

## WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY HERITAGE TRUST

**Minutes of the meeting of Board of Trustees held on 30th May 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 Colby (IC)  
Martin Brown (MB)

**806. Apologies.** Les Blake (Minutes), Ian Camp (IDC) **Action**

### **807. Conflicts of Interest**

SW reported that he was to undertake 2 elements of Voluntary Consultancy 'Commercial in Confidence' work for the WSR PLC. He confirmed that if any conflict of interest arose with his WSRHT role he would stop the consultancy role.

**SW**

### **808. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

These were accepted. One additional comment from John Robinson was made, being that he wanted to make clear that the 'Supplement to the Safeguarding' document that he had written and which was agreed, would be for internal guidance and would not be published. A question was asked by Geoff Evens about publishing MT's recent note on BA, it was agreed to do this.

**GE**

### **809. Matters arising**

**Membership Development** : DF reported on this, explaining the details from the Membership report. Newsletter 17 has gone out. There are 96 current members. Chris Bolt has been making progress, but not all members have current emails, and further chasing is being done. It was wondered if MT should add his name to any letter. This was agreed and GE suggested use of MailChimp as this shows much more detail of the recipient.

**CB/MT**

**Horse Box Project update** : SW explained that the PLC had been unable to attend a planned meeting, so a new date was needed.

**SW**

There is a need for an indicative cost for the renovation. However there was a strong feeling that 3639 had to take priority over any work on the Horse Box. With the understood projected cost for 3639, and possibly more being required if the present programme was not met, this work needs a proper fund raising programme. SW to consider how this can

be developed **MT**

**Trust Agreements with the PLC** : Feedback from the PLC was still awaited particularly with regard to the issue of energy costs at BL and the Trust share of those on Platform 1. This will be followed up. **SW**

**Long Service Awards** : Agreed that the event would now be held on 11<sup>th</sup> July at the Gauge Museum. Details to be issued. **SW/IDC**

## **810. Museums**

**BL Museum** : The report from IDC was taken as read, and with Ian not present, any questions Trustees wanted to raise, need to be raised with him outside the meeting **ALL**

**BL Electrics** : This had led to some email correspondence in the Trust in the past few weeks. MT took the lead on this item at the meeting. He wanted to get a proper joint meeting with the PLC. For this some proper estimates were needed for what is essentially a job of rewiring the BL museum, JW suggested the electrician that has checked our Washford. Agreed that estimates were needed to inform the meeting with Pete Chilcott. **MT**  
**IDC to follow up  
JW lead**

**BA Museum Renovation and Reinterpretation Report** : The report tabled by HA/SW showed how hard this work had been and how costs have escalated, the report was clear and was commended. Of the new Information Boards 75% are unusable, and will need to be reprinted. Agreed MT to have a meeting with IDC to resolve how this will be managed. Painting had had to be redone 3 times because of the damp, and some equipment to remove the moisture was being looked at. On the movement of heavy items Robin Wichard and JW were in discussion. **MT/IDC**  
**RW/JW**

In the discussion that followed the need for clear planning was highlighted, with more definitive costings. As the Trust takes on more projects, more detailed Project management will be crucial. **All to Note**

However at this stage there was broad agreement that additional costs were needed to complete the works. The Board approved an additional sum to be added to the existing budget for that purpose.

We had not been successful with the Discovery Grant application, but informal feedback had been offered and will be used for future reference. **SW**

## **811. Learning and Education-update on 2024 Programme**

HA gave a verbal report. She has a packed diary covering outreach and

visits to the museum, and is really encouraged by repeat visits coming in. On the Website learning pack for Minehead 150 years extension, she has worked on this as PLC had not been able to find anyone. Lecture programme being developed too.

## **812. Finance**

DF ran through his report. Financially we are not in a bad place, but we have been spending a lot and this cannot continue without a significant fundraising effort in the medium term. We have picked up another legacy which is very welcome. DF did raise a concern that maybe we don't maximise funds on the museum because it is seen as part of the PLC and therefore part of the ticket already paid for. So maybe we need to make the difference clearer with signage explaining the museum is a stand-alone charity. We also need to be more innovative in how we capture donations and recurrent income. Rather than try to deal with this at the meeting it was agreed that this needs consideration by the Finance and Governance Group to work this through. SW agreed to organise this.

**SW**

## **813. Governance**

### **i) Accreditation**

Report produced by IDC noted. Key points picked out were progress on MODES which is well advanced, but there remain a few key points to develop, which will be quicker to resolve now GE is back. A number of elements need attention: Organisation Health is nearly done; user Experience/ Engagement is in progress; Access policy and plan has been drafted by SW and is ready for review by the working group; it is important that Emergency Planning is addressed, with GE/MB to work on this. The current aim is that by the end of 2024 the full draft accreditation application should be ready. We should be able to approach South West Museum Networks to push this forward. Contact will be made on this point in early autumn.

**IDC/GE**

**SW**

**MB/GE**

### **PR and Communications**

With Sarah Hayes having resigned we will need a similarly capable person to fill the role. The Trust will need to pursue any contacts it has, as well as readvertising. JR suggested that there may be other organisations we could approach such as the Institute of Marketing for contacts. With Sarah gone it was assumed that input to Fiveways was temporarily suspended. GE will follow this up. SW will review the role profile, seek comments from Trustees and then re-advertise.

**GE**

**SW**

### **Volunteering**

JR paper taken as read. JR expanded to cover the need for the

Washford Team Role Profiles, MB agreed to meet up and explain what had been done to date. General agreement that Spark Somerset video was worth developing further. We need to work more closely with the PLC to ensure that we join up when we can, can develop where they are not working on things, but ensure we do not duplicate. JR highlighted recruitment and succession planning, which he felt needed focus but with an agile and slimmed down approach. DF wondered if we should require volunteers to be members; but this was not felt to be a sensible step.

**MB**

### **Corporate Sponsorship**

There was agreement that we should develop an approach that would access corporate sponsorship, whilst making sure the Trust adheres to relevant charity laws. Agreed we should search for a Patron for specific projects and/or the Trust. Key to much of the next few years projects would be targeted fund raising, and where possible linking this into corporate sponsorship. Now is the time to start really developing ideas here, and it was agreed to send ideas to SW who would develop this. We should also watch how Robin Wichard is developing this within the PLC and Geoff Garfield with the Association.

**All to SW**

### **Membership Rules**

It is important that these are all formally agreed. SW,MT and DF to work on these off line and bring back in July.

**SW,MT  
and DF**

### **AGM**

The core reports for the AGM have been circulated by SW. Responses need to be sent to SW in next few days. DF suggested we sign these all off at July meeting and lodge them early. MT report approved at meeting. IDC, IC and JW all agreed to stand again for the Committee, and JR agree to be co-opted.

**ALL to  
Note**

### **814. Washford**

MB and JW spoke to the paper. There has been really good progress on fitting out the new workshop area. This means that it should be possible for restoration work to recommence in July. There is a problem with the WiFi connection and this is needed for the electronic sign in. The training plan on the generality of working at Washford is well on the way, but the detail on the wood work machinery needs more work; a meeting with a training provider is scheduled for next week. How this will all be captured on HOPS is being worked through with PLC.

**JW/MB  
to  
continue**

## **815. AOB**

The station staff at Dunster want to get rid of a number of items, perhaps the most important of which is the Ticket Printing Machine. MT and IC will follow up. While it is hard to get the card to print on, it is an important historic item, which does needs to be considered.

**MT/IC**

MT raised the washing and toilet facilities at Washford. This may be costly to build, but it needs to be considered for development and fund raising into 2025.

**MT**

Next Meeting : Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> July at 5:30 PM by Zoom