

Minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2016

1. Present : Chris Bligh, Lisa Bligh, Robert Deed, Claire Gladstone, Jan Godfey, Michael Ireland, Richard Proctor, Anne Johnson, Christine Marsh, Maureen McDonald, Bob Rush, Richard Searight, Paul Voaden, Derek Webber, and Julie Yelland.
2. Apologies: Tom and Sue Baxter
3. Minutes of the last meeting: approved and signed
4. Matters arising: There were no matters arising
5. Christine Marsh confirmed that £250,000 is still available for the Okehampton Parkway station from DCC.
6. Richard Proctor gave a summary of the Sunday Rover service. He reported that there had been 144 trains with overcrowding on 10 occasions with 42 standing when 1 coach was used. Time keeping was excellent, 71% of the passengers were local. The service was fully supported by everyone, GWR staff were extremely helpful and a letter of thanks should be sent.

Action. Michael will write and send.

Greatest thanks to Richard Proctor for his work. Richard has received a letter of thanks from Okehampton Town Council.

Richard Searight requested a copy of the electronic file from Richard for the press.

Anne Johnson stated that the Gunnislake bus service had now ended.

OkeRail database of interested people was suggested by Bob Rush.

7. The Hatherleigh bus had been successful and will aim to provide a service for four Sundays next year [2017]. It was also suggested a Tavistock bus link would be possible.

8. 10 Point Plan

Chris and Lisa Bligh outlined progress with the planning for a public consultation event and exhibition to be held in the Charter Hall. Okehampton on 12th November. It was noted that there needed to be an amendment to the map to link with Bere Alston.

Chris and Lisa Bligh reported they had met with Richard Proctor to discuss Polar Express issues. The following points were noted from the meeting.

- The two platform option is expensive but works
 - Mike Davies [Chair of OkeRail] needs to write to relevant bodies to secure support and funding to enable the platform to be built [Show both possible Station on plans].
 - The track could be split at Samford Courtney, but this would result in parking problems.
9. Bob Deed noted that Network Rail have 20 million for new stations, but a business plan is required by 25th November 2016. To make such an application we require expertise from DCC. The options were 1 million for basic station or 4 million for a full station. Match funding would be required for these projects.

It was noted that Aggregate Industries [owners of the line] are in communication with Christine Marsh.

Richard Proctor's survey data to be presented in graph form at the exhibition and consultation event.

Chris Bligh has revisited passenger numbers. Depending on the level of growth the line is viable with revenue outstripping costs. The calculations are based on the Tarka line and then on Richard Proctor's figures. It was noted that very few branch lines make money but Chris Bligh believes that within 10 years 3 coach trains will be necessary due to passenger growth.

Action Richard Searight to organise a press release.

Bob Deed tabled a press release from the Tiverton Gazette [4th October 2016] in which some of the 'facts' are incorrect, to put it mildly. Bob [Mid Devon District Councillor] will challenge this report at the next full Council meeting. Motion of support proposed by Chris Bligh and seconded by Jan Goffey [Mayor of Okehampton] All in favour.

South West Trains and First Group contacted

Advertising for Public Consultation Event – Chalk on pavement outside the Charter Hall.

Actions: Christine Marsh and Jan Goffey to write press release on social media. Bob Deed suggested an OkeRail leaflet to explain the groups role.

Reported that Christine Marsh had sent information to many areas; e.g. Hatherleigh Parish Pump and organise boards and tables.

10. Bob Deed reported on the Special Train to London on the 18th March. It is proposed to be an HST set from Okehampton to Paddington with a possibility of Pullman Restaurant car, the fare of approximately £40. Timings : Departure 07.20 or 7.50 am with a return to Okehampton Station by 21.25 or 22.10 hours, with Stagecoach bus connection.

11. AOB. At letter from Paul Cox [Department for Transport] to Ms Laycock [Hatherleigh Councillor] was read by Claire Gladstone.

Christine Marsh said we must have dates venues for future exhibition and consultation events.

Paul Voaden informed the group about the Launceston Railway Circle on 21st October in the Town Hall at 19.30 hours event to mark the 50th anniversary of the closure of the line;

Date of the next meeting to be confirmed.

Michael Ireland – Chair

Sunday, 20 November 2016