

## **NORTHAMPTON RAIL USERS' GROUP**

### **Minutes of meeting held 7th February 2009 at The Guildhall, Northampton**

**Present** Linda Addy, Colin Bricher Julie Chambers, John Ellerby (NCC), Peter Godchild (BTP), Alan Jones, Sally Keeble, Paul Minton, Geoff Steel, Elisabeth Townsend

**Apologies:** Mitzi Latham (L-M), Gyde Horrocks, Shaun Hope, Tom Welsh and in view of the poor weather and travel conditions a presumed apology from all other members not present.

**Minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> December Meeting:** agreed, except that Julie had sent apologies.

#### **British Transport Police**

Peter Goodchild of the BTP introduced himself and the role of the British Transport Police. Peter's group covers from King's Langley to Long Buckby and consists of a sergeant and 7 PCs. Peter reported that fatalities (2 have recently occurred) have a big impact due to the difficulty of getting to the scene, the current objective is to clear non suspicious fatalities within 90 minutes. To speed things up they have 3 motor cyclists to call upon to get to the scene.

A big problem affecting users is bicycle thefts at Northampton.

Shockingly there have been 23 staff assaults this year, with a 100% detection and prosecution rate.

User's expressed their concern over staffing late at night at Castle Station and the consequent feeling of poor security. Peter said part of the motor bike team's remit was to call at appropriate times to provide a presence. A suggestion was a help phone at the station with a direct connection to the police.

#### **LM Report**

Mitzi sent here apologies, not surprisingly in view of the weeks poor weather and related problems she or anyone else from LM was able to attend.

#### **Timetable & Issues**

Sally reported back on her meetings with Mike Haigh and Geoff Hoon. Topics covered were the new timetable, the 07.12 replacement, timetable tweaking and fast track access.

Mike Haigh acknowledged the poor start to the new timetable and the problems caused by staff out of place, getting staff into the right place is a continuing problem. Staffing for Sunday services remains an issue. There seems to be common agreement that monumental mistakes were made in implementing the new timetable.

Sally met Geoff Hoon along with Brian Binley. The case for the 07.12 replacement, timetable tweaks, fast line access and routes north were made. The point about a quick train arriving Euston before 08.00 was taken on board. The Scottish and northern routes will depend on the new company to be set up to serve this franchise.

To move the agenda forward we need the figures for the use of the new services post 07.12 removal, which is currently difficult to tell due to the general chaos following the timetable introduction, the WCML infrastructure failures in January, the repeated cancellation of the 06.42, the bad weather, and now the temporary replacement of the 06.42 Pendolino with a Voyager with too few seats forcing people to use other morning

services. Coupling [problems with the 07.03 causing it to be delayed adds to the sorry story.

The intercity express 2014 seems to be slipping away.

John Ellerby is trying to set up a meeting of NRUG, MKRUG, the relevant transport authorities and LM. Mike Haigh has said he wants to see NRUG alone and have separate meetings with the other stakeholder groups.

### **Way ahead on timetable & Service Issues**

Work with LM to get better services

Get MK infrastructure fully utilised to the benefit of MK and N'ton

Consider our input into the 2012 Virgin re-franchise, especially regarding removal of moderation of competition

Invite Geoff Hoon to visit Northampton

Encourage the new WNDG chairman to be more alive to transport

Organise a joint MKRUG NRG meeting - Geoff Steel will talk to Phillip Haughton. The suggested location is Euston to maximise getting people to attend. The objective of this meeting is to agree on what to work on and how to take a co-ordinated approach.

### **AOB**

By observation the Crewe service does not work well - it terminates at Northampton too often and fails to connect to anything decent at Crewe. Tamworth also has no connectivity.

The next "meet the manager meeting" at Northampton is scheduled for 07.30 to 09.30 at Northampton - most of us will be on trains or already at work by then - the timing does not work. PAM to write to LM to ask for a different time.

**Next Meetings:** 7<sup>th</sup> March 2009, 4th April 2009

NORTHAMPTON RAIL USERS GROUP

Secretary: Paul Minton, e-mail pamin100@aol.com

Liaison Officer: Elisabeth Townsend, e-mail elisabeth-townsend@lineone.net

**Agenda for meeting on**  
**Saturday 7th March 2009**

**at**  
**THE GUILDHALL**  
**NORTHAMPTON**  
**at 10.00 AM**

1. 10.00 - Attendance and apologies
2. 10.02 - Minutes of 7<sup>th</sup> February meeting and matters arising not appearing elsewhere on the agenda
3. 10.05 - London Midland Report
4. 10.20 - Virgin Report
5. 10.30 - Timetable & Service issues and campaigns
  - service usage figures etc
  - cancellation statistics etc
  - MKRUG meeting and way ahead
  - Geoff Hoon visit to Northampton
  - Transport Authority, RUGs, MKRUG, LM meeting
6. 11.30 - AOB.
  - (Please notify the Chair before the meeting of any items of AOB to be discussed.)
7. 11.45 - Meeting closes

**Date of next meeting: 4<sup>th</sup> April 2009.**