



REFERENCE 1903

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

**Minutes of the Management Committee held on 30th March 2019
At The Somers Town Coffee House, 60 Chalton Street, London NW1 1HS
Commencing at 12.00 hrs**

PRESENT

BA	Brian Arman	(President)
WGD	Gordon Davies	(Chairman)
WRG	Bob Green	(Secretary)
ARW	Reg Wood	(Treasurer)
ILR	Irene Rabbitts	(Branch Liaison Secretary)
MSR	Mike Robinson	(Managing Editor – “The Railway Observer”)
DPG	David Goddard	(Membership)
APD	Andy Davies	(Library & Archive)
DJ	David Jackman	(Web)
DB	David Bird	(Chair – Publications Sub-Committee)
PC	Paul Chancellor	(Chair – Development Sub-Committee)

DK David Kelso (As a Trustee was in attendance)

1903.01 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

All were welcomed to the meeting.

In opening the meeting WGD remarked that the introduction of the new website is now well advanced and is about to be installed within the very near future.

The South Wales Branch held a trial meeting at Port Talbot with the aim of having semi-regular meetings in the town. Long term plans are to hold meetings in Swansea. WGD has sent congratulatory emails to Peter Fortune and Stuart Warr for their efforts.

Contact with the LNWR Society, which has carried out a recent survey of like-minded societies, established that the RCTS is by far the largest society and in WGD's opinion is way ahead of anything that is currently available. Apathy and a senior age profile though is generally apparent across the board.

Following on from the advertisement appearing at the rear of “The Railway Magazine's” supplement “101 Things about Railways” a budget should be set up for further reporting which will allow the Society to promote the Library and Archive as a useful and effective resource for both the membership and the railway enthusiast movement.

WGD pointed out that in the last couple of years CIO status has been obtained, together with the launch of a new Archive and a new website. Is social media therefore the next challenge? WGD reminded all of what had been said some time ago and not to take on too much. Otherwise, like Web4 (no fault of DJ), matters will stall and nothing will be done to time.

1903.02 APOLOGIES

JR John Redgate (Committee Member – Co-opted)

1903.03 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF MC MEETING 1902

All agreed that they were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

DPG proposed and DB seconded that they be accepted and Chairman WGD therefore signed them off.

1903.04 MATTERS ARISING/ACTION POINTS FROM 1902

1902.06 The Ron Buckley photographic collection has been collected and is in Society hands.

1902.04/1809.16 Working Arrangements with Geoff Corner continue to remain undefined (PC/David Pick).

PC made comment that the meeting agenda makes no specific reference to either the Society Vision or the Strategic Review and should be discussed. However both subjects were to be mentioned within the meeting and are reported accordingly within the minutes.

1903.05 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MATTERS

- .01** Governance: Essentially, this was debated within the earlier meeting of the Trustees. The minutes of that meeting define the setting up of a working party in order to specify a methodology enabling the Society to operate via a single governing body. An initial working group of DB/BA/MSR/JR and Richard Neale was suggested. WGD is initially to set up this working group but will not be a sitting member. As a consequence the Strategic Review and the Review of the Rules will be deferred until the way forward becomes clearer. **Action: WGD**

PC brought to the attention of the MC that Dr Martin Firth of the Bristol Branch is well versed in the techniques of spreading messages such as the "Society Vision" and defining forward paths. It was suggested that he be invited to bring his ideas to the next MC meeting in June and this was agreed.

- .02** Society Vacancies: An advert is to be placed in the May RO seeking applications for those vacancies that are to arise at the 2020 AGM. Namely this seeks replacements for
a) Chairman; b) Secretary; c) Co-ordinator for Members' Weekend/Officers' Conference;
d) Exhibitions and Events Officer.
The style and format of the advert is illustrated as Appendix 1.

As these up and coming vacancies have been known to the membership for a little while some movement has already occurred. **REDACTED** has shown an interest in taking over the Chairmanship and **REDACTED** has spoken to WGD/WRG in respect of his interest in the position of Secretary. These will be followed up. **Action: WGD/WRG**

Nothing regarding the positions of Members' Weekend Co-ordinator or Exhibitions/Events Officer has so far materialised.

- .03** Conflict of Interest: The finalised documents were presented to the earlier meeting of the Trustees. They were approved and will now be implemented and put onto the website. All Trustees and MC members will be instructed to sign the documentation. The agreed documentation is to be seen in Appendix 3 of the Trustee meeting – ref. T7/1903.07. **Action: ILR/WRG**

1903.06 WEBSITE

- .01** Website: A few weeks prior to the MC meeting DJ circulated to the MC members the latest version of the proposed updated website with a view to seeking their agreement to formalising its implementation.
PC made the points that in his view the proposal was none too promotional and that the home page was in need of some "livening up".

DJ responded by pointing out that the new website is the lowest cost updatable platform that can be introduced, not forgetting that up to this point £17,000 has been spent on the project thus far which has generated nothing of any benefit. His current version of the Home Page is designed around mobiles, tablets and the like, which is very advantageous but as such is necessarily simpler.

Following this discussion the MC agreed to approve the launch of the new website and DJ informed all that it would be made live during the coming week. **Action: DJ**

(PC opted to vote against the launch of the website in the form that was presented and circulated.)

To inform the membership more fully DJ was asked to prepare a full presentation for showing to the Officers at their Conference in October, plus a briefing document for the next round of Regional Meetings. **Action DJ**

In moving the project forward the MC confirmed to DJ that the next phase should concentrate on Membership elements.

DJ further explained that subject matter relating to Mystery Photographs and the Photographic Archive requires to undergo a significant sortation process before either can be advanced. Furthermore the "Liveries Library" which, although not a great attraction, is nevertheless a valuable resource. For now it will therefore remain as current.

The Forum is to be removed from the front page.

Two further points of note. It is recognised that training has to be put in place for Branch Co-ordinators and that Jack Knights is looking after the work currently done by the Branches.

WGD thanked DJ for all his hard work.

- .02** Social Media: This was considered to be worthy of adding to the Agendas for the up and coming Regional Meetings.

1903.07 ARCHIVE/LIBRARY

- .01** Lease: WRG informed the meeting that all of the formal documentation has been signed on behalf of the Society by WGD/WRG and returned to our Solicitors, Hollingworth Bissell, on 4th February. Nothing has since been seen or heard from either Network Rail or GTR's Solicitors.

- .02** Project Status: APD was pleased to report that the damp-proofing work and leaking drains have all been sorted. The Library is now back to some level of normality and will be finally back together within the next couple of weeks.

To inform the membership of what is to be found in the Library a resume composed by Librarian Peter King has been put into the AGM Supplement.

On an on-going basis an Archive & Library News Bulletin will be issued on a regular basis.

- .03** Photographic Archive: PC and DJP have yet to meet with Geoff Corner in order to establish the working arrangements that are currently in place.

At the June 2018 MC meeting minute 1806.11 records that on the introduction of the Zenfolio photographic portfolio print purchasing prices were raised to £2 for a standard print whilst commercial purchase costs were set at £12.50 for B&W and colour at £25.

PC commented that a broad brush cost analysis carried out by himself indicates that the current operation is failing to generate a satisfactory income and therefore considers it worthy of a detailed financial examination. In conjunction with ARW and the relevant photographic members of the Archive Committee an assessment requires to be carried out as soon as possible. **Action: PC/ARW**

- .04** Library Yahoo Group: Ahead of the meeting APD circulated a paper originated by Jeremy Harrison describing and discussing the current position of these groups and seeking clarification from the MC as to the way forward and the form that this might take. The presented paper is shown in Appendix 2.

It was the originator's recommendation that should the grouping approach be seen as useful then the system to be adopted should be that of groups.io.

However the MC was unenthusiastic, a view which was reinforced by DJ who believes that through the new updated website it might well be able to provide similar functionality.

The MC therefore chose to leave matters as they currently stand.

1903.08 BRANCH LIAISON

- .01** Regional Meetings: Through contact with the various Chairmen of these meetings ILR considered the following to be worthy of debate:

- i. That individual Branch Secretaries/Chairmen compare notes between those within close proximity of each other.
- ii. Debate the merits of Long Service Awards, e.g. length of service badges.
- iii. The need to establish speaker expenses ahead of any meeting.
- iv. Social Media.
- v. A Society Vision.

- .02** Policies: Policies require to be written covering i) Safety of those with disabilities, and ii) the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children where branches share a venue at which children are present.

1903.09 FINANCE

- .01** Out-Turn 2017/18: The final and fully audited figures are shown as Appendix 3, which show a deficit over the year of £3531. This lines up with that reported at meeting 1902.05.01 (Appendix 1) excepting that taxation is now included.

Notes to the Financial Statements have not been included within the Appendix to these minutes as they are to be found in the minutes and Appendix 1 of meeting 1902 (as specified in the above paragraph).

The Treasurer described his handling of donations to the Society within the accounts by explaining that those of an unrestricted nature are entered into the P/L account whilst restricted donations are to be found on the Balance Sheet.

ARW reported that the Society has been fined £100 by HMRC due to the submission of a late tax return which should have been submitted by the Auditors. As a consequence a bill will therefore be sent to them.

- 02** Budget 2018/19: This has been reported as indicating a year end surplus of £3526, the detail of which is shown in Appendix 4.

- .03** Banking: New bank accounts have been opened as a result of becoming CIO and all are now accessible.

Despite setting up of indemnities cheques made payable to the Society in the name of RCTS continue to be refused by Society bankers Lloyds. ARW will continue to pursue the matter.

Action: ARW

1903.10 "THE RAILWAY OBSERVER"

- .01** Articles: PC sought to establish the merits of paying authors to publish articles of interest in the RO. This has previously been discussed with a number of RO Editors, all of whom were opposed to the concept. By a show of hands the MC unanimously agreed that any form of payment should not be given for such material.

- .02** Advertising Policy: Due to his conflict of interest with Colour-Rail PC left the meeting whilst this subject was discussed. In overall terms the Advertising Policy was defined by MSR and accepted at the meeting 1812 – see minute 1812.11.02 and its attendant Appendix 6. Commercial discounting within railway type publications is of the order of 10% which was

acceptable to the MC and will now apply across the board. MSR will discuss the outcome with PC.

Action: MSR

DB suggested that RCTS member discounts for Colour-Rail material could be of help to the discussions.

- .03** RO Print Run: Excess numbers of RO's are currently being experienced and in an attempt to bring this down the run will be reduced to 2600 from the current level of 3300.

Action: DPG

1903.11 MEMBERSHIP

Details of the membership numbers as at the end of March are given in Appendix 5a and the membership distribution in 5b.

The numbers are a better guide than those quoted at the meeting of 2nd February as the renewals process is now almost complete. Of those recruits who took up the offer of "Free Membership" some 63% did not follow their membership through into this year. Appendix 5b illustrates the detail.

An increase in membership numbers by over 400 is good news, the majority of which can be attributed to last year's "90th Year Free Membership Offer".

However the analysis shows that "long term member" losses amount to 192.

1903.12 DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

PC reported the following from the Development Sub-Committee meeting in March.

- ILR is now attending meetings of the DSC
- A project team is to be established with the specific objective of assisting any branch which might be in need of help.
- William Wilson has been recruited by the DSC in order to assist the committee in delivering small type projects.
- A Membership growth of 5% is to be the target figure for this year.
- Phase 1 of the Advertising budget directed at magazine advertising amounting to a spend of £3,000 has been absorbed.
Phase 2, targeting railway magazines that cover railway preservation movements, is about to commence for which a further £3,000 is budgeted. However the total spend for phases 1 and 2 will only amount to c.£5,000.
The final £3,000 of spend has yet to be defined but this will be finalised once the renewal fee has been established later in the year. As adverts need to be placed in September, the DSC requested that the 2020 membership fee be set before the September meeting of the MC.
- Member benefit in the shape of a 15% discount for books from BookLaw has been negotiated.
- Heritage Railways are to be approached seeking discounts for Society members.
- An outdoor fixtures organiser requires to be sourced.
- Analyse and define best practice for branches.
- Volunteers are required for manning Society stands at Ramsgate, Crewe and Carlisle exhibitions/open days.
- Although a long way off, Steve Lacey is co-ordinating ideas for the Centenary year celebrations of the Society.
- No volunteer has yet been found to take over the leadership of the Photographic Portfolio. This is currently under the stewardship of Les Nixon, who is no longer a current member of the Society.
- The DSC is of the view that the artwork as applied to the banners is now out of date and should therefore be updated. This view was not held by all MC members. This will be reviewed in 12-18 months' time when new brochures will be required.
- Incentives need to be devised to encourage the recruiting of members via the branches.

- PC has recently updated the documentation relating to the 5 year loans of Society Nameplates to either Heritage Railways and/or individual Society members. All have signed and returned their agreements with one exception. This being The Great Western Trust, who is questioning the valuation of £50,000 for covering the insurance of King Class "King Henry VII" straight nameplate.

-

1903.13 PUBLICATIONS

- DB reported that good progress is being made with the photographic style of book covering the work of Michael Mensing. At this point around 150 illustrations have been identified.
- Stuart Warr has proposed the idea that he puts together a collection of his black & white photographs for a possible future publication by the Society. This is currently being followed through.
- In conjunction with the Bristol Branch an alternative process for selling books through the branches is being trialled. The system currently being tested is such that branches purchase books at a discounted rate of 50% which they can then sell on at a price set by themselves.
- John Jennison's book aimed at a history of diesels remains in the pipeline.

1903.14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- DPG requested that a discussion be put into a future MC agenda relating to the arrangements currently in place with "The Railway Children" charity as, since becoming a CIO, the Society cannot now support other Charities with differing objectives.
- Sussex Branch: This has now ceased to exist. ARW commented that their funds have not yet been received by the Treasurer and DPG informed the meeting that their members have all been reallocated to the nearest branch. WGD has written to Paul Baston and Paul Snelling thanking them for their efforts on behalf of the Branch over many years.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 17.10.

W R Green
Society Secretary
April 2019

Appendices Attached to These Minutes

1. Society Vacancies
2. Yahoo Groups – Future?
3. Finalised 2017/18 Financial Accounts
4. Forecast Out-turn 2018/19
- 5a&b Current Membership Details

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.