

# Destination Okehampton

Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Present: Kevin Ball, Tom Baxter, Chris Bligh, Steve Blood, Brian Finch, Clare Gladstone, Michael Ireland, Anne Johnson, Jon Kelsey, Tony Leech, Christine Marsh, Mike Moore, Richard Proctor, Richard Searight, Steve Whiteley, Paul Voaden & Paul Vachon.

Apologies: Mike Davies, Jan Goffey, Maureen MacDonald and Bob Rush.

Welcome by the Chair

Notes of the last meeting were approved. Proposed RS & Second CB.

Royal Oke – 18<sup>th</sup> March was a successful day with GWR showing commitment to another train event. Fantastic day despite technical problems with positive reviews. Many staff were volunteers. A discussion took place between CB, KB and MM regarding wheel slippage.

An article in *Rail Professional* gave us a high profile with good press coverage. Thanks to United Charities loan to make the day affordable for the local community.

Noted that there was to be a meeting of OkeRail Forum on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

KB told the meeting that Mel Stride [MP Central Devon] and Chris Grayling [Sec State for Transport] were talking about a trial service on the Okehampton to Exeter route. The intention was for at least a two year trial service [if the Government is returned].

Other points made relating to the service was the importance of the train stopping at Exeter Central; the new Okehampton Parkway station will take approximately 12 months to build.

Richard Proctor told the meeting that he hoped to find out very soon the numbers of volunteers permitted for the survey. Questions for this year will change due to trial service. The questionnaire will be shorter with questions of the reason Exeter travellers are visiting Okehampton. Richard read out the questions and it was agreed they were correct.

Town Guide – PV showed visuals of a 24 page guide and Web site proposal. He explained that the walks leaflet went really well

last year. KB commented we should have an APP. Richard Searight stressed the importance of a marketing plan. The funding for the Guide was estimated to be between £800 – 900 for 5,000 copies. It was hoped this could be funded from the Locality Budget. TAP funding was also seen as another possible source of funding.

Action: Richard Searight, Paul Vachon and Kevin Ball to liaise on this project.

Christine Marsh explained that OkeRail CIC's aim would be to support projects. The CIC is to put in place a data protection policy so that names taken at surveys can be confidential.

Michael Ireland explained the OkeRail Forum, OkeRail CIC structure to the meeting.

Community Archive Coffee Morning to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> May with train photographs from the Archive Group. The approximate cost will be £80. Kevin Ball will hopefully fund this from the Locality budget.

Mike Moore suggested Launceston Railway Circle be contacted regarding the history of the line. Mike to supply Paul with photographs of the *Royal Oke* to be enlarged to A3.

Enquiries to be made as to whom administers the Facebook page for the CIC.

Paul Voaden will bring mecano models to the coffee morning. The DRSA will set up their usual table.

Steam Special – Awesome idea! Enthusiasts to hopefully come up with an idea to allow a steam train event on the Okehampton line.

Tom Baxter highlighted problems, for example needing a water supply and the attitude of Dartmoor Railway CIC, an initial commitment would be needed from them. Mike Moore suggested short journey steam event to Torbay. Chris Bligh pointed to the problem of the inability to turn and the costs.

Action To consider all options through the setting up of a discussion group to report to the meeting.

Rail Links – Anne Johnson [Tavistock] said that the local Country Bus is interested in making a link to the Sunday Trains but this would need 3 weeks to organise. It was agreed that we should offer one bus each way. Mike Moore to look at hiring a coach from Bude for two dates. Some concern was

expressed over the seating capacity of the trains with extra passengers from the 'Bus Links'.

KB pointed out that GWR have committed to a two care train.

It was briefly noted that GWR had produced two different leaflets, inbound and outbound of excellent quality and no cost to the community.

**Date of next meeting: 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2017. Since revised to the 1<sup>st</sup> August at 1900 in the Conservative Club, Okehampton.**

Michael Ireland - Chair