

## **Minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Poulton & Wyre Railway Society Held in the WBC Council Chamber on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2017 commencing at 7pm**

### **1. Introduction by Acting Chairman: Brian Crawford (486)**

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and a warm welcome to the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Poulton and Wyre Railway Society.

I have not been informed of any fire alarms so if one goes off, please leave by the several exits and gather in the rear car park. Toilets are through the rear doors and facing you on the far wall.

12 months ago, I was newly elected onto the Executive Committee with the responsibility for taking meeting minutes. This evolved into my taking on the role of General Secretary and then due to the sad and unexpected death of our Chairman, Jeff Banks, earlier this year, I also took on the role of Acting Chairman.

Jeff worked very hard for many years for our Society and I had got used to working with him for the short time I was able to. He will be very much missed and I was most impressed by the very many people who turned out for his funeral at Lytham on the 11<sup>th</sup> May. I was further impressed by the many donations made and the fact that his family ensured the donations came to the PWRS to be used in his memory.

During the past year while attending the monthly Executive Committee meetings, I have also been further impressed by the volunteer work carried out by PWRS Executive Committee Officers and other volunteers. A summary of the excellent work carried out will be given by our Project Manager, Geoff Ogden later. However, I must also praise the tremendous work carried out by our Treasurer, Susan Cox and Membership Secretary, Nick McCrudden.

Susan works very hard to ensure we are always within budget and gives full details of accounts at every meeting. She will be presenting our Annual Accounts later in the meeting and which to our great relief, were received from the Auditors just this week.

Nick also works hard to recruit new members and attempts to retain those we already have. Membership is slightly up on last year at this time when we had about 185 members with 32 left to rejoin.

This year we have a total of 197 members with 36 still not renewed from last year.

The total membership towards the end of the last membership year in July was 220.

The target for this year should be at least 225.

More members are renewing because the "On Track" magazine is posted out to all members, and news of the D.M.U. and Fowler Shunter being very nearly ready.

We have been fairly successful in obtaining grants towards the DMU restoration and other Society costs. An amount of £10,000 was secured from DONG Offshore Windfarm funding

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through GrantScape and is being spent as I speak on the DMU. Other welcome smaller donations have been received from Fleetwood Town Council and Fleetwood Masons and other local community groups. We will carry on putting in funding bids for future grants as funding pots become available as there is still a long way to go and much more work to be carried out.

We had an excellent day on Tram Sunday this year thanks to a great input from our team with more welcome donations. We are planning on acquiring more professional materials to enhance our displays at future events.

Thank you for attending and now onto the next item on the Agenda.

## 2. Attendees:

There were 51 members present and signed in, together with membership numbers.

## 3. Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Ron Stott, Mary Stirzaker (500), Graham Crow, Lenny Wynn, John Goodier, Bill Eccles, Neville Bramhall (428) and William Wright (528).

## 4. Accept minutes of the last Annual General meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016:

The Acting Chairman stated that the draft minutes of the 2016 AGM had been circulated to all members on email with no amendments received, the acceptance of the draft minutes was proposed by Peter Williams (350) and seconded by Ian Johnstone (141) and passed.

## 5. Matters arising from the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting:

There were no matters arising.

## 6. PWRS Annual Report:

The Annual Report was given by the PWRS Project Manager Geoff Ogden (164).

Geoff showed various slides each containing a number of photographs illustrating the work that has been achieved over the past year. In particular:-

### Permanent Way

Photograph of the team drinking tea prior to shifting ballast out of the way to provide space for the penultimate track panel of the delivery spur. Jeff Banks our late Chairman is central in this photograph and was enjoying his return to active involvement after a period of illness. Unfortunately, Jeff died suddenly, it is a great loss to the Society and he will be sorely missed.

The next couple of photographs show the team in action moving the ballast and the scale of the task can be appreciated from their contents. A snapshot after the task was completed left no doubt where the track panel was to be laid. The last photograph showed the completed track panel which led into a video where a trolley mounted camera traversed the complete length of the spur.

### Thornton Station

A picture of the entrance to the station before any work had been undertaken. It was completely overgrown and some locals walked past everyday completely unaware there was a station behind the overgrown jungle. Another to show the state of the working platform before removing vegetation. The story developed with an illustration of the work involved in moving scrapings by hand to the working platform. This was followed by a picture of the first row of flags being laid and then the finished approach up the platform ramp. The start and finish of the installation of a large wooden fence demonstrated yet another of the many projects undertaken by the Thornton Team.

The remaining photographs were a review of floral decorations planted as part of the Thornton in

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Bloom competition. The final photograph was a picture of team members responsible taken outside the ticket office being looked down on by the newly restored station clock.

## **Burn Naze Station**

A sequence of photographs showing the flags laid along the working platform. The photographs illustrated the step increase from an initial row to the current position of approximately 45 rows each containing on average 4.5 flags. The flagged area starts just after the fog hut and is preceded by a compacted platform surface of road scrapings. These scrapings came from Breck road just outside the Civic Centre when it was refurbished. A brilliant example of recycling by the PWRs. The slides continued with the team in charge of erecting a wooden gate to stop people traversing down the ramp and onto the line. Another slide showed the entrance gate to the viewing area where future shots of the Tornado can be taken with an unrestricted view. A few snaps to show its construction and the magnificent display of hyacinths whose scent can only be described as heavenly.

A PortaKabin donated by the Ice Company at Fleetwood was shown being lifted over the fence onto the non-working platform. This is a temporary measure as it is intended to move it to the working platform where it will form the basis of some simple catering facilities. The remaining slides described the preparation for installing a gate in the palisade fencing adjacent to the road at the back of the non-working platform. These gates have dramatically increased our effectiveness in delivering materials for projects at Burn Naze and all points north towards the buffer stops.

## **Jameson Rd**

The opening photographs displayed the clearance work around the track bed starting at the Bridge and stretching towards the distant south. The transition from a fly tipping site into a recognisable railway track is exceptional considering the small number involved in the project.

It does not stop there, a sequence of photographs reveals the excavation, landscaping, provision of rockeries in bloom and a compound area laid with a base ready to receive a wooden building. The concluding shots show the building being erected and the team involved. The final picture gives a wide-angle view from the bridge and with a little imagination you can see where the platform will be, how the people will exit the platform through the gardens and an area that might be available for a car park. An outstanding achievement by the few involved.

## **Health and Safety and Training**

The next section is an attempt to demonstrate the Society's approach to training and Health and Safety. The first slide explained how the majority of working volunteers had attended a basic track safety course so they will know how to respond correctly in the event of any train movements and how to negotiate the track safely.

Slide two displayed the training program for a basic chain saw course. The Society made £2000 from selling logs last year and we need to make sure we prepare the product safely. The course involves theory and practice which ensures we will have a pool of operatives to maintain this primary source of income for the society.

Slide three was a risk assessment extract for the running of the chain saw course. These documents have to be prepared for any activities not covered by our generic risk assessment for the day to day activities in which we are involved. Loved by some and hated by many these documents certainly focus the mind and ensure the amount of risk for a potentially dangerous activity is reduced as much as possible.

The final slide showed a safe system of work between ourselves and Allan Hargreaves who is leased a small section of track between Burn Naze Station and Hillylaid crossing. The document has been prepared by an industry professional and spells out how Allan and the Society need to interact to any proposed movements of track machinery. This document together with the

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previously mentioned basic track safety course was a requirement for the renewal of our community licence this year.

## **John Fowler Locomotive**

The first and only slide was a picture of the John Fowler with smoke coming out of the exhaust as it was restarted earlier on this year. The next offering was a video showing all six inspection doors removed, the engine ticking over and a complete traverse of the engine revealing all the moving parts in operation.

The next stage is to get a fitness to run exam (MOT) and the team are finishing off a few items before that occurs. Assuming a fitness to run exam is achieved and there are no unforeseen surprises a decision to fit vacuum brakes needs to be taken. It may be that the Fowler pulling a brake van with certain safeguards in place will not need vacuum brakes. Watch this space.

## **DMU 108**

The opening video captured the DMU being moved from the sheds to a platform so that we could begin work on it down at Butterley during our first visit. The next photographs showed the team cleaning the front and side of the power car and the difference between the parts cleaned and those not is amazing. There was a picture of the cab after a thorough degrease and a panoramic view manufactured by merging three photographs to give an indication of the drivers view.

The next shots pictured the floor of the power car devoid of seat frames being thoroughly cleaned, then the seat frames being temporarily replaced from the stock of items in the trailer car. The team responsible for the hard work were shown in the penultimate picture. The final picture shows the current state of the trailer car after the corroded steel has been cut away and new plate welded in. The front buffer has also been replaced.

A second visit to Butterly removed all the seat frames and seats for the power and trailer car and returned them to the NPL workshops. The seats frames for the power car have been powder coated and over half of the power car cushions have been cleaned and if necessary repaired. A system now needs to be set up to reassemble each frame seat and back ready for installation into the power car as well as refurbishing the remaining seat backs and cushions.

The work involved in repainting both cars, refurbishing the cabs and overhauling the engines is expected to take twelve months. This will occur after the current job of riveting the roofs of both units is completed. These jobs will be performed at Butterly before the units are brought back home.

## **Transport**

The society have three trailers at their disposal. Slide 1 shows our largest which used to be a caravan until our well renowned response team got their hands on it. Slide two shows the middle trailer of the trio loaded with logs on route to Thornton Station.

These trailers have moved a mammoth amount of materials over the last twelve months and because they are trailers they need motive power. This is usually in the shape of volunteer's cars. I think the time is now ripe for the Society to look into a feasibility study of providing some form of transport to ship our ever-growing mound of materials around the locality.

## **In closing**

The achievements you have seen tonight are due to a dedicated team of volunteers whose hard work and tenacity has made it possible. Thanks to all those involved.

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## 7. PWRS Annual Financial Report:

The Annual Financial Report was given by the Society Treasurer, Susan Cox (437)

Firstly, an apology for the fact that last year's Annual Accounts had not been circulated due to an error in communication.

In order to give more time to close the accounts for the last financial year, prepare and carry out an audit, this has been a 9 months accounting period from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. Future accounting years will be from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March, being a full 12-month period.

The thanks of the Society members go to the auditor, Peter Boysen, who has once again carried out the audit at no charge to the Society.

Bankers for the Society remain Santander who provide Business Banking which appears secure, at no charge. The availability of BACS payments to suppliers brings the Society into line with modern banking. Since the close of accounts, the RBS cheque only account has been made available for the use of the Trust.

The Society started the year with just under £5,000 in the funds and ended with £15,000. The majority of this increased amount has been realised from grants for use on the DMU being refurbished at Midland Rail and for works on the Jameson Road portion of the line.

A monthly standing order for £250 was paid to Midland Rail to offset storage charges for the DMU. This shows as a total of £1500 in the accounts. When work started on the refurbishment, this amount was used in the first stage works.

The Society is now registered for VAT purposes. As more is spent on VATable goods and services than is charged, this has turned out to be a worthwhile exercise. Quarterly returns are made to HMRC and the net excess is paid into the Society account. Since the close of accounts on 31<sup>st</sup> March, I have been able to submit a return and reclaim back VAT paid over the past three years since I took on the accounts.

Due diligence is paid to spending the Society's money. Apart from the ongoing annual payments for insurance, membership fees and ON TRACK magazine costs, major amounts are pre-agreed at Executive Committee meetings. Any items paid by BACS internet payment are agreed by the co-signatories on the bank account. Cash reimbursements are signed for after VAT receipts are produced.

The Treasurer asked for any questions – none were received. She therefore moved adoption of this report. Proposed Peter Williams (350) and seconded by Dave Evans (85) and accepted.

8. **PWRS Executive Committee proposal:** to accept amended PWRS Constitution document dated 17.07.2017 as circulated to all members registered for emails: No amendments have been received. Seconded by Oli Harrison (329) and accepted.
9. **PWRS Executive Committee proposal:** to accept Disciplinary Procedure document dated 11.07.2016 as circulated to all members registered for emails: No amendments have been received. Seconded by Oli Harrison (329) and accepted.



**10. Election of PWRS Officers and Executive Committee: (Maximum 15)**

The Acting Chairman stated that the correct procedure for nominations had been carried out and that only nominations for the present 4 Principal Officers have been received, duly proposed and seconded in accordance with the new Constitution. Therefore he called for a show of hands for their election en-block. There were no votes against so the following Principal Officers were elected.

- a. Chairman:** Brian Crawford (486)
- b. General Secretary:** Brian Crawford (486)
- c. Membership Secretary:** Nick McCrudden (274)
- d. Treasurer:** Susan Cox (437)
- e. All other members of the Executive Committee:**

The Chairman stated that the correct procedure for nominations had been carried out and that only nominations for the Executive Committee members listed below have been received, duly proposed and seconded in accordance with the new Constitution. Therefore he called for a show of hands for their election en-block. There were no votes against so the following members of the Executive Committee were elected.

Geoff Ogden (GO), Richard Rossall (RR), Peter Banks (PB), Nigel Kirkpatrick (NK), Sid Best (SB), Simon Miller (SM), Peter Williams (PW), Bill Eccles (BE), Mary Stirzaker (MS) and David Cox (DC).

**11. Any other Business:**

- a.** Gordon Whyatt (74) requested the way forward with respect to the PWR Trust particularly on storage and operations.  
(Although this was a question concerning the Trust and not directed at a Society issue, the Chairman asked if the PWRS President and ex-Co-Chairman and member of the Trust, Eddie Fisher, would like to respond.)  
Eddie Fisher stated that initial operations would involve a short section of line between Hillylaid crossing and Thornton Station once a lease from Network Rail is in place. It is a slow process but proceeding. We are also compiling an up to date and comprehensive business plan and will soon be setting up an operating company, of which several Directors are current or ex-railway personnel with a great deal of required experience. We are exploring several storage options at the moment.
- b.** Oli Harrison (329) requested an update on signal boxes made redundant by Network Rail at Carlton and Poulton.  
Eddie Fisher responded by stating that Network Rail had handed the disposal over to contractors who will be demolishing them. We are still hoping for something.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Signed as an approved true record of proceedings:

Chairman: ..... Date: .....

(NOTE: 2018 AGM booked for 19<sup>th</sup> September 7pm WBC)

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