

# SHREWSBURY ABERYSTWYTH RAIL LIAISON COMMITTEE

## WITH THE CAMBRIAN COAST CONFERENCE

# MINUTES

of a meeting held in Y Plas Machynlleth on  
FRIDAY 8<sup>th</sup> July 2016 at 11.15am

### 1. Attendance record

Present were	Representing
Cllr T Roberts	Chair Shrewsbury Aberystwyth & West Coast 250
Cllr S Griffiths	Chair Cambrian Coast and Gwynedd County Council
Robert Robinson	Secretary & Welshpool Town Council
Cllr Michael Williams	Vice Chair Shrewsbury Aberystwyth & Powys County Council
Cllr Eryl Jones-Williams	Vice Chair Cambrian Coast & Gwynedd County Council
Rhydian Mason	Cambrian Rail Partnership
Ben Davies	Arriva Trains Wales
Cllr Ray Quant	Ceredigion County Council
Cllr Jeremy Barnes	Carno Community Council and Action Group
Anne Lloyd Jones	Gwynedd County Council
Tracy Parkinson	GM Talyllyn Railway
Roger Whitehouse	Talyllyn Railway
Cllr Mair Benjamin	Aberystwyth Town Council
Angus Eickhof	S A R P A
David Taylor	Rail Future
Cllr David Collington	Caersws Community Council
Roger Goodhew	S A R P A

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Apologies received from	Representing
Andrew Wallbank	Caersws Community Council
Cllr Alun Williams	Ceredigion County Council
Dafydd Ellis-Thomas	Welsh Government
Rhian Wyn Williams	Gwynedd County Council
Network Rail	
Tony Caine	Powys County Council
Cllr A Williams	Aberdovey Community Council
D Lewis	Rail Future
Glenda O'Brien	Gwynedd County Council

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

The Committee approved the minutes of the last meeting.

**3. Financial Report**

To consider the financial report as follows:

- i) The current bank balances for the Shrewsbury Aberystwyth Rail Liaison Committee stand at £725.
- ii) Grants from Shropshire and Ceredigion have been received.
- iii) Grant from Powys County Council is still under discussion.

**4. Actions taken since the last meeting**

To note the following actions taken since the last meeting:

- i) Welshpool Town Bus**  
Agreement for the town bus to stop at the station has been gained and notice served to bring in a new timetable.
- ii) Caersws Car Park**  
Discussions continue over the provision of a new car park.
- iii) Machynlleth works**  
Confirmation was given that the footbridge should be open on 7<sup>th</sup> July with the lifts being in operation on 6<sup>th</sup> August.
- iv) Bridge at Welshpool Station**  
The meeting was informed that there are now two litter bins located by the ends of the bridge.

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**v) Bus Plus for Welshpool**

Arriva Trains and Welshpool Town Council are to discuss a proposal for the area.

**5. Reports:**

To receive reports as follows:

**i) Arriva Trains Wales**

A report was given by Arriva Trains Wales as follows:

- i) Some issues over the past few months with weather and staffing. The situation has now improved.
- ii) WiFi (free) is currently being installed on all 158's.
- iii) Works to the bridge at Barmouth are planned soon and will require replacement bus services.
- iv) Improvements to toilets on the trains continue.
- v) There is no plan by Welsh Government at present to replace rolling stock.
- vi) There are no plans to introduce driver only trains on the line.
- v) The meeting noted the following 12 month (March 2015 to April 2016) figures for the Cambrian Main and Coast Lines:

<b>Station</b>	<b>Increase (percent)</b>	<b>Increase (numbers)</b>
Welshpool	17.84%	157,979
Newtown	13.44%	148,409
Caersws	17.69%	58,000
Aberystwyth	3.34%	313,000
Barmouth	8.39%	189,000
Harlech	13%	
Porthmadog	39.4%	77,699
Criccieth	82%	
Pwllheli	38%	75,000

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**ii) Network Rail**

There was no representative at the meeting but apologies for absence had been received.

**iii) Cambrian Rail Partnership**

A report was given on the work of the Cambrian Rail Partnership as follows:

- i) A mobility scheme is now in operation at Aberystwyth station.
- ii) The helping hand scheme is working well.
- iii) The film received a highly commended award at a recent event held in Paddington London.
- iv) Comedy Weekend in Machynlleth was supported by both the partnership and Arriva Trains Wales.
- v) Poster cabinets along the coast line are in place with posters designed by children regarding safety.
- vi) Two new tourism booklets have been prepared along with one for Shrewsbury Station giving information on the Mid Wales experience (particularly close towns such as Welshpool)
- vii) Leaflet distribution is now by a private company.
- viii) The web site is being updated.

**iv) Transport Police**

There was no representative at the meeting.

**6. Progression towards another train to compete the hourly service.**

Discussions continue with Welsh Government over the objective of a full 7 day hourly service.

Clock face timetables are to remain on the agenda for the future.

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**7. Tourism matters**

To consider the following:

**i) Tourist Information Office provision along and around the line.**

The meeting considered the closure of Tourist Information Offices along the line. Welshpool has seen increased footfall from 10,000 persons in 2013 to 34,200 in 2016.

Various opinions were expressed. It was confirmed that Barmouth's service is under discussion and that Aberdovey is still open at this time.

**ii) Rail ticket sales at Welshpool.**

The meeting noted that rail ticket sales started at the Welshpool Tourist Information Office on 7<sup>th</sup> July.

**iii) Issues related to disabled travellers.**

The issue of the treatment of disabled passengers was discussed. A letter has been sent to a recent passenger who had a poor experience. A copy of the letter is to be passed to the Chair and Secretary.

The meeting recognised that in general the service by Arriva Trains Wales for disabled is very good.

**8. New stations along the line**

To consider any update station re-opening as follows:

**Carno**

No further progress at this time. The campaign continues.

**Bow Street**

There is an exhibition hosted by Ceredigion Council being held. Movement towards a re-opening business case is happening.

**9. Train stopping along coast in the evening**

The meeting considered any actions regarding the stopping train along the coast in the evening.

The current timetable projections still do not allow for the train in question to stop at all stations.

The Secretary is to raise the matter again with Welsh Government.

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**10. Rail Franchise**

The meeting noted that a statement by Welsh Government is due very soon on the process. The Minister is now Ken Skate with Shadow Minister Russell George. A copy of the Franchise document from the Groups is to be passed to Russell George and a meeting to be arranged with Mr Simon Pickering over matters concerning the franchise.

**11. Coastal Communities Fund**

The meeting noted the Coastal Communities Fund:- This scheme was instrumental in awarding the Swanage Railway a seven figure sum towards the completion of its route from Swanage to Wareham. The fund is now online.

Selwyn is to pass details to Trevor and Robert to follow up.

**12. Actions to be taken forward**

The following actions are to be taken forward.

- a) Grant from Powys County Council is still under discussion.
- b) Bus Plus for Welshpool to be taken forwards
- c) Welshpool Town Bus stopping at station monitoring
- d) Meeting to be arranged with Ken Skate Minister and
- e) Plan with details of requirements to be prepared and submitted to Russell George (Shadow Minister)
- f) Meeting with Simon Pickering to be arranged.
- g) Selwyn is to pass details to Trevor and Robert to follow up.
- h) The minister and shadow minister to be reminded of the last train not stopping on the Coast Line.

**13. Mark Lewis**

The meeting noted that Mark Lewis has moved from Powys County Council and put on record their thanks for all his work on the line whilst at PCC/

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**14. Date of next meeting**

To note the date of the next meetings as follows

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 11.15am at Welshpool Town Hall  
Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth Rail Liaison Committee

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at 11.15am at Y Plas Machynlleth  
Joint Main and Coast Line meeting

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 11.15am at Y Plas Machynlleth  
Joint Main and Coast Line meeting