

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT) MEETING

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at the SDRYT Coach, Stanhope Station, on Monday 26th October 2015.

The meeting started at 19:35PM.

Those present

Mike Wood – Acting Chair
Richard Maughan
Peter Baker
Ruth Carroll
Kevin Richardson
Paul Wilson
Gerry Mudd
Mark Woodhams
Tony Slack –Secretary

1 Apologises for absence

Kevin Hillary, John Askwith.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the 29th September 2015 meeting were approved by the Directors with the following corrections:

Item 11 para 7 – weel should read week

Item 14 The second para in the Membership section should be in the Volunteering section.

Proposed: - Paul Wilson

Seconded: - Richard Maughan

3 Matters arising from the last meeting not covered in the agenda

There were no matters arising.

4 Identify any other business to be discussed in Item 18

Update on medicals – covered in Item 14.

Update on Eastgate situation – covered in Item 15.

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No change

6 Acting Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave a verbal report closely following his Report in the newly issued edition of Between the Lines magazine (BTL 89).

The period 2014 – 2015 has been a very good year for the Trust in many ways.

We have managed to maintain and improve a very good working relationship with the Company. The new General Manager has demonstrated a helpful, positive attitude to the Trust, which in turn has made the day to day operations very much easier.

Our "Heritage" Bubble Car rail service between Stanhope and Wolsingham has been well received by the public, with almost rave reviews. There has been almost 100% reliability of service, operated by highly professional staff – both on and off the trains. Passenger numbers are up. Well done all.

Our volunteers have been working with the Company, planning events and future services. This will hopefully include a new, regular, passenger service from Wolsingham to Witton-le-Wear, next year.

Much time has been dedicated in the form of preparation for the running of the "Polar Express" trains which is now only a few weeks away. This includes designing and planning rosters, checking availability, ensuring that medical examinations are up to date, issuing cards, etc. This work is invaluable and is much appreciated. Also ongoing, is the protracted battle with the Stanhope Station canopy. Now, as a direct result of hard work, by individual members, we have reached a position where we are able to seek quotes for its refurbishment and repair. Thank you to those concerned with this specialised work.

We must also welcome the 12 new members from the "Stockton and Darlington Youth Team". I'm certain that they will be a valuable asset to the railway; vital for its long term future and survival.

Last, but not least, thank you to all my fellow Trust Directors. They are genuinely hard working, dedicated, helpful, work as a team and on occasions, even have some very good ideas.

The Directors approved the Chairman's Report

Proposed: - Kevin Richardson

Seconded: - Gerry Mudd

7 Treasurer's report

This is a quiet time of the year for the financial affairs of the Trust. There are relatively few membership renewals at this time and this reduces the donations too.

On the expenditure side, most of it is routine, but we have provided new identity badges for volunteers and ordered a stock of Railway ties (not in the American sense) for sale. This is the rather large figure listed as 'Sundries'.

Overall our surplus continues to grow.

The Trustees Annual Report has been sent to the Independent Examiner and they have asked for some clarifications. In particular; the relationship between the Trust and the CIC and the reasons for the £40k loan in the accounts.

The Directors approved the Treasurers Report

Proposed: Ruth Carroll

Seconded: Richard Maughan

Stanhope Station Lease update.

The position with the lease for Stanhope Station remains unchanged.

8 Charities Commission

Confidential.

9 Trust Shop

The shop continues to do well averaging about £50-60 per opening day over the Heritage season as well as providing an added attraction at Stanhope. The number draw and the Lottery (read them as the same) is providing a slowly increasing income each month.

10 Secretary Report

It was agreed that tea, coffee and biscuits will be available for the members attending the AGM. The Finance Secretary agreed to bring these to the meeting

Statements will be available to cover the position with No 40 and if raised the situation with the Charities Commission.

Action: Richard Maughan, Peter Baker

Following the AGM there will still be two places vacant on Trust Council. Council discussed potential members that might be willing to be co-opted. These were: Peter Kearsley, Steve Raine and Trevor Horner. It was agreed the Peter and Steve would be approached in the first instance.

Action: Tony Slack, Gerry Mudd.

Gerry Mudd indicated his intention to retire from Council once a plan for the completion of the restoration of No 40 is in place.

11 Heritage Services

This is the final month of the Heritage Service for this season. Passenger numbers have declined slightly and a fuller analysis will be undertaken to feed into the timetable for 2016. Revenues are up on last year and once the final figures are calculated it is likely that there will be more funds to donate to the Trust at year end. Costs for insurance and advertising tray liners for the café during Polar Express are still to be agreed with the CIC as are credit/debit card receipts and there will be further income from the planned Halloween Special.

The 122 Bubblecar has performed very well throughout the season but will require a replacement starter motor and a brake block if it is to pass a Fitness to run exam prior to next season.

A small quantity of diesel may be required to complete the service for this year. If this is the case fuel will be purchased in 5 gallon drums rather than order a full 500litre delivery.

12 No 40 Report

Ian Riley, Boilersmiths have been requested to quote for the restoration work which will be the 3rd quote and is expected on the 27th. The North Norfolk Railway are to be approached also,

The loan schedule has been finalised with the total loan being £36,000, the plan covers cash flow to the end of 2019 based on the Trusts current accounts. The plan shows an order placed on the chosen boilersmiths Q1/Q2 2016. The first call on the new loan arrangement would be Q3/Q4 2016 for £9,000. Subsequent call offs would then be as and when individual parts of the refurbishment are completed. Repayments would start Q1 2018. A new loan agreement is to be drawn up and agreed.

It was agreed that the project would be properly managed and that strict financial control will be undertaken with payment agreed with the boilersmith on the completion of sections of the work. The income from the hire of No 40 to other railways is not included and the situation with the Charities Commission could be a factor in the final outcome.

13 Projects/Restoration Activities

C&W

A Gresley Teak coach has arrived at the depot which belongs to the A1 Trust, the owners of Tornado.

The progress of the covering of the tables in Nina needs to be assessed.

Infrastructure

Paul Wilson had produced and circulated a project plan for Stanhope Station canopy. It was agreed that this was an excellent document and the meeting ratified the plan.

Proposed: Mike Wood

Seconded: Mark Woodhams

Temporary restoration has been undertaken in order to secure the structure for the duration of the Polar Express event. A team of volunteers is required to be assembled to tackle the project. Scaffolding will be required and another quote is to be sought.

14 Volunteer and Membership Secretary's Report

Volunteering

There is a new member willing to volunteer who has crossing keeper and guard experience from another heritage railway.

Another 1st Aid course is planned for 16th November with 3 volunteers and the café manager due to attend.

New training packages are to be put in place next year to include an updated rule book and other procedures.

Medicals are required urgently for a number of volunteers:

Membership

Membership currently stands at 534 and 12 new youth members have joined from the SDRYT.

15 Weardale Railway Trust Activities

Mark Woodhams has given a presentation to the Railway Retired staff organisation and a transcript was reported in the retired staff magazine. A photograph of No 40 in action adorned the front page.

The Trust has had verbal confirmation from the CIC to progress plans to open up the line to Eastgate. A small party rode a Wickham Trolley up to Eastgate to begin an assessment of the condition of the line. A second trip is planned for the 27th October. Trevor Horner has emailed the CIC S&T manager to start a discussion about the operation of the crossing in this section of the line.

There is evidence that some residents have encroached onto railway property. Trespassing was also observed.

16 Weardale Railway CIC reports.

WRCIC Management Meeting

Main points from meeting.

Broken Banks; Lifted and packed 6 inches w/e 23/10. Monitoring to be continued

Bridge 15; Rock armour needs to be put into the river to direct the flow. Environment Agency to be invited to a meeting to inspect and discuss flow of river and extensive works

Gunbarrel shed; Terms of lease state that building must be water and wind tight before lease ends (Dec 2016). Building currently considered dangerous.

WRCIC Board Meeting

There has been no Board meeting since the last meeting.

17 Other reports from Trust Directors

17a Weekly Lottery/Fund Raising

There have been no winners for the Lottery Draw to date. There are now 11 members. It is planned to hold a draw for the current prize money (£80) at the AGM. This event is also going to be used to recruit more players to take part.

17b Educational Activities

Talks: 17th November 2015 Howden-le-Wear.
 24th November Bishop Auckland Civic Society

Publications: November, Bishop Auckland Past & Present by Tom Hutchinson.
 Just published: - 'The first five miles' by Bishop Auckland Station History Group.

Presentations. Howden-le- Wear. 7th & 8th November Howden-le- Wear WW One event

Magazine (Publication dates/content deadlines)

BTL89. Publication date 30th October 2015. Proof copy returned to Linton's 26/10/15.

BTL90. Publication date 5th February 2016.

18 Any Other Business

It was noted that care will have to be taken by the actors at Harperley station for the Halloween Special train.

Directors were requested to provide prizes for the Raffle to be held at the AGM.

The meeting closed at 22:05PM

19 Date of next meeting

Next WRT Council meeting: - Monday 30th October 2015 at 7:30PM at Low Waterhouse Farm, Esh Winning