



ABBEY FLYER USERS' GROUP

Watford Junction to St Albans Abbey Line

Minutes of the ABFLY committee

Tuesday 23rd May 2017

at the St Stephen Parish Centre, Bricket Wood

Present:

- David Horton (DH) – Chairman (by Facetime link)
- John Burke (JB)
- David Charlton (DC)
- Kevin Ambrose (KA)
- Robin White (RW) – Membership Secretary
- Trevor Gurd (TG)

Apologies:

- Roz Devlin (RD) – Treasurer

Actions / outcomes from meeting:

1. **Matters arising from last meeting (6th April) - Abfly Newsletter:** DH has drafted next edition which will be the last in paper format. Thereafter communications to be electronic (Website, Facebook, Twitter). **Actions agreed:**
 - a. **DH to send RW the labels for envelopes**
 - b. **RW & TG to select printer, advise DH so he can send copy electronically direct to printer.**
 - c. **RW & TG to arrange collection of printed copies, stuff envelopes & dispatch**
2. **Shuttle Bus (Abbey – City stations, St Albans):** JB undertook audit of posters & other publicity along Abbey Line stations passed details of lack of publicity to Lianne at Interlink (cc's CRP officer). Various members confirmed lack of posters or other publicity at various stations along route. TG advised that at previous week's CRP meeting, it was reported that average bus loading was 4-5 passengers. This echoed result of JB ticket analysis. RW reported that guards were announcing existence of shuttle but only that it goes to City station **Actions agreed:**
 - a. **JB to undertake another audit & take photos of any posters at stations**
 - b. **TG to contact Steve Helfert (SH) (London Midland) to ensure guards announce bus goes to City Centre as well as City station**
3. **Community Rail Partnership:** Discussion of ABFLY boycott of CRP meetings, DH in regular contact with Edna Woname (CRP Officer) re Bricket Wood station project and proposed steam train festival in May 2018. TG attends as rep for St Stephens Parish Council. KA had contacted Trevor Mason (Herts. CC) who advised that responses to last year's consultation on the Transport Vision (including Guided busway proposal) will inform the Local Transport Plan, the draft of which is due to go out to public consultation in September, with the final document being adopted in March 2018. DH asked what had CRP actually achieved apart from cosmetic changes at Abbey station.

Regarding future relationship, TG felt Abfly would be better in than out, not least to seek access to funds which HCC have for transport projects (feasibility study?) **Action:**

- a. **Agreed to defer decision on rejoining CRP until autumn when Herts CC's position on guided busway should be clearer.**
4. **Franchise Renewal:** Decision expected to be deferred 4-6 weeks due to general election, with consequent delay in commencement of new franchise.
5. **Report back from London Midland meeting:** TG had meeting with SH – advised on blockades at Euston (August) & Birmingham due to HS2 works. LM considering use of class 350s on branch. LM having to switch 319s twice a week for sand refilling. LM thinking of dropping “leaf-fall” timetable (following cull of lineside trees. The line’s revenue collector has now returned to work after extended sick leave. **Action:**
 - a. **TG to check with SH whether Abbey Line affected by blockades**
6. **London Midland stakeholders’ meeting:** Trevor Gurd attended event in Birmingham. Met Fay Lambert, LM’s new community liaison officer.
 - a. **TG to pass Fay’s email address to DH for DH to invite her to speak at AGM**
7. **Presentation on Abbey Line & Abfly:** KA with JB gave presentation on Abfly to Sopwell Residents’ Association. Attended by several local politicians and generally very positive response.
8. **Performance issues:** TG reported that at last CRP meeting, SH reported that 98% trains on time recorded. Extra late train had 10-12 passengers. Meeting questioned level of publicity. **Actions:**
 - a. **TG to raise need for extra publicity (posters, highlight in timetable etc.) for later train.**
9. **Revenue collection on line:** No ticket machines at Bricket Wood or How Wood. TG suggests machine at Bricket Wood needs to be better located & in view of CCTV. **Action:**
 - a. **TG to raise with SH (LM)**
10. **Membership:** Paid up members - c80, another c250 on list. 328 are on DH’s email list). **Actions:**
 - a. **RW to investigate possibility of standing orders**
 - b. **RW & TG to consider an on-train membership drive, using application forms derived from website.**
11. **Finance:**
 - a. **DH to contact RD to have accounts audited and ready for AGM.**
12. **Railway Consultancy’s GRIP 1 Feasibility Study:** So far, £295 had been submitted by members & supporters towards the cost of the study (£10,000). Plus so far £1,500 promised by two of the four county councilors along the route (SGM: £1,000 and SW: £500). **Action:**
 - a. **DH to pursue other two county councillors by email**
 - b. **KA to send DH list of Watford councillors (who have small locality budgets)**
 - c. **DH to write to St Peters’ Parish Council seeking donation.**
13. **Bricket Wood station project:** DH updated meeting & reported that Network Rail had offered the project group a 25 year lease at a peppercorn rent and were treating asbestos found in building. Group forming into a Community Interest Company. Project team setting up a Community Interest Organisation & inviting pledges. Issue over canopy maintenance.
14. **Steam Specials:** This is planned for 5-6 May 2018 (160 years since opening of line) & encouraging support from London Midland but will have to await franchise decision. CRP concerned about taking on risk. **Action:**

a. DH to pursue with new franchise holder when announced.

Dates for future meetings

- **AGM** – Wednesday 5th July (St Stephens Parish Centre)
- **Committee** – 7.30 pm, Wednesday 8th November (St Stephens Parish Centre)
- **Members/Public Meeting** – Monday 20th November (to be confirmed when venue found)

Kevin Ambrose

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24th May 2017