

## WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT) MEETING

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at Witton-le-Wear Community centre, on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018.

The meeting started at 19:30PM.

### **Those present**

Kevin Richardson – Chairman  
Peter Kearsley  
Paul Wilson –Secretary  
Tony Slack  
Simon Adams  
Bob Dingle  
Richard Maughan  
Gerry Mudd  
Steve Raine from 1939hrs  
Mike Wood from 2014hrs

### **1 Apologies for absence**

Mark Woodhams

### **2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 meeting were approved by the Directors with minor corrections.  
Item 7 in minutes duplicated, subsequently making all other item numbering incorrect  
Item 12 Projects, first sentence change gates to gate (as there is only one)

Proposed: - Bob Dingle

Seconded: - Peter Kearsley

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

None

### **4 Identify any other business to be discussed in Item 19**

Franking Machine cost/ replacement versus postage stamps

Consideration of developing an on-line shop

Heritage Railway Association membership, do we want this to continue

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

There are no new conflicts of interest.

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

Having completed our 2018 heritage season, our volunteers are busy supporting the WRCIC "Train to Christmas Town" event.

The event is providing some of our volunteers with the opportunity to progress and be passed out as competent in various roles, which will greatly assist in operating trains next year.

Due to our commitments to the TTCT event, and everyone's responsibilities outside of the railway, progress on our various projects is still slow. However, we expect this situation to improve over the coming weeks.

Now that the WRT operating season is effectively over, analysis of the trading results from the Trust shop is very encouraging. A profit of over £5,500 is a significant contribution to our bank balance. Congratulations and many thanks to Mike and all his staff for their efforts!

We still need to resolve how best to cover the position of Trust treasurer going forward and must also bear in mind that we will soon require a new editor for BTL, as John Askwith only agreed to continue until the upcoming AGM.

Finally, thanks to everyone for your continuing support, and, because this is expected to be our final meeting of 2018, very best wishes for the festive season.

Proposed: - Gerry Mudd

Seconded: - Tony Slack

## 7 Treasurer's Report

The financial summary for the month was circulated to Directors prior to the meeting and is summarised below.

Key discussions points centred around accounting for spending on Witton le Wear crossing gate; is it considered a Trust asset or a repair? This topic was deliberated by Directors and agreed that it was a repair. Identified that Linton's cost to produce our recent BTL magazine was 66p per copy. This is a good return on previous charges by Linton's. The Trust's continued membership of the Heritage Railway Association was also considered. Due to the Trust turnover, our annual membership has increased to £195. This is much higher than in previous years, however this membership provides valuable services and support, agreed to continue.

We are still without a Treasurer, we discussed potential to approach Kelso Yuill, as he has previously undertaken this role. Trust council also discussed speaking to Peter Baker, to see if he would extend his tenure. Action: Kevin Richardson to consult with Peter Baker and Bob Dingle to consult with Kelso Yuill.

The cash balances as of the 1 December are:

£28,481	Barclays
£17,931	DBS
£197	In hand

Proposed: - Bob Dingle

Seconded: - Simon Adams

## 8 Trust Shop

Peter Baker has provided an update on the figures for the shop this year.

<b>Takings:</b>	<b>7355.29</b>	
Of this	1982.41	vatable
	5372.88	non-vatable
Including	520.97	card payments

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>1761.75</b>
Shop purchases	1421.19
Vat	330.40
Sum-up charge	10.16

**Shop Profit            5593.54**

The donation jar held £9.94 and the No 40 model £76.80. All in all, a very good year. Many thanks to Mike Rapp and all the shop volunteers.

## 9 Secretary's Report

We are no further forward in identifying further potential patrons for the Trust.

I received a call from Mrs McKenna at Stanhope Methodist Hall, advising that they have double booked the hall and we are being cancelled. Other venues have been contacted and I'll keep trying other venues in the interim. An approach to John Askwith is to be made to see what interesting historical photos were available digitally and I was thinking of asking him if we could show after AGM? Any other ideas gladly accepted.

Progress is being made with regards to WRT polices with two ratified at last meeting and these should be ready for upload to our website before Christmas. There will be a further one was agreed at meeting.

Correspondence has mainly been via social media and email to the Trust. John Askwith has continued to be a frequent commentator and regularly shares his opinions/ pictures which are always well received. We've had enquiries from Canada about a family member previously working at Witton le Wear; commercial queries about Christmas Trains/ Stone Valley festival; contact from the Isle of Man re: 'Bertie' a shunter they have for sale; and people wanting details about the 31 gala next year. Also, on Twitter a suggestion was made to us, CIC and Verdant leisure about offering a platform at Kingfisher.

Industrial Heritage Network – North East; we're signed up although we had no representation at the initial session. I have put my name forward for now, but this doesn't have to be a director, so that opens things up for us. The commitment is totally up to us, it supports networking with organisations like ourselves and the offer of hosting a meeting up, next one in about 5 months.

Thanks to Gerry Mudd for taking up some of the work to keep our website updated and current; we now have a video's tab, following feedback from an observer with a view to either taking over the current Weardale Railway channel or creating a new one.

The Sunday Gang continues with the clearing of vegetation along the track and contribute to the Trust's Public Benefit obligations.

## **10 Data Protection Legislation**

Peter Kearsley shared his document regarding our data retention policy. This was discussed by directors and it was agreed to accept this.

## **11 No 40 Report**

McEwen's have completed further work, with replacement pattern straps now fitted. Progress is ongoing although slow. Richard Maughan feedback his conversation with the Boilersmith following a recent inspection and the bottom pad for access plate now required. Awaiting costings for this. The Inner firebox still has 600 short stays to fit, which will take an estimated 1 month if McEwen's can focus on this. Richard Maughan to plan an unannounced visit. Significant discussion was undertaken due to a lack of progress and timescales exceeded.

Action: To ask Peter Baker to update the schedule of work prior to our next Council meeting.

There have been no further steam group meetings.

## **12 Restoration Activities**

Identified that Wolsingham, Broadwood and Stanhope still require paint applied. Kevin Richardson raised that he is considering developing a project working group on a Wednesday. It was highlighted that this group should continue when heritage services operate mid-week. Directors discussed a recent photograph posted on social media, of the Stanhope water tower and surrounding shrubbery looking unsightly. Plan to discuss with the CIC to establish a plan to develop this area in the future.

Rob came and cleaned our guttering between canopy and main building at Stanhope in early November, he is more than happy to come yearly to do this. Paul Wilson also had a look at the internal guttering under canopy, we will need to get tower or decent ladders for us to clean these out prior to heritage session starting as they have a covering of moss

## **13 Projects**

Kevin Richardson reported that 20 new brake blocks have been delivered for the Trust's 108. Advised that its not advisable to replace all brake blocks at one time as they need time to bed in. A local supplier of brake blocks has been identified. Norman Clarke has been busy completing some internal work to the 108 whilst at the depot.

Witton gate still needs to be replaced and Kevin Richardson reported that we now have 3 quotes from traffic management firms and Directors agreed to support this. No date is yet fixed for this work to be completed.

Beacon £180 +VAT

Barrier £195 +VAT

Hatton's £436 +VAT

#### **14 Trust Promotion Drive**

The Trust has not been present at any recent events. Gerry Mudd has kindly offered to support keeping the website current and up to date.

#### **15 Volunteer Liaison Officer's Report**

Bob Dingle provided an update. We've had 5 new people offer their time and discussed how we can progress involving new volunteers, such as supporting the Sunday gang, attending Broadwood, whilst the Christmas Trains are operating. 2 have recently passed out as crossing keepers. Bob purported that the new volunteers have a range of interests and all prepared to have a go.

Mike Wood updated the meeting on the work of the Sunday gang. Recent work has seen the gang at bridge 4A and Witton le Wear; East and west of MP 5/6 and clearing sight lines of river around Harperley.

#### **16 Acting Membership Secretary's Report**

We've had 28 new members join the Trust in 2018, this is managing to replace the numbers who are no longer with us. Membership has stabilised at 428.

#### **17 Heritage Services**

Tony Slack shared and discussed his financial forecast graph. 2018 has shown a significantly less profit margin. This has largely been down to increased fuel costs and additional non-timetabled running days.

Planning for 2019 is well advanced with Tony Slack presenting the proposed draft timetable. It includes cream/ afternoon teas; evening trains in addition to the heritage service offer. All heritage trains will run to Bishop Auckland West.

#### **18 Weardale Railway CIC Reports.**

A management meeting is scheduled for Thursday 6 December.

To make a passing loop at Scotch Isle, two left hand points have been identified at Eastgate. Sunday Gang have been requested to help with vegetation clearance in preparation of points removal.

Steve Raine has assisted the CIC with x3 boundary issues. Tony Slack fed back that Evan Green-Hughes recently attended the Community Rail Partnership meeting, highlighting issue with connecting footpath between the two Bishop Auckland stations. Mr Green-Hughes has written to Sir Peter Hendy of Network Rail regarding the matter and has received a favourable response, with a representative attending the site to explore further.

A confidential matter was discussed by trustees.

#### **19 Other reports from Trust Directors**

##### **19a Weekly Lottery/Fund Raising**

There have been no winners since last draw. A number draw is necessary and will be conducted after the meeting. Mark Woodham's number was drawn by Bob Dingle and he wins £120.

##### **19b Educational Activities**

Talks:

Nil

Publications:

Magazine (Publication dates/content deadlines)

BTL 101 November 2018

Late being sent out due to issues with franking machine, but still in line with AGM targets. Still need to find an Editor to take over from John Askwith from March 2019.

## **20 Any Other Business**

### **Franking machine**

Tony Slack provided an update on costs for discussion. Richard Maughan suggested the potential for sharing postage costs and to look at costs for a different system for franking.

Neopost franking machine annual cost £170+VAT

Annual cost for franked mail £936.21

Annual cost for 2<sup>nd</sup> class mail £1000.91

New machine cost £475+VAT

Annual service charge £100

Would take 3.5years to repay the difference

### **Creating an on-line shop**

A couple of enquires have been received via info@ email address, wanting to know if the shop is open. Paul Wilson raised suggestion that should we not consider developing an extension of shop on Facebook or E-bay to supplement the good work done by our shop volunteers. Action Paul Wilson to discuss with Mike Rapp.

The meeting closed at 22:00PM

## **20 Date of next meeting**

**Next WRT Council meeting: - Monday 4th February 2019 at 7:30PM at Witton-le-Wear Community Centre.**