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REFERENCE BT31/0512

**MINUTES OF MEETING BT31 OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE RAILWAY CORRESPONDENCE & TRAVEL SOCIETY**

Held via Zoom on Tuesday 5th December 2023 at 18.00

TRUSTEES PRESENT AT THE MEETING

JM	James Milne	Chairman
RLM	Richard Morris	Secretary
DPG	David Goddard	Membership Secretary
MS	Matthew Shaw	Digital Officer
APD	Andy Davies	Archivist
ILR	Irene Rabbitts	Branch Liaison Officer
ARW	Reg Wood (<i>part time</i>)	Treasurer
MSR	Mike Robinson	Commercial Group Chair
DBB	David Bird	Deputy Chairman
DMC	David Cross	Strategy Group Chair
JR	John Redgate (<i>part time</i>)	Trustee

Others present

PJC	Paul Chancellor	Minute Taker
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0512.01 – CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The meeting opened at 18.00. The Chairman welcomed those present. It was noted that there could be a conflict of interest for PJC with Colour-Rail. MS advised that he was an LCGB member. JM emphasised that all items were confidential and that items should not be discussed outside the room without an operational necessity.

0512.02 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

0512.03 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF TRUSTEE MEETING BT30

The minutes of BT30 were approved.

0512.04 MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

None

0512.05 ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM BT30

- AP1** Escalate Lease signing issue - now with the Society Solicitors. *carry forward.* **APD New AP1**
- AP2** Refine proposals on the use of Society funds by year end. *done.*
- AP3** Complete Affiliates list at year end. **APD/DMC New AP2**
- AP4** Re-submit/settle Cheltenham expenses claim. *done.*
- AP5** Investigate Society Funds investment opportunities. *completed.*
- AP6** Appoint Digital Archive Manager. *carry forward.* **MS New AP3**
- AP7** Develop/provide analysis of member recruitment by month/source.
carry forward. **DPG/DMC New AP4**
- AP8** Review Society rules and policies. Policy review completed. Rules review ongoing. **RLM New AP5**
- AP9** Discussion on Trustee pen portraits. *completed.*
- AP10** Purchase dehumidifiers for Leatherhead. JM suggested that wall moisture levels should be measured prior to purchase to ensure that suitable equipment was selected. DPG to try to find a suitable tradesman. *ongoing.* **DPG/APD New AP6**
- AP11** Resend 2028 note to Cheltenham branch. *done.*
- AP12** Evaluate feasibility of proposed archive picture pricing policy. *completed*
- all discount possibilities could be incorporated but there would be a software cost in some cases. Now awaiting firm proposals from Commercial group.
- AP13** Place editorial team volunteer request in the Officer's Newsletter.
carry forward. **MSR/ILR New AP7**
- AP14** Contact Railway Magazine re traffic observation reporting. *done.*
Findings discussed with MSR but the Railway Magazine believed that it still had a role to play in providing hard copy observations for future generations to use.
- AP15** Advise Overseas Members renewal rates to MS. *done.*
- AP16** Write and insert RO note explaining new Membership Rates. *done*
- AP17** Prepare note for donations to database project. *done.*
- AP18** Advise AVR nominations/change RO cover price. *done.*
- AP19** Arrange meeting with LCGB. *done.*
- AP20** Review Collections Policy document. *carry forward.* **APD New AP8**
- AP21** Contact Railway Magazine re scanned copy of their magazine indices. *done.*
These do not exist.

- AP22** Seek archive accreditation on the National Museums Archive register. Applied but not yet received. *carry forward.* **APD New AP9**
- AP23** Arrange meeting with Publicity Officer. *done.*
- AP24** Arrange meeting to discuss rolling yearly membership and report the outcome to the Trustees. **DMC New AP10**
- AP25** Summarise Regional Meeting minutes. *done.*
- AP26** Amend/finalise H&S Policy document. *done.*
- AP27** Add templates for Letterheads and compliments slips to website. *done.*
- AP28** Complete and analyse branch attendance data. Data still awaited from some branches. JM requested that they again be asked to provide the information or establish the reason why it could not be done. **ILR New AP11**
- AP29** Advise availability of WSR Silver Pass in Officer's Newsletter. *done.*
- AP30** Circulate revised Officer's Handbook. The text concerning branch AGMs requires revision. *ongoing.* **ILR New AP12**
- AP31** Advise JM if any proposed 2024 meeting dates are unsuitable. *done.*
- AP32** Add 2024 meeting dates to diary supplied by RLM – *agenda item 13.*

0512.06 COMMERCIAL GROUP REPORT

MSR advised that a new colour of cover for the RO would be used for 2024 but that the choice was currently limited due to technical issues with the printer.

Regarding the number of pages in the RO, there was nothing in the Society's Rules requiring a minimum number of pages, just that a magazine should be produced 12 times each year.

A new International editor was being sought.

DBB advised that the new digital publications had boosted 'publications' income but that 2023 was better than 2022 for hard copy sales as well, although quiet at the year end as there were no new publications. Two books should be published in the first half of 2024. Ways of marketing to the trade were being reconsidered. It was agreed that an appeal for authors should be made via the Branch Newsletters with a request to branches to bring up at their meetings. **DBB/ILR AP13**

The Officers' Directory had not been published and should be expedited. **MSR AP14**

JM asked if the Chair of the Commercial Group was to be rotated between MSR and DBB as originally proposed. Decision requested. **MSR/DBB AP15**

0512.07 FINANCE GROUP REPORT

Doc 07 refers. ARW reported that the full expected bequest had been received,
REDACTED

Membership renewal income was being received at an acceptable rate including donations to date of £2,086. Direct debits for existing members would be activated on 15th December.

JR had advised that for the current 165 life members a life expectancy of 10 years should be used and funds had been allocated accordingly.

Work on the year end accounts was well underway but the 'usual' branches were late in submitting their returns. ARW to advise ILR those requiring a follow up. **ARW/ILR AP16**

ARW had advised that he would be having medical treatment in January and that DPG would have the means to action finance and payment matters if required.

0512.08 STRATEGY GROUP

DMC advised that at the recent SG meeting advertising was discussed and that a revised advert format and advertising plan had been agreed.

REDACTED

A more general discussion on advertising concluded that wherever possible all membership adverts should include a mention for both digital and hardcopy publications and vice versa and that more co-ordination was required between the governance groups.

Little progress had been made on a 2024 Membership event, but a positive response had been received from the 1066 DMU group about use of their DEMU on a railtour in our Centenary Year of 2028.

DMC was concerned about the possible decreasing interest in the Society nameplate collection and would produce a paper for BT32. **DMC AP17**

The SG had produced, as requested, a list of ideas for the use of Society funds (Doc 08). It was suggested that funds should only be used for 'projects and investments' that would add to the Society offering and not for subsidising regular society operational activities such as Zoom meetings. The SG was thanked for its efforts in its discussions and producing the paper. The content of the SG paper were "duly noted" [Explanation: "duly noted" is a specific term often found in Minutes to show that all present gave proper consideration, and that this was recorded appropriately]. Given the caveats about using funds as a form of subsidy, the Trustees would be happy to receive specific proposals, and consider approval, whenever such proposals are laid before a BT meeting.

0512.09 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

See Doc 09. DPG advised that 38 new direct debits had been received. After some chasing, less than 500 members had still not responded to the first joining invitation. Some 48% of members are now paying their subscription by direct debit. 49 resignations and nine Member deaths have been recorded. DPG had not seen any adverse reaction to the increase in the 2024 membership rates.

There had been no significant surge in demand for Paid Life Membership, although this will become clearer in the next few weeks.

0512.10 CHAIRMAN'S OUTREACH UPDATE

REDACTED

0512.11 LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE UPDATE

Doc 11 refers. A rates demand has been received which included an 80% charity rebate. ARW advised that this has not been paid as some charities are entitled to a full rebate and this has been requested and a reply from the Council is awaited. JM requested that documents submitted for Trustee consideration contain only the information necessary to keep them informed or make decisions; the full supporting documents should be provided to the relevant Governance Group.

0512.12 TRUSTEE UPDATE

Doc 12 received which advised that MS was tendering his resignation from the Trustees effective from 31st December 2023. JM thanked him for his speedy response to all requests and for his, on occasions, challenging and constructive input to the Trustee debates. MS will remain as the Society's Digital Officer and continue to project lead the Society's digitisation of its photographic archive.

0512.13 MEETINGS DIARY

See Doc 13. ILR advised that the 2024 Member's Weekend would be in Portsmouth from 27-29 September 2024. RLM requested that the Strategy and Finance Group meeting dates be advised to him.

DMC/ARW AP19

0512.14 DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

27th January 2024 by Zoom starting at 10:00 am.

The meeting closed at 20:40

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 07 Finance Group Update
- 08 Strategy Group paper on "Use of Society Funds"
- 09 Membership Statistics as at 30 November 2023
- 10a Position Paper LCGB
- 10b Position Paper SLS
- 11 Archive and Library Report
- 12 Trustee Resignation
- 13 Meetings Diary

BT31 ACTION POINTS

AP1	Escalate Lease signing issue - now with the Society Solicitors.	APD
AP2	Complete Affiliates list at year end.	APD/DMC
AP3	Appoint Digital Archive Manager.	MS
AP4	Develop/provide analysis of member recruitment by month/source.	DPG/DMC
AP5	Review Society rules and policies. Rule review ongoing.	RLM
AP6	Purchase dehumidifiers for Leatherhead. Measure moisture levels.	DPG/APD
AP7	Place editorial team volunteer request in the Officer's Newsletter.	MSR/ILR
AP8	Review Collections policy document for BT32.	APD
AP9	Seek archive accreditation on the National Museums Archive register.	APD
AP10	Arrange meeting to discuss rolling membership.	DC
AP11	Complete and analyse branch attendance data. Get data from 'missing' branches/establish reason for not replying.	ILR
AP12	Circulate revised Officer's Handbook. Text in relation to branch AGMs requires revision.	ILR
AP13	Put author request in Branch newsletter.	DBB/ILR
AP14	Publish 2024 Officer's Directory asap.	MSR
AP15	Confirm 2024 Chair of the Commercial Group.	MSR/DBB
AP16	Advise names of branches where accounts are required/chase up.	ARW/ILR
AP17	Prepare nameplate collection paper for BT32.	DMC
AP18	Circulate copy of NDA agreement to Trustees.	RLM
AP19	Advise Governance Group Meeting dates to RLM.	ARW/DMC