

WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY HERITAGE TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of Board of Trustees held on 16th March 2023 at 5.30pm by Zoom video conference.

Present: Mike Thompson (Chairman) (MT) Steve Williams (SW)
Don Fraser (DF) Geoff Evens (GE)
Matt Jackson (MJ) Ian Coleby (IC)
Helen Anson (HA) Martin Brown (MB)
Ian Camp (IDC) John Waters (JW)

724. Apologies

Action

None. The Board introduced themselves to John Waters and welcomed him to the Board

725. Conflicts of Interest

No new conflicts of interest were recorded.

726. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26th January 2023

These were agreed as a correct record.

727. Matters Arising:

i) Museums (valuations, events & winter plans)

IDC advised that work still ongoing on valuations. The current insurance limit was noted. DF is speaking to a local specialised insurance agent to get their opinion. He will follow up. Item to be carried forward.

DF

ii) 2023 Museums Programme

IDC has met with MJ and decided that the weekend event with the Taunton Model Railway Group will be held in September. There will also be events on the 40s and 60s weekends, subject to confirmation. We have offered the PLC all the facilities of the museum. The 'loco of the Month' display will be moveable throughout all the stations. IDC is hopeful that the museum will be used as a reception point for the evening QB trains. IDC will speak to Lee Robbins.

IDC

iii) MRG 25th Anniversary Event

MJ and IDC met with the Taunton Model Railway Group Chair. The TMRG has agreed that their club house will be free on the date. Hopefully, this will be held in September. All testing was completed on Tuesday night ready for the opening day.

MJ

iv) Blue Anchor refurbishment – update.

Works temporary on hold at BA. Will recommence on railway opening. Still on target for May opening. There is a need to give some thought to

the form and timing of any formal reopening ceremony. HA will order the audio-visual equipment beginning of April.

IDC/HA

v) **Gauge Museum office enhancement**

HA and her parents have been working on the project. Due to the condition of the walls, new shelving will need to be self standing. HA is hopeful that the work will be completed in time for the reopening of the railway.

HA

728. Finance.

DF had distributed the reports to the Board. There were no significant issues to report and Trustees had no points to raise at this stage. DF is now working on end of year accounts. He also made a proposal to increase the level of reserves and this was approved by the Board.

DF

729. Heritage Carriages Programme.

i)The Board considered the paper prepared by JW. Key points to note were:

- 3639. 60% of the timbers for the superstructure have been manufactured with the final timbers being delivered the following week.
- 9038 – Board is happy that 9038 could be available for photo shoots at the Gala at BL rather than MD due to concerns re security/vandalism etc. MT will liaise further with the PLC GM.
- 6705 – Hoping to move up to BL in time for the Gala.

MT

ii) Sherrings Yard licence.SW advised that it is a more complicated process than first thought. All the necessary information had been passed to the Trust solicitor to negotiate with the PLC lawyer. Draft licence will cover a 20 year period with the annualised and full period costs noted. The Board asked that there be a break clause after 10 years. Board confirmed its approval to enter into the licence.

SW

iii) Williton restoration shed .JW has obtained a revised quote and drawings from the manufacturer. Following discussions with the PLC it had been agreed that the Shed and workshop which would be in the SW corner of the yard as part of the dedicated space allocated to the Trust and to the new licence. There is room for double track with a physical connection to the North Yard. Following discussion, the Board approved the Project as a whole in principle but asked that it be taken forward on a phased basis confirming the previous decision on initial financial allocation (including planning and enabling fees). It was also agreed that LHC should continue to be our specialist adviser. It was also recognised that a targeted fundraising campaign would be required to complete the whole project. MT, SW and JW to lead.

MT/SW/JW

iv) Carriages at Dunster West – JW reported that the carriages are now safely covered and they will not affect the running line.

730. Special meeting of Trustees.

The Board agreed the draft minutes prepared by SW.

Fundraising – SW suggested that a small sub-committee be formed to discuss the matter. This was supported by the Board.

SW

BL – SW has met with Chris Austin and will develop a revised proposal for a phased approach to the Platform 1 Development beginning with the Cattle Dock. SW will consult the Board on his return from holiday. SW

Station House – MT updated the Board on current developments. Subject to further discussions with the PLC, revised proposals will be presented to the Board for consideration in due course. MT

Footbridge at BL – MT has spoken to JJP and advised that the Trust would prefer not to fund the move to WSR if the PLC do not want the footbridge. Discussions are still ongoing. SW to discuss further with PLC. SW

731. Trust membership and operational funding.

The Board received a discussion paper from IDC. It was agreed that this be deferred to the next meeting. IDC/SW

732. Museum Accreditation Programme.

The Board received an update paper from the Accreditation Working Group. GE advised that significant progress had been made with the application process and the Group were reviewing the overall organisational health of the charity using the Arts Council template. One of the key requirements was that there was a minuted approval of all the updated policies and procedures that GE had been working on and which had been agreed by email.

A schedule of these would be prepared for formal Board approval at the next meeting. GE/SW

733. Business Plan refresh.

SW advised that he is still awaiting submissions from some Trustees. He requested that all outstanding contributions be submitted to him by the end of March. A revised Plan will then be produced for approval by the Board. SW

734. Trust Corporate Governance.

In line with the requirements of Accreditation, SW will be updating the Register of Trustee Interests. SW

Date for 2023 AGM will be 2nd or 23rd September subject to the Auditors agreement to submit the accounts prior to month-end. Decision on preferred date to be made. SW

Reports and accounts will need to be drafted in April. DF/MT/SW

Charity Commission statement needs to be completed by 13th May. SW

735. PLC matters.

Tribble Bridge – Board agreed to contribute a lump sum to the fundraising campaign for the repairs. MT/DF

Letter to PLC on Trust Projects – this has been sent to JJP and the Board is hopeful of a positive response. MT

Staff briefing 4th March. Those present gave feedback to the Board on matters covered. Generally positive outlook for the forthcoming season.

736. Safeguarding and DBS certification.

Discussions have been held with the PLC regarding these matters. We need to ensure that the WSRHT is in line with PLC policy. Further discussion would take place off-line. Trustees

737. Any other business.

MT advised that a note re the HRA conference had been circulated.

IC advised that a second 'note of the tales' is to be produced and asked for any submissions to be sent to him asap. The Board approved the proposal.

IC

738. Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was agreed to continue to hold meetings by Zoom for the time being. The next meeting would be Thursday 25th May 2023 at 5:30 PM