

WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY HERITAGE TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of Board of Trustees held on 28th March 2024 at 5.30pm by Zoom video conference.

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

In Attendance -Les Blake (Minutes) Chris Bolt (Membership)

795. Apologies. Ian Coleby **Action**

796. Conflicts of Interest

No new conflicts of interest were recorded.

797. Membership Development Proposals

The Board welcomed Chris Bolt to the meeting. Chris presented a paper with a range of proposals in relation to Trust Membership. The Board supported the recommendations and agreed that Chris (working with Don Fraser and Steve Williams) should proceed to develop specific initiatives further for implementation. Any policy issues would be brought back to the Board. Chris then left the meeting.

CB/DF/SW

798. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16th November 2023

These were agreed as a correct record.

799. Matters Arising

1) Volunteer Wash Up Session

Had taken place on 16th March. No issues raised.

IDC

2) Horse Box Project

The Wagon Group has withdrawn their support due to lack of volunteers. SW is talking to the PLC.

SW

3) BA Renovation progress and reopening arrangements .

Still some structural issues outstanding. The Board noted that John Anson had kindly agreed to assume Project Manager responsibilities. Further contact would be made with the PLC for them to take action following a site meeting on 25th March. The re- opening will have to further be delayed until this issue is resolved.

Board to note that Mike Thompson has taken over the lead for PLC discussions working with John Anson and Ian Camp

MT/IC

4) Learning and education programme

A new trail has been launched. HA is working on a new puzzle book to be sold in all the railway shops. Several schools are expressing interest

in visits.

HA

5) BL Museum electrics.

IDC is speaking to Pete Chilcott following the report issued by our Electrician. MB voiced his concern over the state of the electrics.

IDC

800. Williton and Washford

MB presented the risk assessment on Washford jointly developed with the HCPRT. Significant progress had been made in line with arrangements agreed with the PLC. Further work would be undertaken on this alongside a process of continuous implementation...

JW has circulated the latest Fit Out Plan for Washford. It was noted that the Dunster carriages would be moved in the near future on a nonrunning day. Most of the tools had now been moved from Williton. One of the issues that needs to be addressed at Washford is site security. JW is working on proposals to bring back to the Board.

JW

801. Finance

DF has circulated the finance reports. He is working on the annual accounts at present. No significant issues were identified by the Board.

Budgets – DF will be contacting the Dept Heads for input. Draft budgets to be issued over the next few months.

DF

Fit out plan – the overall plan for a move from WN to WF and upgrade machinery has been distributed in summary form. The Board agreed the budget for the fit out plan and authorised JW to proceed.

JW

Trust Agreements with the PLC- SW advised the Board that he and DF had been approached by the General Manager with a view to updating the current suite of agreements (reflecting also the move from Williton to Washford). One of the significant elements was a proposed major increase in energy costs at BL. The General Manager had been asked to provide evidence of this in relation to Trust use of energy on Platform 1 and this information was awaited. The Board would be kept abreast of developments and would be asked to approve any revised Agreements. SW will lead on redrafting and negotiation with support from DF.

SW/DF

Income Generation- SW reminded Trustees of the need to press on with identifying income generation opportunities preferably on a recurrent basis in line with the proposals in the Finance and Governance Group paper. He reminded the Board of the need to begin to develop project proposals for appeals and external fundraising including corporate sponsorship, proposals for which would be developed jointly with Chris Bolt. Any suggestions to be relayed to SW for discussion.

All

802. Governance.

a) Accreditation.

GE advised that the BL Emergency Plan has been completed. MB will meet with GE within the next 10 days to discuss the plan. Unless there were

any further significant issues with the Plan (Board Trustees to comment within 10 days), then subject to the outcome of the meeting, the Plan would then be published on the Website and included within the Accreditation application library suite. Due to the situation at BA, this would be brought back to the Board later once the Museum site was operational and could be re-inspected.

GE/MB

b) Safeguarding.

The draft Safeguarding Policy was presented to the Board by JR. Following discussion it was agreed that the Policy be adopted and that JR would be responsible for overall implementation and control. There were some minor adjustments to be made and JR would issue a supplement to the Board to cover these.

JR

c) Corporate Risk Register (CRR)

MB presented the first draft of the CRR. SW proposed that initial comments on the Register should be received within two weeks of the meeting back to MB. This was agreed.

ALL

803. Long Service Awards

12 awards have been received from the PLC. These will be presented to the volunteers at a later date.

SW

804. Any Other Business.

SW advised that the Business Plan will be updated and redistributed over the Easter holiday with the intention, subject to any final Board comments that it would be published shortly after for implementation. SW also proposed and the Board approved, that the Plan should now be updated biannually rather than yearly.

SW

805. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 30th May 2024 at 5:30 PM by Zoom.