:51			15:43				08:51			15:39				09:51									15:21				
Sanday	dep		08:58			15:50				08:58			15:46				09:59									15:28				
Papa Westray	arr											14:35																10:45		
Papa Westray	dep											14:42																10:52		
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52			14:37			17:47	07:52			14:52		17:47				10:47	15:17	16:17	08:17						11:02	17:47		
North Ronaldsay	dep	07:59			14:44			17:54	07:59			14:59		17:54				10:54	15:24	16:24	08:24						11:09	17:54		
Eday	arr																				08:34					16:15				
Eday	dep																				08:41					16:22				
North Ronaldsay	arr																									16:32				
North Ronaldsay	dep																									16:39				
Sanday	arr																						10:33					18:00		
Sanday	dep																						10:40					18:07		
Westray	arr			09:45							09:45					08:45							09:25							
Westray	dep			09:52							09:52					08:52							09:32							
Papa Westray	arr			09:54	14:54		16:45				09:54		16:45			08:54				16:34			09:34		14:15			16:15		
Papa Westray	dep			10:01	15:01		16:52				10:01		16:52			09:01				16:41			09:41		14:22			16:22		
Westray	arr						16:54						16:54											14:24			16:24			
Westray	dep						17:01						17:01											14:31			16:31			
Stronsay	arr					15:55							15:51											10:45				18:12		
Stronsay	dep					16:02							15:58											10:52				18:19		
Kirkwall	arr	08:16	09:11	10:16	15:16	16:11	17:16	18:11	08:16	09:11	10:16	15:16	16:11	17:16	18:11	09:16	10:11	11:11	15:41	16:56	08:51	09:56	11:01	14:46	15:41	16:56	11:26	16:46	18:28	

Eday: Monday AM drop during school term only. Bookings on the Eday drop will be subject to availability from 12:00 the Friday before departure (note change to Friday from summer 2023)

Sunday: Flight drop off/pick up on request. Bookings can be made on the Sanday or Stronsay flight, shared with North Ronaldsay, from 12:00 on Friday until 12:00 on Sunday.

PLEASE NOTE - The operation of the Stronsay Sunday service is subject to availability of ground crew on the island. Currently (Oct 2022) there are NO Stronsay crew available. Please check with Loganair.

Saturday Refit: Additional frequency by air provided while the Orkney Ferries ONI vessels are on winter refit.

A: Operates school term only, 20 Feb - 31 March; 17 April - 28 June; and 22 August - 11 October 2023.

B: Operates during school holidays, 03 - 14 April; 29 June - 21 August and 12 - 27 October 2023.