

## WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT)

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

The meeting started at 19:35PM.

### **Those present**

Richard Maughan – Chair  
Mike Wood –Vice Chair  
John Askwith  
Kevin Hillary  
Kevin Richardson  
Paul Wilson  
Peter Baker  
Tony Slack –Secretary

### **1 Apologises for absence**

Gerry Mudd, Ruth Carroll

### **2 Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014 meeting were approved by the Directors with the following corrections:

Item 3 First sentence - elected should read nominated. Richards should read Richard.

Item 9 A comma is required after 55012 in the second sentence. The fourth sentence of the third paragraph should be removed.

Item 15 the last sentence requires rewording.

Proposed: - Kevin Richardson

Seconded: - Paul Wilson

### **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**

There were no items of other business.

### **5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

There were no changes in conflicts of interest.

### **6 Chairman's Report**

A very successful Polar Express operation has now concluded to which the Trust contributed a lot of volunteer effort. This was instrumental in the success and helps to contribute to the long term viability of the railway.

As well as planning and running this year's Heritage Service, we need to be concentrating on looking after some of our other assets such as Nina, both Sentinel Shunters, Stanhope Station and of course Number 40. Add in the shop, track walking and the Sunday gang and there is an awful lot of work to do. We need to try to inspire some more of our membership to become active volunteers to help with all this. Consideration should be given to another volunteer meeting as in previous years or some further planned work days at Stanhope Station could be an answer?

In the meantime let's keep up the good work and ensure our railway survives and prospers.

The Chairman's report was accepted by the Directors.

Proposed: Kevin Hillary

Seconded: Kevin Richardson

## 7 Treasurer's report

This has been a very quiet time for the Trust's accounts, since our last meeting. We have received just over £400 in donations, lottery receipts, including £55 from The North East Theatre Organ Association, and there have been just three membership renewals.

Our expenditure has been limited to the regular £56 (+ vat) to Elliott's for the hire of the container, in use while 40 is being restored.

Cash balances: £15230 in DBS, £7797 in Barclays

Drain at Stanhope Station:

The drain situation has been re-reported to the Asset Management Department of DCC. DCC's first reaction was to say it is down to the Trust to repair. However I have forwarded the drain inspection report to them and for referral it to their insurers to see if it was covered. The lease allows for their access to repair the drains, but does not say that it is at their expense. They will be insured for damage caused by Landslip, subsidence or heave. It could be that one of these has damaged the drain but there is no other evidence.

Lease Renewal:

The lease on Stanhope Station runs until the end of March this year we have been talking to DCC about its renewal since March last year, but with little progress. Earlier this week, DCC were spoken to again. The contacted individual indicated that she now had authority to renew the lease and would be sending a draft agreement soon. The agreement this time is likely to be for 10 years and we will have tenure for when the lease expires. A draft Heads of agreement has now been received which has the tenant as the Weardale Railway CIC and not the Trust and asks for a rent of £18,000 per annum. This is a great disappointment and further discussions have taken place with DCC and a further response is awaited. Further to this the Chairman has contacted the DCC CIC Director to pursue the matter with the head of the Asset management Department.

It was agreed that the Treasurer write to DCC indicating that the Trust had been a tenant for 21 years and in that time had made considerable improvements to the Station.

Action: Peter Baker

A meeting to be convened to discuss this further with Steve Raine as an invited guest. Suggested date Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> February at Low Waterhouses Farm.

Action: Tony Slack

Easter Draw:

Tickets for the draw will go out with BTL. In the past, the prizes have been cash totalling £295. It was wondered if Driver experiences, cab passes, family tickets, individual tickets and rover tickets would make the draw more attractive and be cheaper for us. There is not time to remove all the hurdles to Driver experiences in time for this year's draw, but it is still worth exploring for later. The Chairman also made the point that volunteers are unlikely to see tickets as attractive as cash. Suggest a scale of prizes. Previously prizes have been; 1st: £100, 2nd: £75, 3rd: £50 and 7 prizes of £10.

The following prizes were discussed and approved for the Easter Draw 2015:

1<sup>st</sup>: £75 plus a return cab ride on the Heritage Train  
2<sup>nd</sup>: £40 plus a return cab ride on the Heritage Train  
3<sup>rd</sup>: £25 plus a return cab ride on the Heritage Train

4 prizes of a Heritage Train return family ticket (or £15)  
4 prizes of a Heritage Train individual return ticket (or £5)

The meeting discussed and approved a trip for a long standing active member and his family along the line on his birthday, with a tea to follow.

The Treasurers report was approved by the Directors

Proposed: Mike Wood  
Seconded: Paul Wilson

## **8 Heritage Services 2015**

An agreement reached with the WRCIC for the payment of the outstanding insurance bill. The final sum that will be donated to the Trust is £6065.00. Louise Baker has kindly offered to undertake the Heritage Services accounts. Working capital will be required to fund the 2015 service with brochures to procure and distribute in the first instance. A draft 2015 brochure has been produced and circulated for comment. The 122 Bubblecar is again available for this year's Heritage Service. The first planned operating day is Mothering Sunday on the 15<sup>th</sup> March followed by Easter Holiday services in April. The plan is for three trains a day between March and June and then four trains through the rest of the season until the end of October. A number of special event days is under consideration.

## **9 No 40 Report**

Little progress on the restoration of the boiler. There has been a visit from the Boiler Inspector which has identified a number of remedial actions required to some of the work already undertaken. A programme of work is to be identified to facilitate the boilers' return. The work on the chassis etc. at Wolsingham is almost complete. Valve shims are to be ordered.

## **10 Restoration Activities**

An inspection of the platform canopy at Stanhope Station has revealed much of the woodwork is in poor condition particularly some of the roof glazing bars. One of the original builders is to be contacted to advise on the construction of the canopy.

The station roof requires the slates that have been removed/broken replacing.

A team of skilled volunteers is required in order to effect the necessary repairs.

The situation with the collapsed drain under the up platform has been discussed as part of Item 7.

## **11 Secretary's Report**

The summary report of the 2014 AGM has been prepared and forwarded to the Editor of Between the Lines for inclusion in issue 86.

## **12 Volunteer and membership Report**

### **Volunteer Report**

During the recent Polar Express around 30 volunteers assisted in various duties on the Railway. A big thank must go to all those that took helped out this year. On the Operational side there were a total of 2,824 hours worked. On top of these hours there was also extra hours worked in the preparation beforehand and also after the event. Volunteers also assisted in platform duties and in the lead up to Polar Express the Sunday Gang were also busy. Consequently, these extra hours worked by our volunteers takes the total number of volunteer hours for the Polar Express to 3,500.

The maximum number of operational volunteers assisting on one day was 12 and the minimum was 6. Comparison with at the figures from last year shows the number of hours worked operationally during Polar Express 2013 was 2,000

Several of our experienced drivers were also passed as competent on the Class 31, Class 56 and Class 47 during this period. There was also some up-skilling of Crossing Keepers progressing to Assistant Guards over Polar Express also.

### **Membership Report**

The Trust Membership currently stands at 577 members. Since the last magazine we have had a couple of people join as Joint Members. Joint membership can be used for enrolling extra members of your household and the cost is £7.00 per member. This would cover them for insurance if they volunteer at the railway. There is only one magazine per household.

March is always a busy month for renewals and this year is no exception. The total number of renewals that will be sent out in the mailing of BTL 86 is 252. This means the Treasurer and Membership Secretary will be very busy in the coming months.

Currently we have approx. 31 complimentary members that receive free copies of Between the Lines magazines. A list of these members has been circulated for discussion in February's meeting. The list of Complimentary Members is to be reviewed.

Action: All

**13 Projects**

Restoration projects have been discussed in Items 7 and 10.

**14 Weardale Railway CIC Reports**

Gerry Mudd has prepared a summary document for discussion at the next CIC Board meeting to be a teleconference call on the 4<sup>th</sup> February.

**15 Other Reports from Trust Directors.**

**15a Weekly Lottery/Fund Raising**

The current Lottery owner has agreed to relinquish the organisation of the Lottery and it was agreed at the last meeting that Paul Wilson would assume responsibility. Consequently Paul has circulated a set of modified Lottery rules for discussion. Council to review the document for the next meeting

Action: All

**15b Educational Activities**

Talks

Presentation on 21<sup>st</sup> March for the Witton-le-Wear 100 years event.

The WR displays boards will be on display at a local history event; History Belongs to You on the 9<sup>th</sup> May

Publications

BTL 86 currently at the printers.

Available for dispatch – 6<sup>th</sup> February 2015

As previously discussed the 2015 Easter Raffle ticket books will be dispatched to members in the BTL 86 mailings.

**16 Any Other Business**

There was no other business not previously discussed at the meeting

The meeting closed at 21:45PM

**17 Date/time of the next meeting:**

**Next WRT Council meeting: - 24th February 2015 at 7:30PM at Low Waterhouses Farm, Esh Winning.**