

WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY HERITAGE TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of Board of Trustees held on 25th May 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) John Waters (JW)

Chris Austin (CA) Trust President was welcomed specifically for discussion of items 743 and 744

739. Apologies

Action

Ian Camp(IDC) and Martin Brown(MB)

740. Conflicts of Interest

No new conflicts of interest were recorded.

741. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16th March 2023

These were agreed as a correct record.

742. Matters Arising

Due to the pressing nature of items on the agenda, discussion of matters arising was deferred. Urgent issues would be handled outside of the Board meeting and others picked up on the May agenda.

ALL

743. Member Letter

The Board considered the letter received from a Trust Member. Following extensive discussion key points were confirmed and it was agreed that the Company Secretary should draft a response for circulation to Trustees. Assuming agreement, this would then be signed by the Chairman and sent by post.

SW

744. Williton and Washford

i) Sherrings Yard licence update

SW has now received a draft licence from our Lawyers. The proposed licence will be for 20 years at the agreed fee. There will be a break clause after 10 years. It was intended that the licence should be signed within the next 2 to 3 weeks. Trustees confirmed that the licence should be completed regardless of the outcome of the discussions about the Washford Yard site (see below).

ii) Discussions with Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust (S and D)

MTbriefed the Board on the current position including discussions with both the S and D and PLC Chairmen respectively.

iii) Next steps

Following discussion, the Board agreed the following:

- i) The licence for Sherrings Yard must be completed and signed as this was the base case for the Trust in terms of being able to continue its heritage carriage restoration programme. This had to include the necessary permission to build a restoration shed and workshop if the Washford Yard assets could not be secured;
 - ii) MT would pursue his discussions with the S and D Chairman;
 - iii) The regulatory requirements in relation to the operation of Washford Yard were noted;
 - iv) Discussions should continue with the PLC through MT and SW and,
 - v) Any proposals should be brought back to the Board for consideration and agreement. This may necessitate a special meeting.
- MT/SW

745. Finance

DF has circulated the finance reports. No further actions were required at this point. Another small legacy of £2,000 has been received.

746. 2023 AGM

Following discussions held with the PLC and Association, it was agreed to hold the AGM on the same day as their's i.e. Saturday 23rd September. The Trust AGM would commence at 10am and last for 90 minutes (formal meeting plus presentation and Questions and Answers). SW would co-ordinate and brief the Board.

SW

SW also confirmed that the Directors Report and Chairman's report were now almost ready. DF confirmed that the accounts were with the External Independent Examiner. AGM papers now needed to be put together and this would be co-ordinated by DF and SW.

DF/SW

747. DBS Certification

The papers from GE and HA were considered. Having reviewed the procedure required, HA advised that full DBS is not required for all volunteers, however, it was considered best practice that all volunteers should have the basic level of certification. SW advised Trustees that John Robinson had kindly agreed to co-ordinate the whole process on behalf of the Trust and his offer was gratefully accepted. SW to communicate.

SW also suggested that the work be overseen by The Accreditation Working Group and this was agreed by the Board.

SW

748. Review of Policies

SW explained the context for the papers summarising the schedule of Policies previously approved by Trustees but outside formal Board meetings. The Board approved the paper and the recommendation that approval of all the Policies considered thus far should be formally minuted. Future policy approvals will also be handled in this way.

SW

749. Any other business.

IDC has been offered the picnic tables by the Company that provided them for the Gala Days. £1,000 has been quoted. All agreed to the purchase.

IDC

One item is being added retrospectively to the Board minutes in order to formally minute its approval which has taken place outside of the normal meeting.

i)2023-25 Business Plan.

The updated Business Plan was approved by the Board and it was agreed that this be circulated to Members, Volunteers and WSR stakeholder bodies as well as being published on the Trust website and Facebook page.

SW

750. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 27th July 2023 at 5:30 PM