
Report To:	Policy and Resources Exec Sub-Committee	Date:	02 June 2020
Report By:	Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources	Report No:	PR/23/20/SA
Contact Officer:	Scott Allan	Contact No:	01475 712762
Subject:	Proposed Temporary Lay-Up of Cruise Ships – Update		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the response from Peel Ports at a meeting following the last meeting of this Committee on 19 May 2020 and also the outcome of any representations made on this issue by the local MSP and MP.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following the meeting of this Committee on the 19th May, officers met with Peel Ports senior representatives on the 20th May and relayed the Council's opposition to the laying up of cruise ships in the Clyde at this time.
- 2.2 In response, Peel Port expressed their support and sympathy with the Council's position. They emphasised that they are committed to protecting the Inverclyde community as well as their own employees and the crews of ships. They clarified that under international law, they cannot refuse entry to the port by a cruise ship if it is declared free from disease. The Clyde is an attractive locations for ships in view of the wide range of facilities including engineering maintenance. Peel Port advised that no ships are destined for Greenock at this time. Three ships are potentially destined for Glasgow, but they will carry crews of around 40 each.
- 2.3 As requested by Committee, copies of correspondence between the local MP and MSP with Scottish and National government are attached to this report. At the time of writing replies had not been received.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of this report.

Scott Allan
Corporate Director
Environment, Regeneration and Resources

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At this Committee on 19 May 2020, a report was presented which updated Members regarding the proposal by Peel Ports to accommodate cruise ships in the Clyde for lay-up. The report included a copy of a letter sent by the Chief Executive of Peel Ports following the Committee meeting of 05 May 2020. The reply from the Chief Executive of Peel Ports, dated 18 May 2020, was circulated at the meeting.
- 4.2 Following discussion, Committee agreed that officers should convey in the strongest terms the Council's continued opposition to the laying up of cruise ships in the Clyde at a meeting with Peel Ports on 20 May 2020. It was also agreed that the outcome of representations made on this matter by the local MP and MSP be presented to Committee.
- 4.3 Officers met with Peel Ports on 20 May 2020 by teleconference. The Council was represented at Chief Executive / Corporate Director level. Peel Ports were represented at Managing Director / Director level.
- 4.4 Peel Ports were supportive and sympathetic to the Council's position. They were keen to stress that the safety of Inverclyde residents, employees at the Port and crew members on ships were of primary importance. Peel Ports will not compromise on safety and fully appreciate the challenging circumstances which have been experienced in the Inverclyde area.
- 4.5 Peel Ports advised that all UK Ports are governed by rules set by the International Maritime Organisation. This body is an agency of the United Nations and the UK is bound to abide by its rules. Significantly, British Ports cannot deny access to any vessel which has a valid certificate of health. On discussion around why a cruise ship operator may choose Greenock over other destinations, it was explained that choice would be associated with distance to destination, available local facilities such as ship maintenance as well as safe anchorage.
- 4.6 Peel Ports confirmed that no vessels are destined for Greenock at this time. It is the case that vessels with small numbers of crew (around 40 each) are potentially destined for Glasgow. This will have no impact on Greenock or Inverclyde.
- 4.7 Peel Ports committed to advising the Council immediately if there is a specific proposal by a cruise ship operator to bring a vessel to Greenock. This would ensure that matters of Health and Safety including the role of Inverclyde Council in partnership with the Health Board as 'Port Health Authority' are addressed at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.8 With respect to the outcome of intervention of the local MP and MSP with Scottish and National Government, copies of the correspondence sent by Ronnie Cowan MP and Stuart MacMillan MSP to relevant government Ministers are attached. At the time of writing, responses were awaited.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance

Financial Implications:

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A.					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A.					

5.2 Legal

There are no legal implications other than as noted within this report.

5.3 Human Resources

N/A.

5.4 Equalities

Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES
✓	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
✓	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES –
✓	NO - This report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

5.5 Repopulation

N/A.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Corporate Management Team endorses this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A.

Dear Minister,

Re: Berthing of cruise ships

Yesterday, Inverclyde Council discussed a proposal by Peel Ports to accommodate vessels in the Clyde which are not in service. Peel advised they were responding to requests from cruise ship operators to berth ships on a layup basis in the Clyde Estuary. As you will be aware, Peel are the harbour Authority for the Clyde.

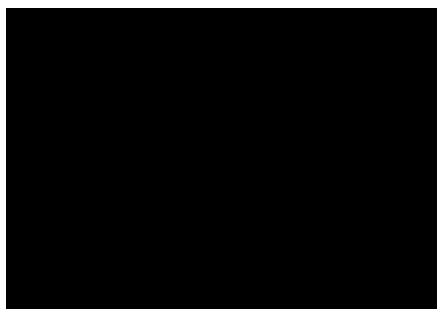
Peel Port indicated each ship, I believe there could be up to 12, could potentially have a permanent crew of around 150 during layover. However, on arrival, this number could be higher, possibly of the order of 500 and excess crew would potentially be disembarked at Greenock for onward repatriation via Glasgow Airport or other transport hub.

The proposal was rejected by Inverclyde Council although I understand that the final decision will be made by the UK Government. Therefore, I would be grateful to know who would undertake the testing of the crew members and vouch for the health and wellbeing of the crew. Also, what about the crew members leaving the ship and undertaking onward travel, how will they be transported to Glasgow Airport or other travel hubs. Added to this, one of the most important questions would be whether there would be transport arranged for said crew members to repatriate them to the country where they reside.

Previously, on the 3rd of March, I asked the Chief Medical Officer and the Secretary of State for Health what plans they had for airports and seaports and as yet they don't seem to have considered this matter. I would be grateful if the Department for Transport and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (copied into the correspondence) could investigate this and respond to the questions raised.

I look forward to hearing from you as a matter of some urgency.

Yours sincerely,



Ronnie Cowan MP
Member of Parliament for Inverclyde



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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Rt Hon grant Shapps
Secretary of State for Transport

Tuesday, 12 May 2020

Dear Secretary of State,

Docking and Mooring of Vessels: River Clyde.

You may be aware of discussions between Inverclyde Council and Peel Ports regarding the potential for up to 12 cruise ships to dock at Ocean Terminal in Greenock. Councillors took the decision to reject this proposal at their meeting on Tuesday 5th May. There clearly were concerns that Councillors raised about this proposal. I share these concerns and those of the Health and Social Care Partnership and sadly, welcome their decision to reject proposals to allow the crew on these ships to disembark from the vessels and to then travel onwards to Glasgow Airport for repatriation to their own countries.

If we were in normal times, I would continue to welcome the crew and the many passengers who arrive in Greenock. However, we are not in normal times. So far, Inverclyde has been the hardest hit area in Scotland due to Covid-19. I absolutely understand the humanitarian argument to help the crew and it is a powerful argument. However, my priority is and will continue to be my constituency and everyone who lives here.

With the higher than average level of deaths in Inverclyde, I cannot agree to this additional risk to my community. Any issues which arise from the ships docking here could in turn have a direct impact on our local health services and any additional pressures at present are not acceptable.

As reported in the Greenock Telegraph, there were many unanswered questions that Councillors quite rightly raised. They were correct in asking them and seeking this information. Ultimately, I believe the risks to my constituents outweigh the benefits to the crews on the ships docking here.

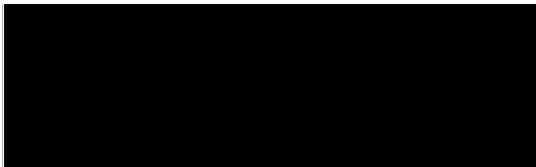
Serving Greenock, Gourock, Inverkip, Port Glasgow & Wemyss Bay

Every country will take decisions based upon their own circumstances and I note that New Zealand has banned cruise ships from their waters until 30th June. There are many of our European neighbours who have banned crew changes during Covid-19. I want to protect Inverclyde citizens and believe that sadly, on this occasion, refusing people to come ashore is the correct decision.

I appreciate that the Scottish Government have a legal role to play in this matter and I have written to the First Minister on this, however as Maritime Law is reserved, I am writing to you to ask that you look into this matter.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Stuart McMillan MSP