

1.

SARPA Meeting

Saturday 6th April 2019 Royal Naval Club Aberystwyth

Before the commencement of the meeting members held a minute's silence in memory of Peter King

Present:

Denis Bates, James Davies, Angus Eickoff, Philip Ellison, Roger Goodhew, John Harken, Sarah Harvey, Robert Knight, Ivor Morris Vice Chairman, Bill Redfern, Viv Skerm, Richard White Newtown Town Council), Michael Williams

Apologies:

Tony Harvey, Jeff Smith, Roger Whitehouse

Minutes of Meeting 5th March 2019

Correction Page 2 paragraph 1, penultimate sentence should read "a light rail link between Gobowen Station and the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt orthopaedic hospital" etc.

The minutes were approved.

Officers' Reports:

Treasurer's Report:

Newsletter: Each issue costs £220 printing and postage in line with what we can afford.

The transfer of banking is still ongoing so details of electronic payments not yet available. There needs to be discussion about how many issues are produced annually.

2.

Bill has put membership forms in with Newsletters - a move which was approved. Michael thought it sensible to have 3 issues, March, July and sometime in the autumn.

Denis suggested 2nd June for the next issue

Angus has updated the website. Facebook is going well with new people paying. A member asked if Sarpa could use Pay Pal. James believed it is good to be able to automatically renew. He reminded members that young people don't use cheques.

Bill explained that electronic transfer and standing orders are easy to arrange and available. Michael said some people do not like Facebook but standing order is a good idea and asked James to investigate but James pointed out that with a standing order the amount cannot be changed whereas direct debit is different.

Bill congratulated Denis on an excellent Newsletter: No 78. There was discussion about to whom the Newsletter should be sent and it was agreed not to send electronic version only; this was done when there was a limited print run James remarked.

Angus suggested putting the membership form in the Newsletter or on electronic copy or downloadable. An extra page could be added to the PDF. It could be printed on the "Join Us" page on the website. Robert informed the meeting that issue no 78 had been given out.

Roger G is due to go to group meetings in May. It is the Cotswolds group's 40th anniversary and many tributes have been sent to them including by famous people which have occupied 5 pages of their magazine. Mark Haslam has written a tribute. Angus added that it is a massive group. He then asked about Shrewsbury having a federation as their group had dwindled. Roger G said there's need for a group at Shrewsbury and at Chester.

3.

Performance on the Cambrian:

Members reported that train performance had been indifferent at times: there had been cancellations due to lack of guards. Angus explained that the ETC had failed at one time.

Sarah described delays at Wolverhampton and confusion at Shrewsbury when passengers had to alight from one end of the train on platform 3 then board it again at the other end.

Bill remarked that the system was better when the platform was clearly divided into sections a and b. Roger referred to signs near the door on the train itself. It was mentioned that the way trains split and join is good for our line. James suggested writing to Tfw about it; even if that's been done it is worth repeating. Angus said there are all sorts of different systems and Roger asked whether software is capable of the discrimination. In Wales it is integrated Angus added.

There was discussion about situations when two different announcements occurred at once as Ivor had experienced and it was agreed there was room for improvement with regard to passenger information. Ivor asked if the passage of a train set off the announcement and Roger told the meeting that at the monitoring point different trains are handled differently.

Publicity:

Denis recounted seeing a poster at Oxenholme station advertising for people to join their group and Robert added that they are very proactive there.

The new logo: Angus wants the competition for its design to coincide with the start of the academic year i.e in October/November. Robert thought timetables should include details of local groups.

4.

Design of new trains:

John Harken referred to the new trains and Ivor responded that they would be here in 2022. John asked when the new Bow Street station would be ready, when is it scheduled for completion. Robert stated next year. Roger mentioned the new timetables and there was debate about improving the speed of trains to allow for new station. Viv Skerm said there is extra time in Machynlleth and Angus that time waiting in passing places hold up trains.

Sarah read a letter from Jenny whose daughter living in Aberystwyth travels to see her in Leicester but cannot access the train toilet because she is disabled. Jenny asks that “ the new trains need to be designed for access by people who use wheelchairs and mobility scooters” as her daughter is not able to have a drink before travelling or on the journey “and finds the whole thing more exhausting than it needs to be.”

Michael suggested contacting Disability Powys and James added that this is the right time to raise the subject. Trains are designed by people with no experience of using them.

John pointed out that there are more disabled people than before. It was decided to contact Tfw. Michael will send a copy of the letter concerning disabled access to the County Council. Members were told that Russell George is hoping to attend a meeting and Angus said he could be invited to Welshpool or Machynlleth.

Roger asked about the abbreviation PRM on the chart on page 3 of the Newsletter. Philip Ellison explained that it stands for passengers with reduced mobility.

5.

Correspondence:

The letter from Patrick Adams about connections to Crewe was discussed and it was decided that it should be copied and sent to Ken Skates for his comments. Angus thought that Tfw are not keen on this proposal. It was said that Arriva had made progress as they had recognised the need for these services. Bill considered it a good idea but must beware of upsetting other trains by doing it. Ivor said the Chester train terminates at Shrewsbury and Viv that there are through trains at certain times.