REFERENCE T11/2004

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registered with the Charity Commission
Registered Number: 1169995

Minutes of Meeting #11 of the Trustees of The Railway Correspondence and Travel Society held via Video Conferencing on 15th April 2020
Commencing at 18.00 hrs

TRUSTEES PRESENT AT VIDEO CONFERENCING MEETING

ACM	Callum MacLeod	(Deputy Chairman – Chairman of the Meeting)
WGD	Gordon Davies	(Retiring Chairman)
WRG	Bob Green	(Secretary)
ARW	Reg Wood	(Treasurer)
MSR	Mike Robinson	
DPG	David Goddard	
APD	Andy Davies	
ILR	Irene Rabbitts	
DB	David Bird	
PC	Paul Chancellor	
JR	John Redgate	

WGD, as Chairman of the Trustees and who is standing down at the end of April, invited ACM to chair the meeting. WGD's presence at the meeting was confined to minutes 2004.01 - 2004.05 inclusive.

INVITED TO THE MEETING

GTA	Geoff Adams	(As Secretary Designate)
DJ	David Jackman	

IN ABSTENTIA

DK Trustee

2004.01 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF MEETING T10/2002 (dated 1st February 2020)

The Trustees agreed the minutes nem con.
ACM asked that WGD sign the T10/2002 Minutes.
Following any appropriate redactions, they will be posted onto the website. **Action: WRG**

2004.02 MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the last MC meeting (February 2020) have yet to be discussed and agreed.
REDACTED It was agreed that this will be undertaken at a short MC meeting held, possibly, on the day of the AGM.

2004.03 APPROVE COMMUNICATION BY VIDEO CONFERENCING FOR TRUSTEE MEETINGS

This was agreed nem con.

2004.04 RESCINDMENT OF DELEGATED GOVERNANCE BY TRUSTEES TO MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

At the initial Trustee meeting (T1/1612) the Trustees formally delegated the control of the Society to the Management Committee. The originating document and relevant Minute is illustrated as Appendix 1.

In view of the proposed changes to the Rules that are to be put before the membership at the next AGM and as MC meetings cannot be conducted face-to-face for the foreseeable future, it was proposed that the delegation be rescinded and the control of the Society will therefore revert to the Trustees until further notice. ACM proposed that this be implemented. Seconded by WRG, all of the Trustees gave their agreement.

Subject to the acceptance of the Rule changes at the AGM, the Management Committee will therefore be formally disbanded at its final meeting as detailed above in minute 2004.02.

2004.05 APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Documentation detailing “Trustee and MC Changes” was circulated ahead of the meeting and is shown as Appendix 2 of these minutes. This details the impending changes and associated timescales.
Following WGD’s impending resignation as Chairman of the Trustees as of 30th April 2020 it was proposed that the following takes place:

i. Appoint ACM as Acting Chairman for Trustees (and MC if necessary).
ii. Co-opt GTA as Trustee.
   Appointments to commence 1st May 2020.
iii. Appoint GTA as Acting Secretary for Trustees (and MC) from 1st June 2020.

WGD proposed the changes. Seconded by ARW, all were in agreement.
WRG will implement the changes of Trustees on the Charity website on the due dates.

Action: WRG

These appointments will be put formally to the members at the AGM for confirmation.

WGD in his final comments noted that he had been on the MC for 18 years, 9 of them as Chairman and in that time the Society has achieved a lot, including the attainment of Charity status and the setting up of a new Archive & Library, plus “an awful lot of other smaller things to enhance the Society”.
Thanks were extended by WGD to all the MC members/Trustees for their contributions and assistance, with particular gratitude towards WRG.
At this point WGD departed the meeting.

2004.06 APPROVE PURCHASE OF USB CAMERAS

The Trustees agreed that the Society would fund the purchase of USB cameras for those Trustees/Officers without them, but they would thus be the property of the Society. However, it is very likely that they will be out of date when the time comes to pass them on. DJ advised against purchasing the cheapest model available. Treasurer ARW agreed to this action.

Action: PC/GTA

2004.07 FINANCE

.01 Reports: The Treasurer's Financial Report to the meeting covering Q1 (November 2019 – January 2020) is attached as Appendix 3(a) and the financial detail behind the numbers is to be seen in Appendix 3(b). ARW commented that the figures were not a fair comparison as the Society's expenditure is not incurred evenly throughout the year. Overall, he is happy but disappointed with the level of income. At this juncture the finalised membership figures are not available as Steve Ollive is still working on them. Publications sales have been disappointing to date; DB added that he has only had 2 orders (for 3 books) so far in April. In response to questions ARW confirmed that Branch returns were not included as these are only incorporated in the half-year and full-year reports; DB confirmed that stock was still available for sale as per the website.

Some savings on the RO will arise this year due to the lockdown closure of the printers, as 2 or 3 issues are to be retrospectively posted in bulk (when normality resumes), hence some postage will be saved. APD added that there have been a few Library sales this year but obviously none now, though some sale items were on the website. ARW continued by confirming that Auction sales were only online at present, but returns were generally somewhat lower. **REDACTED**

ACM pointed out that there must be no unnecessary or non-essential travel at present. WRG suggested the use of couriers. **REDACTED** ACM enquired if it might become necessary to dip into the reserves, with ARW stating that we are 'not going bust'. In conclusion to this element of the report ARW said that in readiness for the AGM he has organised the vetting of the Accounts by the independent auditors and apart from one minor change all has been well received and the Accounts formally accepted.

.02 Economies: ARW expected this to be a gloomy debate in line with the rest of the country. In respect of the need to generate significant expenditure savings the following areas were considered to be worthy of examination:

- New Book Production – no new books expected hence a reduction of income.
- RO – savings on postage possible due to bulk deliveries on cessation of the lockdown.
- MSR pointed out little saving would be achieved by resizing/reducing the number of pages in the RO besides which this is the only thing that benefits the members.
- Admin – Some savings to be generated by not having the usual meetings in London estimated to be worth c.£4,000.
- RO Printing – size of future print runs should be looked at.
- Advertising – Existing recruitment campaign to be halted with no adverts planned in the near future. PC asked for this to be reviewed at the planned June meeting.
- VAT – ARW pointed out that there was a rejigging of the VAT laws in the last budget and a potential net effect of £400 to £500 of additional benefit is there to be had in 2021 as VAT relief for eRO members will then apply.
- Gift Aid – Little impact is expected from the VAT law changes. ARW stated that a new volunteer was needed to assist him in this area. At the time of the year end membership renewals an appeal should be included within the documentation requesting that tax paying members submit their Gift Aid donation form. **Action: DPG/ARW**

In furtherance of the need to generate further incremental savings ARW requested of MSR that postage costs be further analysed and that PC reconsiders the need for further external advertising. **Action: MSR/PC**

Additionally, savings of some £650 can be made by not holding the Officers' Conference in 2020. See minute .10 below.

2004.08 MEMBERSHIP

DPG circulated his ‘Membership Statistics Report’ prior to the meeting and this is attached as Appendices 4(a) and 4(b) of these minutes and added that the last few renewal numbers had still to be finalised. A total of 2702 members were on the register at the end of March. Discussion followed on ways to maintain/increase membership. DPG will therefore examine the full data of information defining from where new members were recruited via the various introductory schemes. His findings will be presented to the June Trustee meeting. **Action: DPG**

2004.09 STRATEGIC PLAN

At the instigation of the DSC debates have recently taken place at the December and February meetings of the MC relating to “The Society Vision”, all of which, along with their associated Appendices, have been recorded within the minutes of those meetings.

In furthering the initiative and following the January meeting the DSC responded to the outcomes and comments from the MC by developing a Strategic Action Plan with the intention of presenting this to the March meeting of the MC. However due to the Covid-19 lockdown the meeting was cancelled. Nevertheless, the document, which is illustrated as Appendix 5, was circulated to the members of the Committee seeking their comments. In response to this many replies were forthcoming all of which were collated by PC and a general resume constructed and is to be seen in Appendix 6.

Whilst recognising the financial limitations that could well become significant PC suggested that the Society could now be working on the following:

a) Establish a price differential between members/non-members purchasing books and photographs. **Action: DB/APD**
b) Investigate possible future increases in branch numbers through the setting up of a “Branch Working Group” lead by ILR in conjunction with ARW, and a Branch Chairman. **Action: ILR**
c) Initiate the proposed Members’ Survey seeking their opinions on specific Society issues. This will be distributed along with a future edition of the RO and the size of the survey would be on A4 folded paper thereby necessitating an expenditure estimated at £100. PC asked that the Trustees note exhibition finances are currently underspent by £1500. **Action: PC**

It was agreed that each of the above three initiatives should be progressed.

2004.10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members’ Weekend/Officers’ Conference: Bristol Branch, who are the organisers of the 2020 event are concerned about potential attending numbers **REDACTED** they would struggle to deal with bookings, etc. With these reservations in mind Bristol Branch seek to cancel the weekend for this year but have volunteered to organise the 2021 Members’ Weekend/Officers’ Conference. Assistance with bookings will be required and ILR and APD volunteered to assist. Should the 2020 event be cancelled at this stage charges of £100 (West Somerset Railway) and £300 (M5 Taunton Hilton Hotel) would be payable. If reorganised for next year the current hotel would be unable to do the same weekend (29-31 October 2021) but could do the preceding weekend. In the event that this is done the current £300 cancellation fee might be avoided but any further and later cancellation would incur up to 100% of fees. After a short discussion it was agreed that –

- The Members’ Weekend/Officers’ Conference will not be held in 2020, and
- Bristol Branch be asked to negotiate a new deal for 2021 with the appointed hotel.
- Members be notified in the RO and on the website that the event has been cancelled for this year. **Action: ARW/ILR/MSR/DJ**

Charity Commission Report: WGD, earlier in the meeting, requested that any comments to his draft Charity Commission Report should reach him before the end of tomorrow (Thursday).

Action: ALL

Minutes of MC meeting 2002: In respect of the arising Action points these will be looked at and cleared during the next meeting of the Trustees. It was agreed that this would be held as a video conferencing meeting on 13th June 2020 commencing at 1500hrs with a finishing time of 1700hrs. ACM and GTA will organise the Agenda. **Action: ACM/GTA**

Lockdown RO: ILR has been contacted regarding information as to what will happen to the supply of RO's for those members who are not in receipt of the eRO. Newsletter 188 describes the action that is being taken and defines that it is the responsibility of each Branch Secretary to circulate the information to their members.

Leatherhead:

- APD advised that any on-going exterior problems with the building will to be dealt with by Govia Thameslink.
- Legal matters have previously been handled by WGD. ACM agreed to speak to him regarding the on-going contact with the Society Solicitor Sarah Hollingworth of Hollingworth and Bissel.

  Action: ACM

  The paperwork, inclusive of a copy of the Lease, is currently in the hands of APD but this will be passed over to GTA in due course.
- ARW reminded the Trustees that there were a number of unknown costs outstanding and in view of the fact that Network Rail was offering a 3-month 'rent holiday' to its tenants, would there be a similar offer for the RCTS from Govia? APD said he would pose the question if he comes into contact with other tenants of Govia at Leatherhead station.

  Action: APD

As there were no other items for discussion the meeting concluded at 2004hrs.

G T Adams – Society Secretary Designate
W R Green – Society Secretary

Appendices attached to these minutes

1. Trustee Governance Delegation to the Management Committee.
2. Trustee & MC Changes
3a. Financial Report – Q1.
3b. Financial Report – Figures.
4a. Membership Statistics.
4b. Membership Distribution/Breakdown.
5. 2020 Strategic Action Plan.
6. 2020 Strategic Action Plan – MC Members' Comments.

NB Due to the size of the Appendices they are not published along with these minutes. Copies can be provided, on application, to the Secretary but will only be supplied subject to any redactions that might apply.