

SARPA Meeting

Tuesday 8th January 2019 at the Royal Oak Welshpool

Present:

Roger Goodhew, Sarah Harvey, Robert Knight, Ivor Morris, Bill Redfern, Richard White, Roger Whitehouse

Apologies:

Jeff Smith, Michael Williams

Minutes of the Meeting held at Aberystwyth on Saturday 1st December:

Sarah distributed copies of the December minutes that had been supplied by Jeff.

Corrections to the minutes: Roger Whitehouse reminded the meeting that he had furnished apologies to the December meeting in advance.

Ivor Morris and Sarah Harvey were present at the November meeting.

Regarding the actions from the minutes: It was assumed that Jeff had written to Ken Skates. Angus will write to Ben Davies with an invitation to attend a meeting making sure to give him plenty of notice.

Roger asked what a "Repair Café" is. It was explained that it is not a specific place but an event or gathering of people.

Robert proposed that the minutes be accepted; this was seconded by Bill.

Officers' Reports:

Chairman's Report: Jeff reported, by email, that he had sent various communications but everything had been more or less shut down over the holiday period.

Treasurer's Report: Bill reported that the bank transfer was ongoing. Since October Sarpa had broken even. Income had been £280.50 and Expenditure £281.49. Estimated Balance is £1,019.

One Newsletter has used up the income to date. There was discussion re the Newsletter. Robert asked how many Sarpa could afford. Bill said sending the Newsletter electronically involved little cost, however many members prefer paper copies and they are a major point of contact.

Robert Knight added they are useful publicity and copies left for collection are always taken.

Angus said 2 per year are too few Robert said 4 are too many. Robert requested **No** Newsletter in December as it is a very bad month not only inconvenient but extremely difficult to access postal services.

There was discussion about the use of colour and agreed it should be confined to the cover to minimise expense. Robert also highlighted the need to keep a limit of 24 pages otherwise the Newsletter is too thick and heavy. He thanked members for agreeing to these.

Performance on the Cambrian Line:

It was agreed that Sarpa should continue to press for improvements and complain when there is poor service. Roger Goodhew spoke of the reasons for this namely the failure of the previous franchise holder to replace old units but instead keeping them running, also frequent late delivery by engineers. He said TfW had been criticised on television but the fault lay elsewhere. They had done the right thing reducing the timetable and announcing in advance which trains were to be permanently cancelled.

Bill said another problem is lack of staff; the previous operator had neglected providing a service in order to make money. Roger identified a major problem: no one was in charge. There was discussion about finding information about reduced services as reasons given had been different on different routes. Roger G explained how to do this. Bill said the journey check worked well. Roger G said questions needed to be asked of Ben Davies. He reported that Mr Davies had been very positive at the Line Liaison meeting and that he had money!

Publicity:

Robert had proposed distributing fliers and is willing to do this.

Angus had previously reported problems with the website provider as the site has been moved to a different server. Angus also asked whether Sarpa should go on Facebook; Robert suggested a fuller debate. Roger G was concerned about misinformation. He referred to a claim that only 21 units in the new trains would have ERTMS saying it could not be correct. Angus reassured members that Facebook could be restricted.

There was debate about the new Sarpa logo. Angus will contact the head of the NPTC colleges; he is offering prize money of £100 if Sarpa will match it. The meeting agreed

that we should. Members could also contribute. Robert agreed to donate £20.

Design of Trains:

Robert and Bill made the point that the Cambrian line runs between Birmingham International airport and a major tourist area and commuter trains are not suitable for the amount of luggage involved.

Sarah mentioned the narrow nature of the steps; there will be double doors but it is the depth – front to back - which is a problem. Roger G said these matters can be raised when Ben Davies attends a meeting. Regarding refreshments members considered that slot machines were definitely not a good idea. There was discussion about buffet service and catering. Angus said the train operator needs a business plan for catering.

The meeting finished at 20.30 approx.