

Draft Minutes of the 10th Annual General Meeting of the Railway Development Society Ltd
Held at the Central Quaker Meeting House in Sheffield;
On Sat 10th May 2014.

Lists of those present, apologies for absence, and proxy votes received, are tabled as Appendices.

Morning Session.

This consisted of: -

- A Welcome from the Lord Mayor - In her jovial address, she recounted her memories of Victoria Station. And this certainly brought a “resonance” to many of those present!
- An address from Railfuture’s Honorary President, Christian Wolmar. In his “overview”, he emphasised current positive developments on the Rail Network. He looks for franchises that work and develop, rather than just the “vanilla” ones. He notes that Network Rail’s Control Period 5 CCP5, which runs from 2014-19) is largely for finishing off projects. He was scathing about certain aspects of HS2. A system consisting only of 5 parkways and 4 terminals is not a railway! And he is agonising over certain crucial details; one of which is Sheffield Station vs. Meadowhall Station; or maybe both?
- Guest Speaker N^o 1, Mary Creagh, Lab MP for Wakefield and Shadow Transport Secretary. Her vision is to get transport working for the population. She listed a whole catalogue of aspects and topics. She displayed a thorough knowledge of the subject, which the audience found very re-assuring; even if she did rattle through the topics at break-neck speed! She talked about HS2, RoSCO’s, infrastructure projects, fares, Dawlish, railway re-openings, and links to HS lines from the regions. Indeed, her speech would form the basis of a complete manifesto for the entire British railway industry!
- Guest Speaker N^o 2, Chris Bell, Chairman of Don Valley Railway, a local campaign group. This railway is a “rump” of the Woodhead Route. It remains in use a single line freight route to the Steelworks at Stocksbridge. But it could be usefully employed as a passenger railway as well. With an 11-minute journey time, one unit could maintain a ½ hourly shuttle service. The suggestion is to get this basic running to Victoria operating first; then link the operation into the rest of Sheffield’s Transport Network? If the “units” [whatever they turn out to be?] proceed beyond Sheffield Victoria, then a considerable number of options become available. Further intermediate stops would require both additional infrastructure and rolling stock.
- Guest Speaker N^o 3, Peter Marshall, Chairman of Huddersfield, Penistone, Sheffield Rail Users Association. This railway has suffered from being split between two Passenger Transport Authorities for many years; the boundary happens to fall just north of Penistone. Singling of the line has been both a saviour and a constrictor; for example, one 16-minute section cannot spawn a ½ hourly service! The role of any Users Group is to be wide ranging, to encompass all relevant aspects; and over a long period of time too. Franchisees are only interested for the length of their franchise; the Group is looking beyond Network Rail CP5, through CP6, and into CP7! What will be the state of things on the route in 50 years’ time [nobody can realistically know the answer to that!]? The Association’s role will be to encourage the powers that be, to make useful capacity improvements. For example, a 17-mile single track section, needs to be broken up into manageable 12- or 13-minute pieces, in order to make a half hourly frequency achievable. The group is there for the long haul.

Afternoon Session - formal proceedings of the AGM

- 1) The Chairman, David Berman, took the Chair for the 10th Annual General Meeting of the Railway Development Society Limited; which campaigns as Railfuture.
- 2) The draft Minutes of the 2013 AGM had been circulated; and these were duly approved.
- 3) There were no specific matters arising from those Minutes.
- 4) The Honorary President [Christian Wolmar] gave his address. He gave a very upbeat picture of his principal activities during the year. His highlight was probably Railfuture's Commons Reception, which attracted 40 MPs. Grass roots' campaigning is worthwhile; but each item is individual and particular. He listed Ashford to Hastings, and Oxford to Cambridge. But exhorted us to go back to our own areas and campaign.
- 5) David Berman gave a verbal summary around the report - referring to the "glossy" Annual Report; which had been produced by Ray King. He emphasised five points for clarification. A) Has Railfuture peaked? No, it is still virile. B) Dawlish has proved that nature is above the law; there has to be another route. C) More use has to be made of the Melton Mowbray line. D) The 40 MPs at the Reception, was far more than the usual dozen! E) All campaigning needs to be a team effort; including along the corridors of power.
- 6) Financial Report. David Harby commenced with some general comments. Railfuture needs to operate using more than one bank account. But there are considerable difficulties in opening a bank account these days. Going down the "charity line" may well not be appropriate for Railfuture. Meeting locations need to be "sensible" to keep costs reasonable. Using the Fighting Fund for campaigns is an appropriate use of money. PayPal is working well for gathering subscriptions. There are a couple of legacies in the pipeline; so remember to write your Will! Although a deficit has been recorded within the year, it is a measure sensible activity. Shares would bring in greater income than bank interest; money laundering has cost everybody dearly! The Report was proposed for acceptance and adoption by Roger Blake, seconded by Ben Walsh, and passed "nem con".
- 7) The Reporting Accountant, Tony Sheward, issued his certificate. It is an internal audit, as the turnover is insufficient to require a full independent audit. If we were a charity, we would have two masters, Companies House and the Charity Commission. He commended the 'Guidelines issued to Branch Treasurers' document and reminded us of the appropriate use of the Welsh language.
- 8) Tony Sheward was re-appointed for the following year.
- 9) David Berman was the only nomination for Chairman; and was therefore elected for another year. The results of the election for Directors, appears as Appendix C. There is a perceived need for a Director of Policy, to check on the direction Railfuture is heading - and correct if necessary. The retired former Managing Director of London Rail, Ian Brown CBE FCILT, one of the newly elected Directors, was invited to take on this role.
- 10) The Honorary President [Christian Wolmar] was re-appointed by the Meeting. The existing Honorary Vice Presidents were all re-appointed. Four more politicians had been approached to be Vice Presidents; and all had accepted the invitation. They are tabled in Appendix D.
- 11) No formal Motions had been received for debate.
- 12) David Berman reviewed the Meeting. The bottom line for Railfuture is effective campaigning. By definition, that will involve media exposure. This must be done calmly, and be sprung from agreed Branch [and National] Policies; no-one must use the Railfuture banner for individual "pet schemes". Campaigning must be for projects which have a reasonable chance of succeeding. The key issue on the Railway today is Capacity, both fixed equipment and rolling stock. Recruitment is vital to Railfuture; as it is in many organisations these days. Directors can only lead, it is members who activate.

Appendix A

Members & Visitors Present

This information is redacted on the web-site but is available to members.

Appendix B

Apologies for Absence

This information is redacted on the web-site but is available to members.

Appendix C

Election of Directors

Three Directors were required; and there were six nominations. The votes cast were:-

Ian Brown	288	Elected
Jerry Alderson	221	Elected
Wendy Thorne	218	Elected
Trevor Garrod	189	
Andrew MacFarlane	182	
Ian McDonald	113	

Over 200 people had used the on-line voting system. The poll had been audited by John Bradley.

Appendix D

Appointment of Political Vice Presidents

Martin Vickers	Cleethorpes	Con
Tom Harries	Glasgow South	Lab
Stewart Stevenson	MSP	SNP
Simon Thomas	AM	PC

All existing Vice Presidents who wished to continue were re-appointed. Their names and photographs are shown on the Railfuture web-site at www.railfuture.org.uk/vice+presidents.

Appendix E

Proxy Votes

This information is redacted on the web-site but is available to members.

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