

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT) MEETING

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at Witton-le-Wear Community Centre, Monday 5th September 2016.

The meeting started at 19:40PM.

Those present

Kevin Richardson – Chair
Mike Wood – Vice Chair (from 19:50)
Peter Kearsley
Gerry Mudd
Richard Maughan
Paul Wilson
Mark Woodhams
Tony Slack –Secretary

1 Apologises for absence

John Askwith, Peter Baker, Steve Raine

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the 5th September 2016 meeting were approved by the Directors with the following corrections:

- Item 2 Correction to spelling of Iowa in Item 20b
- Item 4 Clarification that the Trust representatives on the WRCIC Board do not need to be a member of the Trust Council.
- Item 8 Minor punctuation and spelling corrections.
- Item 10 Correction of the date for the AGM from 2106 to 2016.
Paragraph's 3 and 4 apostrophes required in Trust's.
Asterisk required on note for Corporate Membership.
- Item 12 last sentence: - insertion of "of" required between painting and some.
- Item 13 References to DCC should read the County Durham Community Foundation.
- Item 15 Spelling correction from provision to provision.
- Item 16 Spelling correction of site to sight.
- Item 17 Para 1 – 2nd sentence should read - ...23rd July which was coincident with.

Proposed: - Richard Maughan
Seconded: - Peter Kearsley

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

2017 Heritage Service.
Membership Subscriptions.

4 Identify any other business to be discussed in Item 18

Holebeck Caravan Park extension.

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No changes.

6 Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave a verbal report.

Last week was the final week of running mid-week services for the children's school holidays and due to the dedication of our team, we have, so far, managed to provide a service on all of the time-tabled running days. A well-deserved "thank you" to all concerned.

The draft of the new rule book has been issued for comment. The rules for PTS have been incorporated, albeit in a much more condensed form compared to the current system. The plan is to roll out the updated document prior to the start of the Polar Express season. We have been advised that Polar Express will commence a week earlier than other years, so that only gives a very short window of opportunity in which to update skills where necessary, as well as the many other preparations needed for such a major event. Our volunteers have been requested to give availability for filling the operational roles for Polar, and I would ask everyone to bear in mind the need to support this event, since it gives us the necessary leverage, in terms of man-hours, when negotiating track access for next year's heritage operation – our major source of income.

We have still yet to receive a response from the NRM, to our bid for the 108 unit that is expected to become available shortly.

Finally, due to an incident involving a small child falling from the train at Stanhope station recently, I would ask all of our staff to be extra vigilant when working on or about the platform, especially when small children are around.

Proposed: - Mike Wood

Seconded: - Paul Wilson

7 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer circulated the accounts prior to the meeting.

BTL was issued and we paid for postage and envelopes, then we paid £380 for the printing on the 1st September. A lottery draw was held with John Hargreaves winning £166.40. The prize is increasing as the number of participant's increases.

The Trust shop continues to add to the experience at Stanhope as well as providing a useful income. Mike Rapp stocked up early last month – a total of £220 and another invoice to come. The average daily takings for last month were nearer £65, rather than the £80 we have seen. There is high variability which does not follow the ups and downs of passenger numbers. We have seen or heard of the successful grant application submitted by Paul for the Stanhope Station canopy restoration. Thanks Paul - brilliant result. Unexpectedly, the £2000 awarded was paid to our account on Wednesday 31st August.

Balances today:

Barclays	£15,253
DBS	<u>£30,587</u>
Total	£45,840

The Treasurer is preparing the year end accounts as part of the annual report. The reporting standards are changing this year and the accounts can be prepared according to FRSSSE (Financial reporting standards for small enterprises), pronounced Frizzie, or according to FRS 102. Next year all accounts will have to follow FRS 102. Frizzie is simpler, but Waltons is recommending to all their SEs and charities, that they adopt FRS 102 now to save changing twice. I propose we report according to FRS 102. Neither Waltons nor the Treasurer can make that decision. Legally the board must decide. There is the on-going issue of the loan of £40,000 to the Railway Company, the Treasurer and our Independent Examiner would like it to be removed from the accounts. However they recommend that we do not write it off this year. However under FRS 102 we must revalue it. We must estimate when this will be repaid. To defer the issue I suggest a target repayment date in 20 years' time. Based on this the Treasurer has calculated £13,500 as the amount that the loan is worth now and also points out a benefit in that it would be easier to write off this lower figure next year.

Council resolved unanimously to adopt the FRS 102 reporting standards for this year's accounts.

A meeting is to be called between the Treasurer and Steve Raine to discuss the situation with the loan to the Company.

Council agreed a value of £22,000, for accounting purposes, for the station platform at Witton-le-Wear.

The WRHSL operating profit for 2015 is to be transferred to the Trust bank account'

Action: Kevin Richardson

Proposed: Mike Wood

Seconded: Paul Wilson

8 Trust Shop

This was covered in the Treasurer's report.

9 Secretary Report

Trust correspondence.

The Trust has received correspondence from the Heritage and Development Officer of the Locomotive Conservation & Learning Trust, the organisation that is restoring the NER J21 no 65033, as to whether the WR might be interested in hiring the locomotive once it's restored.

Council resolved to reply in the affirmative and to request that WR is informed on developments.

Action: Tony Slack

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.

2016 AGM

Directors were reminded of the AGM agenda and to prepare for individual sections. Further, contributors to the next edition of BTL were asked to ensure that articles are submitted in time to ensure that the Members receive their copies at least 14 days prior to the AGM.

Contributions to the annual report were also requested.

10 No 40 Report

McEwen's are now quoting mid to end February 2017 as the probable completion date for the boiler restoration.

A contact at the North Tyneside railway is willing to undertake Fitness to Run (FTR) examinations.

There have been no further meetings of the Steam Group.

11 Projects/Restoration Activities

The restoration of the Stanhope Station Canopy is planned to commence on the 12th September 2016 and is scheduled to take 27 working days, to be completed before the end of October. Lee Jackson Joinery is to undertake the removal and replacement of all the glazing bars using hardwood timber and to replace broken glass panes as required. An additional cost of £100 will be incurred for replacement lead flashing. The west end finial will also be replaced as part of this project.

The Company are to be contacted with respect to use of the scaffolding tower.

10% of the payment is to be withheld pending successful sign off of the completed project. Peter Baker is to sign on behalf of the Trust.

Repairs to the woodwork of the cabin at Wolsingham Station are to commence. John Lewins has agreed to manufacture 4 new finials. The Trust will cover the cost of materials.

12 Projects

The following were a number of projects for consideration in 2017:

Decking for the second half of Witton-le-Wear station platform.

The provision of a Halt at Harperley for walkers on the Weardale Way

The provision of a station at Paradise/Witton Park

The provision of a Halt at Holebeck/Kingfisher Caravan Park.

13 Trust Promotion Drive

Involving young people - Local colleges are a potential source of Engineering/Joinery apprentices to which the railway could offer work experience.

No progress on development of Trust website.

14 Volunteer Liaison Report

Sunday gang have been clearing the area between bridges 27 and 28 by Gasworks cottages and the lines of sight at Broadwood Crossing. The work schedule continues to be 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.

15 Membership Report.

No report for the membership. The previous Membership Secretary has still to hand over the database and associated documentation.

16 Heritage Service 2016

The figures for the takings from the 4 days when a shuttle bus was operated to connect the railway to the Flying Scotsman Shed Bash event at Locomotion, Shildon were presented. Takings were in excess of £3100 for the 4 days and represented an operating profit of £1200. The event was considered a success.

An analysis of daily passenger numbers over a sample number of operating days estimates that over 5400 passenger journeys have been undertaken so far this season. This should translate to an increase over the 2015 season. Takings to 31st August were £20689.70. Seven operating days out of a total of 75 so far had failed to break even. The variation in takings from day to day is quite large and with no particular pattern save for the days the service operates to Witton-le-Wear where the takings are consistently above average.

17 Weardale Railway CIC reports.

The last CIC Management was held on 4th August.

The following topics were discussed

- Bridge inspections will cost £17k and are scheduled for w/c 11 September.
- Wolsingham west cutting TSR to be increased to 10mph.

18 Other reports from Trust Directors

18a Weekly Lottery/Fund Raising

As reported in the Treasurers report there have been no Lottery winners therefore a draw of names was made with John Hargreaves being the successful winner.

18b Educational Activities

- Talks (Dates/locations)

09/09/16 – Bishop Middleham LHS

11/10/16 – Spennymoor Probus. U3A

17/10/16 – Wensleydale Railway Association.

- Presentations

Photo Display and information/leaflets Frosterley Village Hall August Bank Holiday w/e
Display boards booked for Darlington Crown Street Library

- Publications.

Rebirth book. Update can be contained within current pages. (No increase in pages) Likely to change some photos, amend text and add new text. Look to have this available for Easter 2017 and go back to original cover price of £5.00.

- Magazine (Publication dates/content deadlines)

BTL93 October/November 2016. *Contributions required by 13/10/16 at the latest.
Despatch by 28/10/16 at the latest.

19 Matters Arising

2017 Heritage Service.

A draft timetable and calendar for the 2017 Heritage Service was discussed. The principal change to the 2016 timetable is the removal of the Thursday high season operation and the introduction of a modified Witton-le-Wear timetable to run on all 77 proposed running days. It was questioned if the proposal had been costed, which it had not. Costings to be worked up.

Action: Tony Slack

Membership Subscriptions.

The draft proposal for changes to the membership subscriptions is to be finalised and ready for presentation at the AGM. This will require ratification by Council at the October meeting.

20 Any Other Business

The plan by the owners of Holebeck Caravan Park to extend the size of the site and increase usage is under review by the WRCIC management team.

The meeting closed at 21:50PM

21 Date of next meeting

Next WRT Council meeting: - Monday 3rd October 2016, venue Witton-le-Wear Community Centre (to be confirmed).