

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT)

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at the Tindale Room, Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre, Bishop Auckland, on Tuesday 28th April 2015.

The meeting started at 19:30PM.

Those present

Richard Maughan – Chair
Kevin Hillary
Peter Baker,
Kevin Richardson
Paul Wilson
Tony Slack –Secretary

1 Apologises for absence

Gerry Mudd, Ruth Carroll, John Askwith Mike Wood

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the 24th March 2015 meeting were approved by the Directors with the following corrections:

Item 6 – Para 2, Steve Raine is advising the Trust.
Item 14 – The NETOA Heritage Tour is planned for the 31st August.

Proposed: - Paul Wilson
Seconded: - Kevin Richardson

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

Planning for the NEMMOC car rally event at Stanhope 15th/16th August

4 Identify any other business to be discussed in Item 18

Further consideration of the CIC request for a track access contribution.

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

There were no changes in conflicts of interest.

6 Chairman's Report

There was no Chairmans Report for the meeting.

7 Treasurer's report

Firstly, thanks to The Secretary for looking after the finances in our absence particularly as this was an active time and everything was documented.

It is a peak time for membership renewals and they have come in steadily, many with donations too. We have at least stopped receiving letters declining renewed membership of the Trust because of the inactivity on the line. We have had a successful Easter draw as well.

The main expense this month has been the repair to Stanhope station roof of £3000. However with the lack of spending on No 40, our balances increased by £400 this month and generally over our year.

There is £2000 in the Restricted funds for Witton–le-Wear station should a project to extend operations to Witton be considered.

The financial figure had been circulated to Directors prior to the meeting.

It is clear though, that we do not have the resources to do everything we would like. We do not yet know what No 40 will now cost to complete, but it will be much more than we were contemplating and there will be more delay. We should look at our subscriptions just to keep pace with routine costs.

The increased costs of production of the Trust quarterly magazine (BTL) and postage means that the current membership subscriptions barely cover the costs. Consideration should be given to looking to increase the membership subscription fee in the future.

An interim lease for Stanhope Station has been signed with the Trust holding the tenancy. DCC continue to be responsible insuring the building structure. The Trust need to come to some formal arrangement with the CIC to define the extent of the CIC usage.

The Directors approved the Treasurers Report

Proposed: Kevin Richardson

Seconded: Paul Wilson

8 Trust Shop

The shop has been restocked and is opening during operating days. It is too early to judge the shop performance so far.

9 Secretary's' Report

The Secretary reported that the Directors details had been updated at Companies House. The Financial Director and Treasurer had submitted the Trust Annual Accounts. The Trust Annual Return is due in August 2015.

Correspondence:

A reply has been sent to a young member who had expressed an interest in the Railway, enclosed was a copy of the current timetable leaflet and a recent copy of BTL.

A card of condolence was sent to the wife and family of a long standing active member following the news of his death

A card of condolence was sent to another long standing member on the sad news of the death of his wife.

A Letter has been drafted to formally apologise on behalf of the Trust for the loss of his VHS Video Tape.

There were no Equal Opportunities/Anti-discrimination/ Trust activities which meet our public benefit items to report.

10 Heritage Services

There have been 14 operating days to date in this our second season of operation. So far £2865.00 has been taken in fares which is an average £204.64 per day. Expenses paid to date are £1,295.00 for leaflets and £30 for Weardale Visitor Network membership. Mileage charges for the Hire of the 122 Bubblecar are still to be calculated and paid for.

The first fill of diesel is ordered for Thursday 30th April - £262.50

There are 2 special trains booked – 1 at £100 for a party of walkers between Wolsingham and Stanhope and 1 at £140 for a private birthday celebration. These are both non timetabled services and the prices cover expenses and include a modest profit.

Saturday 16th May joint venture with North East Theatre Organ Association. An evening of film and music with a railway theme, including the Weardale Railway.

Vintage car rally planned for NEMMOC at Stanhope. Discount fare structure to be agreed.

Discounted fare scheme agreed with South Tynedale Railway and Killhope Lead Mining Centre. On production of a valid 2015 ticket, visitors can claim a discount on rail fares. Similarly, rail travellers can claim a discount at both venues.

The producer of the Heritage Service roster is already experiencing difficulty filling operational roles on some dates. Particularly duty manager and Broadwood. One volunteer is currently covering all unfilled Broadwood dates but would prefer to give some up!

11 No 40 Report

An inspection of the boiler by Boilersmith Adam Dalglish has estimated a further £45,000 of expenditure is required to complete the refurbishment of the boiler. Estimated timescale to completion is 14 months. A further inspection is planned for Friday the 1st May with a provisional estimated delivery before year end. This might present an opportunity to hire number 40 out for Santa Specials over the Christmas period.

Small works to finish the chassis/motion is ongoing.

12 Projects/Restoration Activities

There have been no Carriage or Wagon project works this month.

As reported earlier Stanhope Station roof is now repaired at a cost of £3000. Consideration should now be given to the Stanhope Station Platform Canopy and Wolsingham Station Cabin.

13 Volunteer and Membership secretary's Report

Volunteer Report

We are now well under way to the start of our second season of a Trust run Heritage service. Our Volunteers have been very busy not only on the Operational Side of this but in Station Maintenance as well. A working party met up at Stanhope to make a start on the tidying for the Season. This is an ongoing process and volunteers are always welcome to come along and help.

As mentioned in previous issues we have Station Adopters at Frosterley - Roy and Ellen Humphries. They spend their free time keeping Frosterley Station neat and tidy. They have just finished painting the white line on the platform edge. At Wolsingham we now have Station Adopters also. The Sauntson family have taken on the responsibility of keeping Wolsingham tidy. They have been carrying on from the work carried out by Debbie and Sue last year. When you are passing Frosterley and Wolsingham why not call in and see the amazing work they have been doing.

PTS. There will be several volunteers requiring PTS refreshment from June onwards. Phil Charlton has several PTS exams/questions which can be used to help carry this out. The initial PTS question paper was created by the CIC General Manager and obviously people will need to do a different paper to be assessed correctly. Whether this takes the form of an oral exam or a full written one is yet to be decided. The paper created by the General Manager could still be used for initial PTS examinations if necessary. This will need to be an in depth course as we assume that volunteers are coming with no initial knowledge.

Medicals. Quite a few people need medicals. Mike Wood will be contacted accordingly..

Membership Report

As predicted March was a really busy month for renewals. We have also had several members changing to Life Membership as well as four new Trust Members.

Membership currently stands at 568.

14 Weardale Railway Trust Activities

There is a Railtizer event in conjunction with the NETOA on the 16th May. On the 31st August there is a planned excursion from Howden le Wear to Wolsingham with train journey to Stanhope and onward to Tow Law before returning to Howden. Tickets are £20/head. Extra café capacity will be required – Nina will need to be at Stanhope.

15 Weardale Railway CIC reports.

There have been no CIC meetings since the last Council meeting.

16 Other reports from Trust Directors

16a Weekly Lottery/Fund Raising

The WR Lottery 2015 was launched on the 3rd and 4th April. Application forms are to be included in the next BTL and are available at Stanhope Station. Three numbers (between 1 and 49) cost £1 and players can have as many entries as they want. In the event of there being no winners over a three month period a straight name draw will take place,

16b Educational Activities

Talks (Dates/Locations) None.

Publications. None.

Presentations. Durham City, Yesterday Belongs to You. 09/05/15.

Magazine (Publication dates/content deadlines)

BTL87 May 2015 issue. Contributions were requested by Thursday 23rd April 2015 at the latest. Contributions still awaited.

17 Any Other Business

The NEMMOC event will require an electrical supply to be provided and a stand pipe for water available. This is to be checked out. Once a list of the names of participants is produced discount travel vouchers will be produced on a name by name basis.

The meeting closed at 21:55PM

18 Date of next meeting

Next WRT Council meeting: - Tuesday 26th May 2015 at 7:30PM at Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre, Bishop Auckland.