

NORTHAMPTON RAIL USERS GROUP

Minutes of Meeting held 2nd July 2011

Those Present & Apologies:

Apologies from the Secretary – the list circulated for signature has not been returned/has gone missing and we have no record.

Minutes of Last Meeting: Accepted.

The group were very pleased to welcome Nicola Moss, Head of Franchise Management for London Midland. Nicola's responsibilities include liaison with interest groups such as ours. For background Nicola offered to meet us after we sent a letter to the MD expressing our concerns over lack of preparedness for the bad weather last winter, poor information, lack of train crews and not having resolved the Sunday working issues. More recently we added franchise renewal to that list.

NICOLA MOSS PRESENTATION

NRUG is viewed as having a positive attitude and LM wants to build on this foundation of mutual understanding, recognising that this will not be without the occasional challenge.

The severe deterioration in service in adverse weather was preventative measures to address this in subsequent years was discussed. Exposed points were highlighted a specific example. LM has raised this with NR and Nicola will provide NR with an update. A number of other extreme cold weather measures were described, both for intra-structure and rolling stock.

Tom Welsh mentioned local climate dynamic changes and the need for the railway operators to understand and respond to these. Tom Welsh said he would provide Nicola with more information.

LM performance (PPM, trains arriving with 5 minutes of timetabled arrival time) is currently running at 89.7%, having seen lows of 83.2% and highs of 90.8%. The target is to be in the top third of TOCs for this measure within 18 months.

Recovery from the disruption and decline in service caused by the Sunday working dispute has been good. The dispute has been resolved following a number of legal complications requiring a negotiated solution. There is now a 3 year pay deal in place and the former Central and Silverlink holiday discrepancy has been harmonised. Sunday working remains voluntary, the new arrangement bring stability and means ASLEF and LM will co-operate to resolve any issues which might arise.

The present travel information arrangements at Castle Station were discussed. Currently the desk is behind the barriers, the former travel centre location is thought to be a more logical location.

LM are awaiting data from LOCOG to assist in planning of services based upon known numbers of ticket holders. The same plan will be in place for the Paralympics. Brian Binley said he would write to Hugh Robertson to highlight these issues,

LM does not yet have access to 2012 funding for disabled access. Tom Welsh highlighted the challenges faced by disabled people. Nicola pointed out that 24 hours notice is helpful but not an absolute requirement. Nicola was asked to provide an update for the next NRUG meeting.

Nicola outlined the results of the Passenger Focus passenger satisfaction survey. LM were 15th out of 20 with an average score of 83% vs a national average of 84%. The survey was performed in the midst of the Sunday working dispute. LM have set targets of 85% for 2011 and 88% for 2015, with an ambition to achieve 90%. The spring 2011 survey scores were: punctuality and reliability 76% vs national score of 80%, attitude and helpfulness 63% (vs national score of 64%). LM was the most improved company. The information booth at Euston was raised as an issue.

Three trains per hour Birmingham Euston will be timetabled from September 2011.

The removal of moderation of competition in 2012 is expected to result in some Trent Valley service improvements.

The NR/ORR timetable review continues.

The three hour gap in evening service services to Crewe was raised. Nicola will investigate and respond.

A further stakeholder conference is being planned for the autumn.

Proposals are under consideration to extend realisation on investments to beyond the terms of the franchise.

LM has made applications for gateways at Euston.

Another tranche is to be launched in October. The scheme must make a substantial cost return.

Nicola will return again to coincide with a quarterly LM local team slot.

Brian thanked Nicola for coming and the time she spent on this presentation.

CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN

Tom Welsh spoke on connectivity between Castle Station and the town centre.

Action - remind Matt Golby about the presentation on the CAAP.

AGM

Brian gave the Chairmans's report:

This has been quite a productive year with progress made. University representation has been re-established and involvement with WNDC has been a major success with the formation of strong working relationships with John Markham and Peter Mawson.

Good cross party representation for NRUG has continued.

NRUG has invited the bidders for the franchise to give presentations to NRUG.

The new station has been a prime NRUG objective and has a high profile following the WNDC presentation. The meeting in March also revealed the Secretary of State to be very supportive. A productive meeting was also held between WNDC and David Higgins of NR.

We would like to see NRUG contribute its views and expertise to the development of Northampton.

Northampton will benefit from the freed up capacity resulting from HS-2. Brian has been invited to chair the hybrid bill committee for HS-2, which he is considering.

The financial report was approved.

The following proposals were made for officers:

Sally Keeble proposed for the position of President, Brian Binley for Chair. There are no nominees for Vice Chair. A joint secretary position shared by Paul Smith and Geoff Steel was proposed. There was no nomination for treasurer.

Election of officers was deferred to the September meeting and completion of the AGM adjourned until then.

ACTION ITEMS

Arrange dates to meet the franchise bidders

E-mail to the University of Northampton regarding presence of the University of Northampton transport committee at NRUG meetings – **PAM – done and representation arranged**

Add Chamber of Commerce to circulation list – **Paul Minton**

Write to NR re need for heated points at Riverside and Kings Heath – **PAM**

Submit ORR fares response – **PAM - done**

New rolling stock for LM – write again to CEO of LM to get confirmation of what we are getting by when – **BB, letter sent awaiting response**

Arrange Central Area Action Plan presentation to NRUG – **Matthew Golby**

Northampton Rail User's Group

**Agenda for Meeting to be held Saturday 3rd September 2011
The Guildhall, Northampton**

10.00-10.05: Meeting opens, apologies, minutes of last meeting and AOB

10.05-10.20: New Station

10.20-10.40: Busses/bus station (Patrick)

10.40-11.00: Franchise renewal

11.00-11.30: Review of action items

11.30-11.40: AOB

11.40-12.00: Completion of AGM

12.00: Meeting closes

Dates of next meetings:

October 1st

November 5th

December 3rd