

## **NORTHAMPTON RAIL USERS GROUP**

Minutes of Meeting held 7<sup>th</sup> May 2011

**Those Present:** Brian Binley MP , Colin Bricher, David Cheney John Ellerby (NCC), Shaun Hope, Sally Keeble, Paul Minton, Patrick Rawlinson, Geoff Steel, Tom Welsh, Timothy Webb, Paul Varnsberry, John Markham (WNDC), Callum Jones (Chron & Echo), Cllr Phil Larrett.

**Apologies:** Simon Butterworth, Cllr. Mathew Golby, Gyde Horrocks, Simon Mitchell, Cllr. Suresh Patel, Daniel Smith, Paul Smith, Elisabeth Townsend, David Trill.

**Minutes of Last Meeting:** Accepted

### **NEW STATION**

John Markham (WNDC) was welcomed to the meeting. John gave the following report of his meeting with David Higgins of Network Rail held the previous day:

Northampton is a priority growth area and still one of the fastest growing populations in the UK. It is one of the top 10 locations in the UK for employment.

WNDC will remain in place for a further 3 years to drive through some major redevelopments in Northampton, including the station.

John made the following points to David Higgins:

1. The current station is unfit for purpose – it is operating above capacity for both passengers and car parking.
2. WNDC want the new station to create an “iconic gateway” to Northampton.
3. It is proposed to double the size of the station.
4. The development has a good cost benefit ratio – and meets the DfT criteria.

The master plan has been done by BDP, who have a good reputation for this type of work. The outline design has been agreed with NR.

Planning approval from NBC is anticipated next week.

The challenge now is “the money”. A number of funding options need to be explored, including regional growth funds and the NR funds for smaller stations and partnership investments, which are all in addition to the main capital pot of funds. The car park will be self financing, the station is a strong candidate for the “solum agreement”, which is a NR agreement with Kier. EU funds may also be possible.

Other suggestions were to get planning gain from DIRFT, income from track access.

The viability would be enhanced if given Enterprise zone status, something WNDC, NBC are seeking.

BDP did not look at the traffic infrastructure, WNDC indicate a variety of options will be looked at.

The target date for completion is within the 3 year life of the UDC.

## **WCML RE-FRANCHISE**

We need to get in touch with the franchise bidders.

## **CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN**

For the July meeting.

### **AOB:**

Members are pleased to hear that Paul Smith is now out of hospital and making good progress.

Paul Varnsberry offered to stand down as vice chair now he is no longer a councillor. Members appreciate his frankness but hold a strong view that they want him to continue and welcomed his agreement to continue as vice chair.

Cllr Phil Larrett joined the meeting and was welcomed by Brian.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

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

Add UoN representative as blank line to attendance sheet - **PAM**

Make contact with Chiltern, Grand Central - **Paul Smith**

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

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

Background facts on fares increase – **Gyde Horrocks**

New rolling stock for LM – write again to CEO of LM to get confirmation of what we are getting by when – **Brian Binley**

Central area action plan presentation to NRUG – **Matthew Golby**

## **Northampton Rail User's Group**

### **Agenda for Meeting to be held Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2011 The Guildhall, Northampton**

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

10.05 – 11.00: London Midland

11.00-11.15: WNDC station meeting review – Patrick Rawlinson

11.15 – 11.30: WCML utilisation review - Geoff Steel

11.30-11.40: Franchise renewal

11.40 – 11.55 Review of action items

11.55 – 12.00: AOB

12.00 Meeting closes

#### **Dates of next meetings:**

July 2<sup>nd</sup>

September 3<sup>rd</sup>

October 1<sup>st</sup>

November 5<sup>th</sup>

December 3<sup>rd</sup>