

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT) MEETING

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at Witton-le-Wear Community centre, on Monday 4th March 2019.

The meeting started at 19:33hrs.

Those present

Kevin Richardson – Chairman
Peter Kearsley
Paul Wilson – Secretary
Mike Wood
Mark Woodhams
Bob Dingle
Tony Slack

1 Apologies for absence

Richard Maughan, Gerry Mudd, Simon Adams, Steve Raine

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the 4th February 2019 meeting were approved by the Directors with minor corrections.

Proposed: - Peter Kearsley

Seconded: - Tony Slack

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

Nil

4 Identify any other business to be discussed in Item 19

Medicals

The purchase of additional sum up device

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

There are no new conflicts of interest.

6 Chairman's Report

With the fast-approaching heritage season, and the upcoming AGM, there are a multitude of tasks that need addressing in the coming weeks. The exam on the 108 is well in hand and Witton gate is painted ready for installation. Once the 108 exam is complete, the unit can be handed over to be cleaned, and we will then concentrate on fitting Witton gate. The creation of the passing loop at Scotch Isle by the track gang is currently behind schedule but should be completed in time for our operations to Bishop Auckland.

We have received the Treasurers Annual Report (TAR) ready for signing and the accounts for the heritage service have been accepted and incorporated into the Trust accounts. Our thanks to Peter and Louise Baker for their valiant efforts in completing this in time for presentation at the AGM.

Tony Slack has issued the first request for operational volunteers to give their availability for the heritage operation, which commences on the 23rd of March. I join Tony in appealing for everyone to offer as much time as possible. We have much to cover, both in our own operations, and in supporting WRCIC in their commercial activities. All are essential for the future of the railway, so please help wherever you can.

At this point I would like to recognise the extensive time and effort that has been put into preparing this year's timetable leaflet. With it being a combined publication for our Trust heritage service and WRCIC's operations, much information has had to be incorporated, which has resulted in many visits to the publishers. A huge thanks to Tony for his efforts! Thanks also to those who have assisted by scrutinising and commenting on the various versions that were drafted. The leaflets are now complete and out for distribution.

I had a recent conversation with John Askwith, during which I asked for an update on the activities of the newly-formed Wednesday Gang. He has an extensive plan for work on all our stations and other infrastructure and has already attracted interest from members of the public in joining their activities. I am hopeful that this will result in as successful a venture as the Sunday Gang!

We still face challenges on the personnel front, both in terms of covering essential jobs within the Trust and in resolving certain issues with individuals. Despite these challenges, I am still looking forward to what I hope will be another successful season for us all.

Finally, we lost one of Weardale Railway's most loyal supporters recently, with the death of Munro O'Dell. It was very heartening to see so many of our volunteers at his funeral, as well as most of the WRCIC staff. It gave the impression of a very close-knit community and served as a fitting tribute to one of our own. My thanks to all who were able to attend.

Proposed: - Mike Wood
Seconded: - Bob Dingle

7 Treasurer's Report

Peter Baker shared the financial transactions since the beginning of the Trust's year (1st February 2019) and are as follows. There is still £19K to transfer from Heritage Services from 2018 running to transfer into totals.

Income (all figures below are in £)

Subs	50.00
Lottery	147.00
Gift Aid tax refunds	9,444.41
VAT refund	1,100.17

Expenditure (inc VAT where appropriate)

Website	86.88
Accounts package	14.40
Container hire	84.67
Garter redraw	24.00
108 loan repayments	2127.50

Balances

Barclays	£37,060.66
DBS	£17,982.14
Total	£55,042.80

13 loan repayment cheques were sent out, totalling £4277.50. So far 5 have been presented. 2 members have said they wish to convert their loan to a gift aided donation. The decision to make such a prompt repayment has gone down well.

Director's reviewed the draft Trustee Annual Report (TAR) provided by Louise Baker and made some amendments for the final version at the Trust Annual General Meeting on the 16 March 2019. These were;

- Amendment of Directors details
- Item 4 page 15, the donation from subsidiary, the difference should be less by £220
- Item 7 page 15, query same spending across columns 17&18
- Item 15 page 20, middle line figure does not tally with bank statement +£600 difference

All to points to be shared with Treasurer/ Financial Controller. Directors agreed to adopt the draft TAR subject to amendments listed.

Deed of Covenant discussed and agreed, signed copy provided to Financial Controller for records. Directors considered current Trustees linked to Heritage Services and highlighted the need to have greater independence from Trust board. Agreed that Jean Clarke be approached to ascertain whether she would take on a director role for Heritage Services.

The appointment of Treasurer is currently on hold until after the AGM.

Proposed: - Bob Dingle
Seconded: - Mark Woodhams

8 Trust Shop

Director's ratified the decision in support of Mike Rapp's request to order WR printed items, pens, pencils and mugs, the Trust shop has sold previous items like this and would like to re-stock. Agreed a maximum spend of £1.1K for this and £200-£300 on general shop stock.

Discussed the purchase of a sum-up car reader for sole use of the shop. There have been issues in the past when this has been used for shop purchases and train tickets. This would be £69, currently on offer. The decision has unanimous support from directors' present.

9 Secretary's Report

Planning for the Trust AGM is at an advanced stage; the venue, Welcome Building at Shildon has been confirmed, and costings for refreshments has been identified as £64.80 including VAT for 30 people. Support to proceed had been provided from director's via email. Director's discussed with the AGM being more central, we should be prepared for additional members to be in attendance, agreement at meeting to increase the booking for 40 people totalling £86.40, invoice to follow event. WRCIC Head of Operations has agreed to attend to feedback from a WRCIC perspective.

Following receipt of members putting themselves forward to stand as Director's there will not be a requirement to ballot members. There are 5 nominations for 6 positions on the Trust board.

The last 12 months of Trust council minutes have been sent to Louise and Peter Baker on 22 February for the preparation of the TAR.

Our annual affiliation to Witton le Wear Parish Council is due £20, Directors in attendance agreed to this continued membership, which allows use to use the facilities at Witton le Wear Community Centre for meetings.

The remaining 3 WRT polices that required standardisation have been completed and were signed off at March's meeting. To be uploaded onto the Trust website, in due course.

Tony Slack shared some recent correspondence he'd received.

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 is awaiting a response from Peter Baker regarding potential paper responses of the GDPR he may possess.

11 No 40 Report

There were no further updates, planned to have an update for the AGM.

12 Restoration Activities

The Wednesday workers group plans were shared at the meeting, highlighting some of the restoration activities in the pipeline for 2019. They will be working at Wolsingham, Stanhope and Broadwood projects, we hope they will be able to attract new members to help in coming months.

Directors spent time considering potential funding opportunities. Suggested that funding for shelters at Witton and Bishop Auckland West should be considered as a projects to progress. It's important to understand the value the CIC place on funding and whether they are happy to be included in any bids the Trust make. WRCIC board members to discuss at next CIC Management meeting.

13 Projects

The list of projects is as follows.

- Witton-le-Wear gate replacement. Gate and metal work have received several coats of paint in preparation for fitting. No date agreed for fitting yet, hoped that this can be done prior to heritage season commencing.
- 108 service and exam to finalise prior to handover for a through clean. Donated and remaining seat covers have received a shampoo and will be re-fitted after internal clean. Safety FCRASH items and extinguishers still need to be purchased. As Stanhope Platform 2 needs to remain clear the 108 will be cleaned from the depot. We have received portable steps from Locomotion to assist with this.
- All loco's have all been fitted with a GPS tracker. This will help insurance purposes as we run on WRCIC safety case. Directors discussed and considered the options for purchase. 1st option was £185+VAT and £10.90pm for 24 months or 2nd option £446 outright. Agreed 1st option to enable support and upgrades when available over the period.

- The remaining flower tubs as part of grant from DCC are being delivered on the 19 March to Stanhope.
- Sentinel shunter discussed with RMS locotec employee and a couple of items highlighted to improve reliability and preparation for driver for a fiver. We would need to get a quote for overhaul for air compressor. Re-paint discussed with the suggestion that NCB blue to match No.40 would be ideal.

14 Trust Promotion Drive

Mark Woodhams highlighted several events at which the Trust could be promoted. The Bishop Auckland Food Festival, Cycling event into Weardale in September, Armed Forces Day and Head of Steam event. Mark to progress and appeal for volunteers to assist.

Trust Social media and website continues to be maintained and updated regularly.

15 Volunteer Liaison Officer's Report

Bob advised that there have been 4-5 young people identified for TTI training, which is promising. He will email volunteers who joined the Trust towards the end of 2018 advising on getting involved with 108 cleaning and training to support operational roles.

The Sunday gang continue to clear trackside vegetation with sessions between Bridge 3 and Engineman's Terrace, with a further session planned to address the tree encroachment at Stanhope Station.

16 Acting Membership Secretary's Report

The current membership stands at a total of 428 with one new member joining this year. Membership renewals continue to be received with 35 members, out of 205 reminders, have renewed their membership following letters which were despatched with BTL 102. Further renewals are expected over the next few weeks.

A new pre-printed letter is being prepared which includes a peel able printed membership card, see draft sent by separate cover. This is printed one sided and the peel able portion has both front and back which once peeled fold together to form the card.

17 Heritage Services

The running calendar and timetable for 2019 leaflet for Heritage services has been printed and supplies were delivered to Aha on Wednesday 27th Feb for distribution starting in March. Group booking inquiries are coming in at a steady rate and we have one in March which is coincident with a service day and two in April which will require extra running. Both the latter are repeat business from previous years.

Requests for volunteer's availability have gone out and responses have been good to date.

18 Weardale Railway CIC Reports.

There have been no WRCIC Board meeting/telecons since the last meeting. WRCIC General Manager has kindly supported leaflet distribution by tasking staff with delivering them to Aha, who will support distribution regionally. The Trust will fund all the leaflet costs, this will support our cost contribution to the running of the railway.

Directors were provided with an update in relation to a confidential matter between a Trust volunteer and the CIC

19 Other reports from Trust Directors

19a Weekly Lottery/Fund Raising

During January and February 19, has probably been the closest any participant has come to getting a winning line on the lottery with two lines only being a single digit away. Will complete a draw as part of AGM if required. Mark Woodhams is considering taking over the reigns of the lottery after this.

19b Educational Activities

Talks:

No talks planned for 2019.

Publications:

Nil

20 Any Other Business

- Commemorative plaque for Munro O'Dell, the WRCIC are purchasing a plaque and we have been asked if we would like to share the cost of this, to be placed at Stanhope. Director's agreed to support this.
- Complimentary membership for Gareth Evans. He is supportive of what is going on at the railway, agreed.
- Approval of new reworked WRT garter, this had been circulated, both the black and white and colour versions look much clearer, Trustees approved.
- Approval of new peel able membership cards, sample provided looks better than previous versions used. Agreed to use once laser jet printer purchased.
- Provision of raffle prizes for AGM, All Director's agreed to donate a prize/s
- John Askwith recognition unanimously agreed to presenting this at AGM.
- BTL distribution, we currently order 500, there is excessive wastage, as we only use 380, to order 400 in future.
- Editor for BTL, to have further discussions with John Askwith to ascertain his willingness to continue past his original retirement date.
- As from April 19 the Government will cease to pay NHS indemnity for those conducting private work. Mike Wood is concerned that he may not be able to carry out medicals at the railway past this point if this is correct. He will update once his situation is clarified.
- Sum-up card reader purchases. There is currently an offer on, previously agreed an additional purchase for Trust shop, we have one for Stanhope Station, agreed to purchase one for use on the train (with own SIM card, so it will work without the need for a smart phone purchase.)

The meeting closed at 22:15hrs

21 Date of next meeting

Next WRT Council meeting: - Monday 1st April 2019 at 7:30PM at Witton-le-Wear Community Centre.