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Richard Leonard MSP
Convener,
Public Audit Committee
By email: publicaudit.committee@parliament.scot

25 March 2026

Dear Convener,

Ardrossan Harbour – Provision of Cost Information

The Scottish Government has been clear that we want Ardrossan to be the primary mainland port for CalMac ferry services to Arran. The purchase by CMAL has secured the port in public ownership, allowing for focus to turn to redevelopment of the facility.

I can confirm that the agreed net purchase price for the Ardrossan Harbour Company assets and related Statutory Harbour Authority status was £16 million. This value was negotiated by CMAL and funding was provided through Transport Scotland, supported by a written authority from Scottish Ministers, taking into account the short, medium, and longer term benefits and deducting £17 million for previously committed investment by Peel Ports.

This overall figure is made up of £6 million in consideration of the assets, such as land, berths, linkspan, terminal building, marshalling area and roadway, and £10 million for the permanent rights to control the Statutory Harbour Authority area and associated waters, including charging for shipping and services as required. Other costs for relevant taxes as well as technical, commercial, and legal advice are still being finalised due to ongoing processes relating to the transfer of Statutory Harbour Authority responsibilities - these are expected to be around £1 million.

CMAL are already considering short term work to ensure resilient port operations, and we are committed to funding a two-port service until major works begin. Work is also underway to review and develop the revised scope for a redeveloped Ardrossan Harbour under CMAL ownership.

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An Outline Business Case is expected to be presented later in 2026 when approval is expected to be sought to proceed to procurement on a preferred scheme. Work is expected to start in 2027 and take around 2 years to complete, depending on agreed scope and contract phasing. Project costs for the revised scope can only be confirmed when the design work is progressed and a contract has been agreed.

I trust this provides a useful update on the current position and ongoing actions.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Hyslop
Cabinet Secretary for Transport

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