

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT)

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at the SDRYT Coach at Stanhope Station on the 24^h June 2014.

The meeting started at 19:30PM.

Those present

Richard Maughan – Chair
Peter Baker
Ruth Carroll
John Hargreaves
Kevin Hillary
Mike Wood
Tony Slack –Secretary

1 Apologises for absence

Gerry Mudd, John Askwith, Kevin Richardson, Graham Isom (WRCIC)

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the 27th May 2014 meeting were approved by the Directors as a correct and accurate record of the meeting with the following corrections.

Item 7, Para 7 a question mark is required at the end of the 2nd sentence.

Para 8 the Sentinel shunters weigh approximately 82 tonnes not 822 tonnes.

Item 10 Para 4 distributor should read distributor.

Para 7 WRSHS Ltd should read WRHS Ltd.

Item 15 The old Waiting Room should be referred to as The Education Room

Proposed: - Peter Baker

Seconded: - Kevin Hillary

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

The position with respect to the turntable at Darlington which belongs to the Trust requires discussion.

4 Identify other business to be discussed in Item 18

No A.O.B was identified.

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

A potential conflict of interest was discussed which will be discussed further at the next Council meeting.

6 Chairman's Report

We've achieved it! Two weekends of running Heritage Services and I have a cautious air of optimism about it all. Operating costs are being covered, our customers are giving good feedback and all of our volunteers appear to be happy and enjoying themselves. The support from WRCIC continues and we have a good working relationship with them. Thanks to everyone for all the hard work in setting this up and for the continued hard work that is going to be needed for the rest of the season. We must not rest on our laurels though; we need to be thinking on how to build on this solid start and indeed what we are going to be doing next year? We will have a working steam loco next year, so we need to consider how this will fit in with our plans. Fingers crossed; let's hope the solid start we have made continues.

Proposed: Ruth Carroll

Seconded: Kevin Hillary

7 Treasurer's report

The figures for the Trust's accounts for the period from 27th May were circulated to the Council.

It has been a quiet month generally for the Trust's accounts. Membership subscriptions have come in a steady stream, many with donations.

The shop has done well during the quiet time at the station, takings improving for the two weekends of the train service, which is beginning to show. The shop staff are to be thanked (again) not only for this income, but for maintaining the Trust's presence at the station.

These elements, together with a tax refund for Gift Aided donations bring our income for the period to £3800.

On the expenditure side, the sums are routine: Hire of container in the depot during No40's restoration, BTL, restoration costs on No 40 itself (the lion's share of that being the piston rings).

There is also an item for repairs. This is the loyalty package for the postage machine. It was agreed not to subscribe to this, but it transpires that Royal Mail require postal rate updates to be installed on registered machines. Neopost charge £70 for this service which is free to loyalty package members. The package also includes an ink cartridge each year, which cost about £80 last year, and of course a repair/replacement contract. It is proposed therefore to subscribe to this service.

WRHSL had unusual problems opening a bank account, the upfront costs, so far, and the receipts from fares have therefore come through the Trust's accounts. This is being treated as an inter-company loan which is expected to be fully repaid in due course. WRHSL's bank account should be set up in the near future.

Cash balance today is £27486

Proposed: John Hargreaves

Seconded: Ruth Carroll

8 Shop

There has been a request for a small quantity of funds to be released to restock some items in the shop.

9 Secretary's Report

Very little to report.

A member identified an opportunity for the provision of a filing cabinet free of charge to the Trust for use in the office at Stanhope Station. Consequently a letter was addressed to the members' supervisor explain the trusts shortage of secure filing.

A letter of thanks is to be sent to the retiring Membership Secretary for his dedicated services as both the Membership Secretary and custodian of the Trusts' website.

A letter of thanks is to be sent to the proprietor of Bishop Trains for his kind donation of a set of wheelchair ramps to allow disabled passenger access to the train.

A disciplinary matter from 2013 is to be reviewed.

Health and Safety – There were no Health and Safety items to discuss.

There were no Equal Opportunities/Antidiscrimination items to discuss.

The Secretary's report was approved by the Directors

Proposed: Kevin Hillary

Seconded: Mike Wood

10 Heritage Services 2014

A Press launch day was undertaken on Wednesday the 11th June where the local press business interests, including the Weardale Visitor Network. The event was a success and the guests were very supportive of the venture particularly the editor of the Weardale Gazette which has ran a half page article in the following edition. An interview was also conducted with BBC Radio Tees that was broadcast on the morning of the first day of operation.

Heritage Services commenced running as per the advertised timetable on the 14th of June. As reported by the Chairman operating costs are being covered.

The Bubblecar hire charges for May have been paid and a statement for the June costs is in preparation. A consignment of diesel fuel was delivered directly into the fuel tanks of the unit filling them completely. It is proposed to monitor fuel usage as the service continues to determine the fuel cost per trip.

The reporting relationship between the Trust Council and WRHSL was discussed and the M and A's for the Heritage Company are to be examined.

Action: Tony Slack

11 Number 40

Work on the frames is progressing well, the pistons are installed and the connecting rods and one cylinder cover are planned to be fitted tomorrow (25th). The valves should be timed over the next two to three weeks. The one major item that is delaying the project is the late delivery of the completed boiler. A meeting with the representatives of RRNEL is required to discuss the situation with the boiler both financially and in terms of a new realistic completion and delivery date.

Action: R Maughan, K Richardson

12 Restoration Activities

12a Carriage and Wagon

No C&W restoration work was undertaken this month.

12b Infrastructure

No infrastructure work was undertaken this month.

13 Volunteering and Membership

Membership Report

The renewals are still coming in slowly. Up to the end of May there are 74 outstanding members who have not renewed. One of those is Julian Shepherd who does the lottery. His membership was due for renewal on 1st March 2014.

We have had a new member and also a returning volunteer has just taken up Life Membership. Therefore including the people who have not renewed the total membership is 633 if we remove these there are 559 paid up members.

A request for Corporate membership for the SDRYT has been received. Following discussion it was agreed that the decision taken at the February Trust Council meeting to discontinue Corporate membership should stand. Individual membership applications will be welcomed.

Volunteer Report

It has been really nice to see all the volunteers around the station and on the train. Wolsingham is looking tidier thanks to the intrepid band that worked there. Thanks to Alison for organising the operational roster and Tony for the Ticket Inspectors. Operationally we seem to have enough volunteers but we do need more volunteers to help out manning Wolsingham Station and Stanhope Ticket Office. Today at Wolsingham there were a couple of youths hanging around when I was manning the Ticket Office building. They sat around for quite a while. A policy needs to be put in place about lone working at Wolsingham and who volunteers can contact and how often they should check in. The Community Police Officers should be requested to call in occasionally and have an increased presence to deter the youths that hang around. This is a matter that will be raised at the management meeting tomorrow.

There is a need to make sure we keep on top of keeping the stations tidy and also the general maintenance of the buildings. The bubble car also needs a clean once a week after it has been out running and I am endeavouring to set up a roster for this. At the moment I am not having much success in finding volunteers but I will persevere.

The competencies are progressing really well but there are still some outstanding rule book tests to come in. These are being forwarded to Graham Isom for marking.

Route Knowledge is the next item to be actioned. I will also speak to Graham about PTS cards which incorporate medical expiry date and current competencies.

Thank you to Mike for carry out medicals on a weekly basis. We have a few people left to go and I have started with drivers. I have uploaded the form that needs to be filled in on HOPS so people can download this when their medical is due.

14 Projects

No project work was undertaken this month.

15 Weardale Railways Trust Activities.

A recent new member with building experience (**Keith Laverick**) is to be asked to examine the Education Room floor with a view to a restoration project.

There was a request from the G5 Group for the Trust to consider purchasing the G5 Support Coach over a 4 to 5 year period.

16 Weardale Railways CIC Reports

There were no reports from the CIC management meeting.

There has been a request for the Trust carriage Nina to be moved to Stanhope Station as extra seating capacity for the café. A method statement is in preparation.

17 Other Reports from Trust Directors

17a Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

Arthur Temple remains committed to the running of the lottery.

17b Educational Activities/Talks/Publications/Magazine – (John Askwith)

Talks

There are no plans for further talks/presentations until next year.

Publications

BTL 84

- Content required by the 24 July 2014
- Despatch date is the 8th October 2014 with notification of the date for the next Trust AGM (8th November 2014)

BTL 85 must be received by Trust members at least 14 days before the date of the AGM which will dictate contribution and despatch dates.

18 Any other business.

The Trust turntable at Darlington Bank Top is in the way of proposed track redesign by Network Rail. NR have requested that it be removed to allow their plans to proceed. This is a task that is beyond the means of the Trust at this time. It was agreed that rather than see NR cut the turntable up for scrap enquiries would be made to see if any other preservation group would be interested in the turntable.

The meeting closed at 10:40PM

18 Date/time of the next meeting will be on Tuesday 29th July 2014 at 7:30PM, venue is the Tindale Room, Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre, Bishop Auckland.