

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT) MEETING

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at Witton-le-Wear Community Centre, Monday 31st October 2016.

The meeting started at 19:35PM.

Those present

Kevin Richardson – Chair
John Askwith
Peter Baker
Peter Kearsley
Richard Maughan,
Gerry Mudd
Steve Raine
Paul Wilson
Mark Woodhams
Tony Slack –Secretary

1 Apologises for absence

Mike Wood

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the 3rd October 2016 meeting were approved by the Directors with the following corrections:

- Item 7 1st sentence – the date was the 3rd October.
 3rd Para – add % to the interest rate.
 CDCF is County Durham Community Foundation.
- Item 10 1st sentence should read There was no progress to report.....
 The following statement requires adding. - Council noted that Clair Blakey had been approached by the Chairman with a view to her being co-opted onto the Board of Trustees and had declined because she had a conflict of interest being an employee of the CIC.
- Item 14 Minor spelling corrections.
- Item 16 point 1 – should read ...there are possible contraventions.....
 Point 2 - the Environment Agency were working on a salmon run.
 Point 4 – add ...to the bridge....
- Item 17b There were no Presentations planned.

Proposed: - Mark Woodhams

Seconded: - Paul Wilson

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

The offer of a Wrigley Trolley for restoration.

4 Identify any other business to be discussed in Item 18

Trust sponsorship of the G5 group for membership of the Heritage Railway Association.
Trust Patrons.
Magazine Producer.
PPE for volunteers.
People of significant control.

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No changes.

6 Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave a verbal report.

Yesterday (30th October) we completed the running of heritage trains with our annual Hallowe'en special. Today the 1st Class coach "Nina", the Sentinel shunter and the Bubblecar were all scheduled to return to Wolsingham

depot for overwintering. As time allows, we will carry out maintenance of these vehicles in preparation for next year.

The planned work to Stanhope station canopy is still to complete. Some paintwork is needed on the new corner finials, which we will finish as time and weather allow, together with some temporary strengthening work to the front main beams.

Most of our operational staff have now successfully completed the introductory course for the new rule book, which come into force tomorrow, 1st November 2016. Well done to all concerned.

We have been approached by members of the G5 group with a view to purchasing their BG brake coach, which is currently stabled at Wolsingham depot. It is our intention to discuss ways of financing such a purchase, and we will, of course, carry out due diligence prior to making an offer.

The roster for operational duties for Polar Express is well in hand; thanks to all who have volunteered their time to help make this important event a success.

Finally, I would like to extend a special thanks to our colleague and Trust Secretary, Tony Slack, for the time given recently to update the membership database, as well as preparing and despatching all the BTL magazines (complete with renewal forms and membership cards), at the same time as preparing for this meeting, as well as the AGM.

Proposed: - Gerry Mudd

Seconded: - Richard Maughan

7 Treasurer's report

Income this month has been dominated by the Gift Aid donation from WRHSL of their net profits in the year ending 31st January 2016 of £5681.84. The stated donation in the annual accounts is greater as it includes also the platform surface, fencing and signage at Witton.

Other income:

Subs, donations and shop:	£1384
Lottery	£14 (short month)

Total income **£7080**

Expenditure:

Final canopy payments:	£4289
Container hire	£50.40 (ex vat)
Wood £	£104 - Purchased and used by John Lewins to make the finials for Wolsingham cabin

Postage machine top-up	£150
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Total Expenditure **£4616**

Balances

Barclays	£16,409.17
DBS	£30,587.06
Total	£46996.23

The Treasurer extended thanks to John Lewins for the manufacture of the finials for Wolsingham station cabin.

The Treasurer noted that the cost of the Franking machine equals approximately £190 per annum. With falling membership, costs for postage have fallen to a point at which the savings made by franking may no longer be cost effective over the purchase of postage stamps.

The costs/benefits are to be monitored, including the costs of the complimentary copies of BTL.

Proposed: Richard Maughan

Seconded: Steve Raine.

Council agreed that 25 copies of the Trustees Annual report will be available for the AGM.

8 Trust Shop

The Trust shop continues to be a worthwhile activity but the fluctuations in daily takings are quite wide.

9 Secretary's Report

The Quarterly Business Survey has been submitted to the Office for National Statistics.

The Trust has been served, in error, a personal injury claim from a party whom injured themselves whilst walking on railway property. A response has been sent to the solicitors concerned pointing out that the Trust is not the owner of the railway infrastructure and is therefore not the responsible party.

The Trust has received a letter from Mrs Anita Savory requesting a raffle prize for a fund raising event. Council resolved that a voucher redeemable for a family ticket should be sent.

AGM

Delegates will be able to visit Stanhope station should they wish but must leave in good time for the Polar Express event.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided by Peter Baker.

The raffle will be conducted by Mark Woodhams.

Bill Warriner is to be asked again for a CIC delegate to provide an update to the meeting.

There were no equal opportunity or discrimination issues to discuss.

10 No 40 Report

McEwens have been contacted with respect to the intended completion date of the boiler renovation and have stated categorically that completion will be early Spring 2017. It was suggested that some photos of the work to date be available for the AGM, possibly to include the advanced state of the chassis and bottom end.

A visit to McEwens is to be considered.

There have been no further meetings of the Steam Group.

11 Projects/Restoration Activities

The restoration of the Stanhope Station Canopy is complete with the exception of the corner finials. A temporary fix is proposed for the main support beams. The order has been placed on the contractor to undertake the repairs identified to the east gable end.

Broadwood crossing cabin has been identified as belonging to the WRCIC.

12 Projects

The Trust has been approached by the G5 Group with intention of offering their BG coach for purchase. A purchasing scheme has been proposed by the G5 Group.

At this point in the meeting (20:40) Richard Maughan, Steve Raine and Peter Kearsley declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting.

The remaining Council members agreed that the Trust should express a serious interest in purchasing the BG brake coach as something similar will be required in order to facilitate steam services. A letter is to be sent to the G5 Group expressing the interest to purchase subject to due diligence, including a full physical assessment of the vehicle and costings to restore to serviceable condition.

Richard Maughan, Steve Raine and Peter Kearsley returned to the meeting at 20:55

A small grant application has been submitted. Paul Wilson is monitoring.

As part of the projects for 2017 the possibility of leasing the Eastgate section from the CIC is to be revisited.

13 Trust Promotion Drive

Gerry Mudd is assisting with the upgrade of the website. Work is progressing and January 2017 is the target launch date for the new site.

The National Railway Museum, Locomotion at Shildon was identified as a potential venue to promote the Trust and recruit new members. The exhibition dates for Locomotion are to be obtained. Action: Tony Slack

14 Volunteer Liaison Report

No report submitted by the Volunteer Liaison Officer.

Sunday gang continue to clear areas of track as agreed with Chris Bycroft.

As stated in the Chairman's report the 2016 Polar Express season is approaching. Ruth Carroll has issued the schedule of trains and the initial roster.

15. Membership Secretary's Report

The membership remains unchanged from last month but 70 renewals have been despatched with the last issue of BTL.

Cheaper alternatives for the membership card have been identified and will be presented at the AGM for approval.

Revised annual membership subscriptions will be presented for approval at the AGM.

The proposals are:

- Full £18.00
- Concessionary £14.00
- Joint £10.00
- Junior £10.00
- Family £40.00
- Life 60yrs+ £200.00 under 60yrs £350.00

Membership benefits over and above the quarterly BTL magazine will be:- free travel for Life members and 50% reduction in fares for all other membership classes.

16 Heritage Service 2016

As stated in the Chairman's report, the 2016 heritage service is now complete. Highlights for this season were the operation of the service to Witton-le-Wear and the introduction of the shuttle bus to connect the railway to the Flying Scotsman event at Locomotion. An initial analysis shows that passenger numbers were up approximately 10% on 2015 and that total takings were up approximately 25%. The 122 Bubblecar again gave exemplary service covering almost 4000 miles.

The approach to the NRM for the loan from the national Collection of the Class 108 DMU has been unsuccessful and additional traction is still being sought.

The Leaflet for the 2017 heritage service is being developed and printing costs have been received. It is the intention to have the leaflets available before Christmas this year. Aha will again be used for leaflet distribution.

17 Weardale Railway CIC reports.

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

There were no reports from the CIC management meeting.

18 Other reports from Trust Directors

18a Weekly Lottery/Fund Raising

A quiet month with no new members. The Lottery is to be promoted at the AGM.

18b Educational Activities

- Talks (Dates/locations)

One potential talk in 2017 so far.

- Presentations

None

- Publications.

Rebirth book. Ed Ellis of Iowa Pacific has agreed to write a new Introduction. Target publication date is Easter 2017.

- Magazine (Publication dates/content deadlines)

BTL94 February 2017. Content required by 19th January 2017

18 Matters Arising

There were No Matters Arising.

19 Any Other Business

Council discussed and agreed to sponsor the G5 Groups application for membership of the Heritage Railway Association.

The Trust currently has no Patrons. A number of potential candidates were discussed and are to be followed up.

Action: Tony Slack

The print supply for the printing of BTL is being reviewed.

PPE is required for the Sunday Gang and other volunteers.

People of significant control. It is a legal requirement that Companies have a register of people of significant control but this may not be applicable to the Trust. This situation requires review.

The meeting closed at 22:25PM

20 Date of next meeting

Next WRT Council meeting: - Monday 5th December 2016, venue Witton-le-Wear Community Centre