

## WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT)

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at the S&DR Youth Team Coach, Stanhope Station, on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

The meeting started at 19:35PM.

### **Those present**

Richard Maughan – Chair  
Kevin Hillary  
Peter Baker,  
Kevin Richardson (from 19:41)  
Paul Wilson  
Ruth Carroll  
Mike Wood – Vice Chair  
Tony Slack –Secretary

### **1 Apologises for absence**

Gerry Mudd, John Askwith, Kevin Hillary

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

The minutes of the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015 meeting were approved by the Directors.

Proposed: - Peter Baker  
Seconded: - Ruth Carroll

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

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the Agenda.

### **4 Identify any other business to be discussed in Item 18**

Co-opting a Trust member onto Council,  
Proposals for the development of Eastgate Section.  
The provision of a newly refurbished Wickham Trolley  
The Station Running In Boards.  
The Internment of the ashes of a long standing member.

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

There were no changes in conflicts of interest.

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

It seems as if the warmer weather is improving passenger figures on the Heritage Service. We have had some successful pre-booked parties and the feedback from passengers continues to be positive. There are several calls on our financial reserves and we need to be prioritising the sequence of action to these. The ones that come to mind are number 40's boiler, repairs to Stanhope canopy, a second diesel unit and sorting Witton-le-Wear platform. We have had a steady trickle of volunteers being passed out for operational roles and a few more in the process of being trained. All of these additions will be needed when we begin to offer an enhanced service and will make life so much easier when it comes to Polar Express. Let's hope for another successful summer and enough money to begin to sort some of the above.

The Directors approved the Chairman's Report

Proposed: - Paul Wilson  
Seconded: - Ruth Carroll

## **7 Treasurer's report**

The Treasurer had circulated copies of the accounts as of the 29<sup>th</sup> of June to directors prior to the meeting.

We are just one month away from our year-end, so we can see how this compares with previous years

The comparable income is down this year, both memberships and donations. Last year's donations were helped by the 40 appeal and Gerry's donation following the sale of his coach.

The bereaved family of the long standing member gave a donation of £200 this month and handed over some £114 the remaining Lottery fund collections.

The shop sales have improved. Although one day this month the sales were just £17, they have averaged £85 per day this month. This must be encouraging for the 5 stalwarts that person the shop. We are grateful to them and it does add to the attraction of Stanhope. Robin took £214 on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Although there are end of year adjustments to include, e.g. the Gift aid from donations and subscriptions, and the confusingly named Gift Aided transfer from WRHSL, we are going to make a surplus this year for the first time in many. The primary reason being we have stopped spending on No 40.

The Treasurer has not been happy with the service we have received from our Independent Examiners. As the year end is coming up, we need to decide what to do.

There are aspects of the accounts over which the Treasurer has never been comfortable and has not received the advice wanted from the IE who have signed off the accounts almost without question. Indeed the only question raised this year showed a lack of understanding of the accounts - to do with Gerry's coach.

The Directors approved the Treasurers Report

Proposed: Ruth Carroll.

Seconded: Kevin Richardson.

Change of Independent Examiner

The Treasurer recommends Heather O'Driscoll FCA, be appointed IE. She has vast experience of charities and not-for-profit companies. The Treasurer anticipates that she will raise many questions but that following this the accounts will be put on a proper footing. Heather is prepared to undertake this for £350 plus VAT. This is the same as we paid last year to Allen Sykes Accountants, and is well below Heather's normal charge-out rate.

Proposed: Peter Baker.

Seconded: Mike Wood

The Directors approved the change of Independent Examiner to Heather O'Driscoll FCA

Stanhope Station Lease

DCC have signed the Interim Lease Agreement but we have yet to receive a signed copy.

We have received forms for the Evaluation of Domestic Rates from DCC.

WRT is now solely responsible for repairs to the Station Building.

The date the Trust first occupied the building is required. John Askwith, Gerry Mudd and Steve Raine are to be consulted.

## **8 Charities Commission**

**Confidential**

## **9 Shop**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century sleeper chairs that have been added to the shop stock are selling well, the shop update is included in the Treasurers Report.

## **10 Secretary Report**

There has been a proposal to co-opt Mark Woodhams to become a member of Council.

Proposed: Ruth Carroll.

Seconded: Peter Baker.

The Directors agreed to co-opt Mark onto the Board.

The Secretary will write to Mark and invite him to the next Council meeting.

Correspondence:

A response to the letter from a member about supply of 2015 Brochures has been sent out.

The date, timing and venue for the 2015 AGM were discussed and Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> November at 11:00am was agreed. The venue would again be the Stanhope Methodist Church School Room. Tea/coffee and biscuits will be provided.

## **11 Heritage Services**

Kevin Richardson gave a short verbal report. The Heritage Services continue at a steady rate with costs continuing to be covered. Passenger number travelling in total through March, April and May totalled 1534 which is commensurate with the passenger numbers last season. The majority of passengers join the train at Stanhope (circa 55%), followed by Wolsingham (37%) and Frosterley (7%).

The potential second DMU set has been examined by a team including Evan Green Hughes, Richard and Kevin. The unit is essentially sound with the exception of one end cab which requires replacement. The cost of this is thought to be in the order of £6k. The seats of the Driving/Trailer car are in the unit but require installation. Both cars require a repaint. Should the Trust take this on the costs of transportation and refurbishment would probably take the final total over £10K but we would have use of the unit free for 5 years following completion of the restoration. For the Trust to undertake this project continued track access would be required over a number of years. CIC management are to be approached to determine their long term plans for the railway.

A customer satisfaction survey is to be implemented.

A new roller shutter motor actuator has been fitted to the roller door on the Wolsingham Station Cabin.

A portable toilet is required for the summer season.

Fence paint is to be purchased for the station adopters so they can start painting the fences.

A cost analysis for the extension of the service to Witton-le-Wear has been drawn up. A meeting is to be arranged with the Chair of the Witton-le Wear Parish Council to discuss ways to finance the project.

## **12 No 40 Report**

A costed plan for the continued restoration of No 40 is required to determine the costs and timeframe required to complete. Potential hire income for hiring No 40 out to other railways for Santa Specials is to be included.

## **13 Projects/Restoration Activities**

The Sunday gang are continuing to clear the vegetation along and above the retaining wall at Wolsingham Station. Access to the Company's Wickham Trolley is proving difficult and hindering the Sunday Gangs efforts.

Quotes from 3 suppliers are to be sought to replace the glazing in Stanhope Station Canopy.

## **14 Volunteer and Membership secretary's Report**

### Volunteer Report

There are approximately 50 regular volunteers.

A volunteer has successfully trained and passed out as a Broadwood Crossing Keeper, another has passed out as Guard and will progress to driver training. A further volunteer is to commence training on Control and another as a TTI.

### Membership Report

Membership currently stands at 559 with 40 renewals outstanding. There have been 3 new members join the trust and one Life Member has passed away.

## **15 Weardale Railway Trust Activities**

WRHSL Commercial manager is to be requested to provide a comprehensive list of all the summers planned activities,

Two Council members attended a two day conference held by the Friends of the S&DR at Locomotion in Shildon. The aim was to raise awareness and move towards the 2015 anniversary of the line and to try to gain World Heritage Status. A presentation was given by the Heritage Lottery Fund on how to apply for funding for projects. This was used as an opportunity to discuss the possibility of grant funding for the Eastgate project.

An investigation into the whereabouts of the WRT Cement wagon has revealed that it has been scrapped by Lafarge. Lafarge are to be approached for compensation.

## **16 Weardale Railway CIC reports.**

The CIC currently has a monthly overhead charge. The CIC Marketing Team is exploring revenue earning opportunities e.g. visiting rail tours, Network Rail training or Disaster Training for Emergency Services.

The nomination for a Trust member as a replacement for Gerry on the CIC Board will be discussed at the next meeting.

## **17 Other reports from Trust Directors**

### **17a Weekly Lottery/Fund Raising**

There are now 7 members of the Lottery and there have been no winners to date. The Trust Lottery application form will be included in the next copy of BTL to give the membership the opportunity to participate.

### **17b Educational Activities**

**Talks** There is to be a talk at Howden-le-Wear, 17th November.

**Publications.** A book entitled Bishop Auckland Railways will not be stocked in the Trust Shop.

**Presentations.** The display boards will be on display in Darlington library though July and August.

**Magazine** (Publication dates/content deadlines)

It was agreed that the number of pages for BTL will be 20 and the number of copies will be 500 under normal circumstances.

BTL88 May 2015 issue. Contributions to be submitted by 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2015 at the latest with an August 7<sup>th</sup> despatch date.

## **18 Any Other Business**

There is a Wickham Trolley that will become available in the next two months which will have been recently refurbished. This could be used to give rides up to Eastgate and provide additional revenue. This is to be explored further.

A quote for £168 to manufacture and fit the station names to the station Running In boards at Stanhope and Frosterley has been received. It was agreed that the supplier will be requested to supply and install the station names.

The ashes of Arthur Temple were interred in a short private ceremony at the trackside close to Keilder curve on Friday the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2015. The Temple family expressed their appreciation to the railway for cooperating with the family's wishes. The location was marked with a ring of ballast stones and the laying of flowers.

The meeting closed at 22:20PM

## **19 Date of next meeting**

**Next WRT Council meeting: - Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at 7:30PM at the Tindale Room, Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre, Bishop Auckland.**