

PRESS RELEASE

9TH MARCH 2020

Sandbanks Ferry Company announces toll increase application

- Proposed year on year enhancement of bulk purchase discount levels
- Proposed single trip toll increases less than half the rate of inflation since the last review
- Future single trip toll increases capped annually at the rate of inflation

The Sandbanks Ferry Company has made an application to the Secretary of State for Transport to increase the Maximum Tolls Chargeable amounts, which were last approved under a Toll Revision Order in February 2015.

The proposed cash tolls, or single trip ticket prices, are between a 5% to 5.56% increase on the last approved Maximum Tolls Chargeable amounts. **This represents an increase of less than half the rate of inflation since that point in time.**

The application also proposes freezing the discount level of bulk purchase tickets at the current level until at least 2021. Bulk purchase tickets, which are available to buy in multiples between 10 and 50, are **proposed to remain unchanged until they reach 26%-30% less than single trip tickets.** Bulk purchases, which are now managed via online purchasing, are primarily used by local residents and commuters and are currently discounted between only 10- 24% of cash toll prices.

Toll increases are an important part of the Ferry Company's prudent financial management and in securing the future safe and reliable running of the current vessel, the Bramble Bush Bay. Alongside increases in efficiency, cost savings and the commitment from the Directors not to pay dividends to the owners until a ferry replacement fund is topped up annually, sound financial planning also ensures that a replacement ferry can be purchased when it is judged necessary by the Company's Naval Architects.

Mike Kean, Managing Director of the Sandbanks Ferry Company, said: "We have held detailed discussions over the past 12 months with local residents, councillors and MPs and have incorporated their feedback into the application proposals. These include increasing the discounts applied to bulk purchase of tickets and pledging not to pay dividends until the Ferry Replacement Fund is at the required level in any given year. We are incredibly grateful for their time and input."

Mike Kean added: "Toll increases are a necessary part of the mix in ensuring that our vital service to local businesses, residents and tourists is maintained long into the future, and we look forward to the application progressing over the coming months."

The Sandbanks Ferry Company has recently established a Community Liaison Group with representatives from the Studland, Swanage, Purbeck and Sandbanks communities and Councils. The Community Liaison Group will be a forum for the Ferry Company to inform them about the ferry's ongoing performance and the Company's future plans. Group members will be able to provide their feedback on these issues going forward. The Group held its first meeting on 10 th January 2020 and a second meeting on 31 st January 2020.

The Department for Transport and the Ferry Company will publish further details of the application consultation in due course.

ENDS