REFERENCE BT18/2105

FINAL

MINUTES OF MEETING #18 OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE RAILWAY CORRESPONDENCE & TRAVEL SOCIETY. Held via Video Conferencing (Zoom) on Saturday 22nd May, 2021. Commencing at 14.00.

TRUSTEES PRESENT AT THE VIDEO CONFERENCING MEETING

ACM	Callum MacLeod	Chairman
ARW	Reg Wood	Treasurer & Finance Group Leader
GTA	Geoff Adams	Secretary & Admin Group Leader
DB	David Bird	Deputy Chairman & Commercial Group Leader
MSR	Mike Robinson	*RO* Managing Editor
DPG	David Goddard	Membership
APD	Andy Davies	Archive & Library
ILR	Irene Rabbitts	Branch Liaison
JM	James Milne	Strategy Group Leader & Trustee Designate
DK	David Kelso	Trustee & Imaging Editor
MS	Matthew Shaw	Trustee & Webmaster Designate

INVITED TO THE MEETING

RS	Roger Sandford	Publicity Officer & Trustee Designate

MENTIONED BUT NOT PRESENT AT THE MEETING

AJC	Alan Cooke	(RCTS Addresses & Strategy Group Minute Taker)
DC	David Cross	(Nameplate Supervisor)
DJ	David Jackman	(Former Webmaster)
GB	Geoff Brockett	(Fixtures Editor)
JJ	John Jennison	(Publications Team member)
RL	Rodney Lissenden	(Publications Team member)
SO	Steve Ollive	(Assistant Treasurer, Renewals)
WRG	Bob Green	(Former Society Secretary and West Riding Branch Secretary)

2105.01 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS & COI DECLARATION

ACM welcomed the Trustees to the meeting and enquired if anything on the agenda was likely to give rise to a Conflict of Interest (COI) for anyone – nil declared.
Additionally, Trustees were asked if items for the agenda could be supplied within the specified deadlines, please; DPG commented that his Membership statistics had been delayed in order to include the information from the renewals process, which had just been closed and he considered it important to include.

2105.02 APOLOGIES

John Redgate (Trustee)

2105.03 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF MEETINGS BT17/2104 (dated 10th April)

No objections from the Trustees, so ACM to sign the last page of BT17, scan and then email to GTA, pending the time when he could hand over the original document for filing; ACM & GTA to liaise re redactions, etc. – **Action Point (AP) 1a & b**.

2105.04 MATTERS ARISING, INCLUDING ACTION POINTS

There were no matters arising. Action Points were as follows:

AP1	Completed, in May *RO*.
AP2a	Completed.
AP2b	Completed.
AP2c	Completed.
AP3	Completed.
AP4	Investment options revisited but none made, as interest rates currently paltry; carried forward as **AP2**.
AP5	Completed.
AP6	ILR has issued some revised guidance but more to be done; carried forward as **AP3**.
AP6	Completed.
AP7	Completed; see also 2105.05 below.
AP8	Completed; MSR would be finalising that weekend.
AP9a	Completed.
AP9b	Completed.
AP10	Completed; see also 2105.05 below.
AP11	Completed, in May *RO*.
AP12	Not yet completed, carried forward as **AP4**.
AP13	Completed.
AP14	Completed and also appeared in the SLS Journal.
AP15	Publications Team meeting had taken place, with item on-going – **AP5**.
AP16	Completed; DK confirmed that he checked with the photographer(s) before any photos appeared in magazines other than the *RO*.
AP17	No action as yet, carried forward as **AP6**.
AP18a	See 2105.06.01 below.
AP18b	Completed.
AP19	Completed.

2105.05 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE AGM

ACM screen-shared to show the AGM agenda and the Programme (which will appear in the AGM Supplement to be issued with the June *RO*). Minor changes to the way timings shown were requested by DB. It was confirmed that DJ would be hosting and joining instructions would appear under Talking Points of the June *RO* and GTA was requested to ask DJ to use the 'waiting room method' (as with the 2020 AGM) and for ACM and GTA to be made co-hosts – **AP7**. GTA confirmed that the only thing outstanding was that Rodney Lissenden had yet to advise that he was prepared to second John Redgate standing for Trustee re-appointment; DK advised Rodney was currently away. GTA to chase – **AP8**.

2105.06 ADMIN GROUP UPDATE

.1 Privacy Policy Review

A draft revised Privacy Policy, which had been produced by ACM and GTA with input from ILR had been circulated prior to the meeting. However, MS advised in an email the morning of the meeting that he was not happy with elements of the revised draft; he felt we needed to make it clear that:

a. We hold data on members **and** non-members
b. That where 3rd parties are used, e.g., Zoom, jurisdiction may be outside of the UK
c. To improve our services, we will use analytical data on attendances at Zoom meetings

ACM requested MS to pass his suggestions to himself, GTA and ILR, as well as DPG – **AP9a**. To facilitate this, ACM would send MS a Word version of the draft revised Privacy Policy – **AP9b**.
APD suggested that the words “with your permission” should be deleted from the last sentence of the second paragraph on page 2 of the draft, as it wasn’t always possible to obtain such permission. MS added that currently we would struggle to meet a request from an ex-member to delete his data, as no formal register existed of who held what data, and that this should be reviewed annually to act as a checklist. ACM pointed out that DPG should be allowed to retain name and membership number of former members, in case they wished to rejoin. JM added that the Zoom registration document should include a note to say the Society would collect email addresses, etc., and make use of that data, for example to track if non-members join; DPG suggested that this should be on the application to join the meeting, rather than the registration document. JM to liaise with MS regarding this point – **AP9c**.
DK commented as to whether this level of detail was actually required, when other Societies he belonged to did not do so and perhaps legal advice should be sought – Robert Bartlett was suggested by MSR – but ACM stated that he was happy that this was not really needed, but he would consider sending something to Robert Bartlett once we had finalised our Policy – **AP9d**. However, ARW felt the revised policy had little relevance to an average Branch Secretary and lacked practicality, for example can we get in touch with a non-re-newer and try and tempt him back? The consensus was yes. In reply to ILR, DPG confirmed he would send lists of Branch members / non-renewals to Branches, if requested; see also 2105.06.04 below.

.2 AVR

GTA stated that it had been his hope to provide an update on his research with the Charity Commission regarding this topic. However, he had ‘lost’ two days immediately prior to the meeting, due to an adverse reaction to the second Covid vaccination he had received on the Wednesday. Consequently, he requested that he carry the item forward, though ACM enquired if an update could be provided to him prior to the AGM, which GTA undertook to do – **AP10**.

.3 Branch Liaison Officer

ILR reported that Hitchin Branch have requested permission to change their name to Hitchin & Welwyn Garden City, to more accurately reflect where they operate from; the abbreviation Welwyn GC could be used. No objections raised but ACM suggested it take effect from whenever the deadline was for the July *RO*; MSR suggested that GB also be advised – **AP11a**. In response to ILR’s enquiry, ARW stated that the name of the Branch Account need not be changed – **AP11b**.

REDACTED

.4 Membership Officer

DPG had issued his Membership Statistics, a Renewal Analysis and a Retained Summary prior to the meeting and these appear as **Appendices 1, 2 & 3** to these Minutes. Total membership, as of 21/05/2021, was 2723, which was nine more than the previous year (@ 31/05/2020), and any losses had been covered with new members. The Renewal Analysis revealed an 88% retention rate with paid members; a more active follow up on those members that had not renewed had helped and would be done again in future years, probably starting earlier. The non-renewal figure was 151 and with 115 resignations, stood up well against previous years. There had been three new Life Members, two of which were online only. Format changes had been roughly equal. The Retained Summary (Appendix 3) revealed that of those members that had joined under various schemes, we had managed to retain a fairly high percentage over the next three years; the additional breakdown of the various schemes involved would allow the Strategy Group to analyse those which had been most successful. MSR added that some 25% of members were now online and that the level of printing may be affected soon; DPG confirmed that the print run had been reduced by about 100 copies last year and that there was no current need to change it again.

Post Meeting Note: Subsequent to the meeting it was discovered that the Retained Summary (Appendix 3) contained errors and was reissued with corrected information; it is this revised version that is attached here.

2105.06 FINANCE GROUP UPDATE

ARW advised that he had encountered a problem with Lloyds whilst trying to change the authorised signatories. Instead of returning the form to him for the addition of missed signatories, it had been binned and an entirely new form sent out; this was now doing the rounds, and would end up last with DPG.

A separate renewals account was still used for those members sending renewal cheques, though increasingly Direct Debits (DD) were used. PayPal was also being used for renewals but such payments were being sent to the current account and not the renewal account; PayPal is also the payment vehicle for the purchase of photographs, and this was giving both ARW and SO a great deal of work to try and sort out. Lloyds had been failing to send DD payments to the Renewals Account, and were sending such payments to one of our pre-CIO accounts; ARW had lodged complaints about this and compensation had been received. However, whilst the pre-CIO account was no longer being used, the DD payments were now ending up in the current account, rather than the renewal account, so he was still trying to resolve this.

Regarding the Members' Weekend, many of the people ARW had been dealing with were either still furloughed or had left, but with hotel, etc., services beginning to pick up again, he was arranging to visit the hotel soon and would report back. Contact with the private railways was proving more difficult, especially with the West Somerset, who had problems of their own as well as Covid. Consequently, it wasn't yet possible to agree a Programme for the weekend and publicise it in the *RO*; MSR agreed to add a comment in the July *RO* to say that the weekend was going ahead, and stating that details of the programme would follow in the August *RO*, the deadline for which was 26th June. ARW would liaise with MSR regarding something for the July *RO* – **AP13**.

Returning to Finance, ARW advised that Quarter 2 had finished on the 30th April and he was working on preparing the VAT returns, before starting on the Q2 Budgetary Control Report; the finances were looking in good shape. To conclude his report, the good news was that the renewals and donations had now been fully analysed, and including renewals and all donations, a Gift Aid application had been made for a record £7,370, if approved by HMRC.

2105.07 COMMERCIAL GROUP UPDATE

.1 Archive / Library

APD stated that he had opened the Library three times recently, and received a £20 donation from one visitor. Network Rail's contractors had inspected the loft and also the roof, prior to possibly erecting scaffolding.

A visit had been made to Kenilworth to collect all of Derek Morris' photographs and some books; a copyright letter was also obtained. The Library was continuing to sell books and *RO* binders - £200 to date with two more orders to come. ARW enquired if any lots were being submitted for auction but APD said he needed to get people into the Library to do sorting before this could be done. Peter King was attending on his own but was reluctant to visit with anyone else. APD anticipated holding a key-holders' Zoom meeting soon to discuss formal re-opening but, in the meantime, opening will continue to be by appointment. In reply to MSR's query, APD said he would include something in the July 'Running Lines' about seeking a volunteer to assist with selling via eBay – **AP14**.

.2 Publications

DB reported that they hoped to have the 'Introduction to Michael Mensing' book ready for publication by the end of June, with one or two changes being made. Quotes for printing in the UK had raised eyebrows, so Publication Team members JJ and RL made enquiries with people they know who had had books printed abroad. This led to DB contacting two printing brokers who use printers in the Czech Republic and Poland, concluding that he may well be recommending using overseas printers, with costs about 1/3rd of those for UK printers, subject to quality controls, etc. Additionally, they were continuing to look at small digital re-print runs for out-of-stock books in the Standard series; other books as well, where a possible demand from the Society's back-catalogue had been identified by APD & DJ. MS had managed to scan a Standard Volume 3 in three days, so this was being evaluated as another possible method that could be used. Other ideas being explored are for further Pictorial Publications, with two members suggesting their 'albums' could be used, and a collaboration with Milton Keynes Branch regarding a book on the railways in their area. Also, a possible book on the end of steam in the south with a member from Chichester. RL is evaluating a possible book offered by Michael Welsh on DMUs, consisting of photographs with extensive captions. The Royal Scots and 8F books are still in hand. DB concluded by saying that he had a lot of possibilities on hand, and could do with some helpers to assist; an appeal in the *RO* may follow. MSR offered to help with the photographic books and he and DB would discuss separate to this meeting. At their request, no AP was required.

.3 *RO* Update

MSR advised that submission of photos for possible publication in the *RO* had been high last month, at over 160, but from certain areas only. DK is looking for a replacement for John Cowlishaw dealing with images and MSR added that a volunteer to cover Features was still required. Other people contributing to the three areas MSR often had to cover – Memory through the Lens, Observers Diary and Archive Image – would be helpful. Starting with the June *RO*, a revised format was being used to advertise the Branch video meetings. DPG noted that quite few personal email addresses were still being quoted under Branch contacts for meetings, instead of allocated official RCTS addresses; MSR to request GB to use official addresses if possible – **AP15**.

.4 Payments to RCTS Members for services rendered

REDACTED

Discussion continued on the merits and methodology of rewarding the work of authors. ACM suggested that we have a policy whereby DB, as Publications Officer, has the authority to offer royalties to a potential author, whether a member or not.

ARW reminded the meeting that if someone received expenses / reimbursed costs, these were not taxable. However, any monies received by way of fees / royalties were taxable and schedules were submitted annually to HMRC of such payments; we were obliged to remind recipients of the need to declare these but it was up to individuals to comply. DB confirmed, in answer to a query from MS, that copyright remained with us even if a payment was made. MSR further suggested that we should publicise, via the *RO*, the offer of a payment, by way of royalties, to authors. ACM **Proposed** a decision be made that we adopt a policy of offering royalty payments to authors, member or not, and this was **Seconded** by ILR and **Accepted** by all.

REDACTED

.5 Webmaster Update

MS advised that for the website, he was still collaborating with DJ as he still dealt with some of the codes in use. There had been no major changes recently, though Hitchin Branch had added all their Newsletters and this could also be done by other Branches. It was pointed out that some were already doing so. With JM, he had spent quite a lot of time looking at using Microsoft Teams – see item 2105.08.04 below. He was posting to social media monthly and the recent promotion of the Stuart Warr book was seen by 2000+ people though no sales as yet from these. The Harris project had taken up the bulk of his time and good progress had been made, building on the work DB had already done.

2105.08 STRATEGY GROUP (SG) UPDATE

.1 Updated 2021 Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

The updated SAP had been circulated prior to the meeting and it is attached as **Appendix 4** to these Minutes. JM advised that Dave Coxon had recently resigned from the Strategy Group, as he had taken up the role of Secretary to another organisation, though he would be continuing with his Branch work. There were no questions arising.

.2 Advertising Updates

Two papers had also been circulated prior to the meeting and are attached as **Appendices 5 & 6** to these Minutes. The Advertising Summary information, which came from RS, now included Facebook. The Advertising Effectiveness Analysis, for Q1, threw up an anomaly, where four new joiners were quoting Heritage Railways as a source, yet it was a while since the Society had placed an advert in that magazine. He would keep this analysis updated and this would hopefully allow a better picture to emerge of what does, and doesn't, work.

.3 Recruitment / Sources of New Members

A Recruitment Stats paper had been circulated prior to the meeting and is attached as **Appendix 7**. AJC had provided data which now showed month by month recruitment data for the previous 20 years – the four months shown in red during 2018 were when we had a free offer; the next page provided details of sources.

.4 Zoom Licence Proposal

A 'Teams vs Zoom' paper had been circulated prior to the meeting and is attached as **Appendix 8** to these

Minutes. The original thought was to use Teams but the barriers to using it were such as to not make it worth abandoning the use of Zoom. The proposal is to purchase Zoom licences, for national use by named hosts, and also other licenses, controlled centrally, but for the use of Branches. The cost of the ones for the Branches would probably be met centrally this year but Branches would be encouraged to either purchase their own in future years, or to repay the centre. JM added that experience with Zoom had been built up by the Society, whereas we would need to start again from scratch with Teams, and the registration process for which was far from easy. MS warned about any dependence on either DJ or Jeremy Harrison hosting meetings, so we needed branches to become self-reliant in that respect**.** **See also Post Meeting Note below the List of Appendices.**

Also, to be covered under this heading, was the issue of National Licences. DK reported that he had attended the second national meeting during which a dispute arose between DJ and Jeremy Harrison as to whether the meeting would be muted or not, with DJ winning out, and this allowed discussion to take place during the presentation. Additionally, the captions were not fully shown on the screen, nor were they necessarily accurate; consequently, arguments developed as to what the correct details were, protracting the presentation. JM suggested that rather than being a presentation, the meeting in question was in fact a workshop and any similar future ones should be advertised as such, with another person also controlling the event to curtail discussion. MSR commented that the captions on photos in the Archive are 'lamentable', so we ought to be aware, especially as DJ was due to make a presentation after the AGM; JM suggested the 'Chat' was the proper place for comments. ACM added that Surrey Branch's Tom Kolisch had also asked that the topic of National Meetings be covered under AOB at the AGM. The third trial national meeting was due to take place on the 25th of May, and after that JM advised a full evaluation would take place.

.5 Other SG Updates:

a. Advertising Flyers / Stationery

JM reported that Bob Ballard had relinquished his involvement in this area and AJC has volunteered to take over. MS had obtained authority from ARW for AJC to purchase a thermal inkjet printer, and he would collect the remaining stationery, etc., stock held by Bob B and deliver it to AJC in due course. DB & RS had produced a quality 4-page updated Publications flyer, using a cheaper web printer than previously used. DPG offered to look after the stationery items, such as headed paper and compliments slips.

b. Morton's Magazine Subs & Member Discount

RS had been negotiating a discounted subscription for members with Morton's and the Society would receive £4 for every subscription taken out.

c. Trackside Magazine

This was a new magazine, launched the previous day, with an initial print run of 10k copies and option for a further 20k; a RCTS advert was included in this first copy.

d. Warley Model Railway Exhibition (MRE)

JM stated that he understood, as a Charity and provided we didn't sell anything, we could get a stand for free and two tickets to this MRE. Steve Lacey, the Exhibition & Events Officer had a team prepared to attend but a budget for overnight accommodation would be required. ACM enquired why we weren't selling and DB advised that he had an agreement with Book Law that they would stock our books for sale at this event. Costs to be ascertained so JM was advising ARW now that a funding request would follow.

e. Nameplate Update

DC, the Nameplate Supervisor, had advised that the 'Falkland Island' plate remained with a member in Bristol Branch but it was hoped to eventually loan them to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. In the meantime, they were negotiating to loan them to Tyseley for display at whatever event they run in connection with the Commonwealth Games, in return for a stand at that event; the Jubilee 'Bahamas' nameplates may also be loaned. 'Jupiter', 'Sirocco' and L&Y 413 are due to go the Ribble Centre (in

Preston) and the Crewe Heritage Centre. DC would be going to Sheffield soon and would also see the two Sheffield nameplates held in the Holiday Inn; GTA confirmed that DC had been in touch for the hotel contact information. DPG advised that the Holiday Inn was now named the Crown Plaza Royal Victoria. DC had collected the 1960 Scottish headboard from York, and this was destined for Leatherhead; APD said it was currently in Essex.

f. Open Letter to Branches

ILR advised that they had received 13 replies to date and that a reminder had now been sent to those Branches who had not yet responded. Comments were mostly very positive, though it was mentioned that emails were not necessarily answered quickly. Discussion on the possible use of 'out-of-office' replies, where possible, followed. MS suggested emails to RCTS addresses could be set up to automatically state that the email had been received. JM and ILR would look again at responses concerning this item and advise accordingly, copying to all that may be affected – **AP16**.

JM continued by saying that one or two Branches, who would remain anonymous, had asked for access to Branch membership records, to see who had lapsed and to assist in trying to restore those memberships. DPG confirmed details were available, if requested, in addition to receiving it every six months anyway, though he might be slightly annoyed if a Branch requested it every month. JM suggested this may make an item for inclusion in Running Lines, though probably not until August – **AP17**.

Note: JM had advised, prior to the meeting, that there was no progress to report yet on the Member Logo Proposal.

2105.09 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

ACM confirmed that the next BoT meeting was on the 21st August, but he suggested that we stick with Zoom and that he would again be willing to host.

2105.10 AOB

.1 Society Diary

ACM reminded the Group heads that they needed to advise dates, etc., of meetings so that the Society Diary could be kept up to date. Also, to be included will be the deadline date for items for inclusion on the BoT agenda, which it was agreed should be 14 days prior to the meeting, to allow GTA sufficient time to prepare it. DB confirmed that a date for a Commercial Group meeting would be advised as soon as it could be agreed.

.2 Letter from Eric Palmer

JM had circulated this to ACM and GTA but it would be added here as **Appendix 9** to these Minutes.
REDACTED Eric had suggested copies of the *RO* could be made available at shops run by the likes of the Ffestiniog and Severn Valley railways, etc. Additionally, could the *RO* contain details of more interesting items that had come up recently in auctions?

REDACTED

.4 Retirement of DK (as a Trustee)

ACM pointed out that DK was standing down as a Trustee at the forthcoming AGM, so this was the last BoT meeting he would be attending. DK recalled joining the Society during an Edinburgh Branch meeting, held in the then Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce in Charlotte Square, when he, and another colleague, were just coming up to their 16th birthdays! In thanking him for all he had done over the years, DK was wished a happy retirement, though he would be continuing with his imaging work for the foreseeable future.

As there were no other items for discussion, ACM concluded the meeting at 1737.

G T Adams – *Society Secretary*

APPENDICES ATTACHED TO THESE MINUTES

1. **Membership Statistics**
2. **Renewal Analysis**
3. **2018-2020 Retained Summary (revised)**
4. **Strategic Action Plan (updated)**
5. **National Membership / Advertising Summary**
6. **Advertising Effectiveness**
7. **RCTS Recruitment 2104**
8. **Teams vs Zoom Proposal**
9. **Letter from Eric Palmer (scanned)**

Post Meeting Note:

As part of the Strategy Group report above (**2105.08.04**), JM presented his paper entitled 'Teams or Zoom' – this was circulated with the BT18 agenda and is attached as Appendix 8. However, due to an oversight, actual acceptance of the recommendation was not formally approved by the Trustees and this was only picked up during the drafting of these Minutes. There were no negative comments about the proposal during the meeting, so there seems no doubt it would have been approved. Consequently, ACM has issued a Chairman's decision to approve, prior to it being formally accepted at the BT19 meeting. This action allows both the Strategy and Commercial Groups to proceed accordingly, rather than having to wait until the next meeting in August.

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

AP1a. **ACM to sign last page of BT17 Minutes, scan and send to GTA (2105.03)**

AP1b. **ACM & GTA to liaise re redactions then GTA to arrange posting to the Society website (2105.03)**

AP2. **ARW to revisit investment options, when interest rates improved (2105.04)**

AP3. **ILR to continue reviewing guidance to Branches re resumption of face-to-face meetings (2105.04)**

AP4. **JM/Strategy Group to draft guidance for Branches on how to set up an host Zoom meetings (2105.04)**

AP5. **DB & Publications Team to continue reviewing Publications strategy (2105.04)**

AP6. **JM to revisit Member's Logo Proposal and re-submit (2105.04)**

AP7. **GTA to request DJ to use the Waiting Room for the AGM and make ACM & GTA co-hosts (2105.05)**

AP8. **GTA to chase Rodney Lissenden to confirm his seconding of John Redgate for Trustee reappointment (2105.05)**

AP9a. **MS to advise his suggested changes to the Privacy Policy to ACM, GTA, ILR & DPG (2105.06.01)**

AP9b. **ACM to resend MS word version of revised Privacy Policy (2105.06.01)**

AP9c. **JM & MS to liaise re changes to Zoom application document(2105.06.01)**

AP9d. **REDACTED**

AP10 **GTA to continue AVR research with the Charity Commission and advise ACM (2105.06.02)**

AP11a. **ILR or MSR to advise Geoff Brockett of Hitchin Branch change of name (2105.03)**

AP11b. **ILR to advise Hitchin Branch re retaining same Branch Account name (2105.03)**

AP12. **REDACTED**

AP13. **ARW & MSR to liaise regarding Members' Weekend announcement in July *RO* (2105.06)**

AP14. **APD to include an item in the July 'Running Lines' to seek a volunteer to assist with sales via EBay (2105.07.01)**

AP15. **MSR to request Geoff Brockett to use official email addresses wherever possible (2105.07.03)**

AP16. **JM & ILR to review responses to emails sent from Branches to the centre (2105.08.05f)**

AP17. **JM to consider an item in 'Running Lines' re obtaining Branch membership details (2105.08.05f)**

AP18. **REDACTED**

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