

**SHREWSBURY ABERYSTWYTH RAIL LIAISON COMMITTEE  
WITH THE  
CAMBRIAN COAST CONFERENCE**

**Minutes.**

**For a meeting to be held in Y Plas Machynlleth on  
25<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at 11.15am**

**1. Present were**

**Name Representing**

Cllr Trevor Roberts Chair & West Coast 250  
Cllr Eryl Jones-Williams Gwynedd County Council  
D Evans Access Meironwyndd  
Cllr Anne Lloyd Jones Cyngor Gwynedd  
Mair Benjamin Aberystwyth Town Council  
Angus Eickoff S.A.R.P.A.  
Roger Whitehouse Tallylyn Railway  
D Woodhouse Tourism  
Roger Goodhen Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Passenger  
Association  
David Crunkhon Arriva Trains Wales  
David Taylor Railfuture- Cambrian Branch  
Cllr Alun Williams Ceredigion County Council  
Cllr Jeremy Barns, Carno Community Council & Carno Station Action  
Group  
Ben Davies Arriva Trains Wales  
Cllr R Quant Ceredigion County Council  
Cllr M Williams, Machynlleth Town Council and Powys County Council  
Rhydian Mason Cambrian Rail Partnership  
Ann Elias, Growing Mid Wales Regional Strategic Transport (Ceredigion,  
Powys and Gwynedd Council's)  
Simon Thomas AM (Welsh Assembly Member for Mid and West Wales)

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

The meeting approved the minutes of the last meeting of this Committee subject to the following notes: Question was raised regarding the correct name of " Cllr A Williams Aberdyfi" .?

**Matters arising:-**

**Coastal Communities fund – no update**

**Issues raised regrading Last Train up the Coast from Machynlleth**

The last train along the coast (on the official timetable) shows an hours wait which was not considered acceptable. (previously the wait was 45

minutes). There are some passengers who manage to catch the last train waiting only a few minutes (if they miss the train, which is not scheduled as a connection they would be stranded). The Chair confirmed he has raised the matter with Welsh Government officers who would seek to identify ways to reduce the waiting time.

### **Include Roberts update . a) Under tourism rail tickets at Welshpool**

The TIC ticket sales for rail are increasing week by week. Since the 1st August nearly £20,000 of tickets have been sold.

### **b) Tourism Meeting in Welshpool**

We had a Tourism Meeting of local attractions in Welshpool. Interesting trend - whereas Visit Wales is saying there is an increase of Mid Wales Tourism of 15% our local attractions were saying 10% down on footfall. However, people were spending more when they came.

### **c) Complaint letter from disabled person**

See attached letter. I said I would go back to him next week. I think it is the £5 offer which is niggling.

### **d) Minutes**

If someone does some notes I can draft minutes from them.

### **e) Actions since last meeting:**

i) Grant from PCC is still under discussion but I maybe able to gain this via another route via discussions I am having over other matters.

ii) No further news on Plus Bus at this time.

iii) The Town Bus Service does now stop at Welshpool Station.

iv) The meeting with the Ministers Office and with Simon Pickering has been held.

Two surveys being carried out via Welshpool Town Council for the Meeting funded by the Partnership funding.

v) Russell George AM Montgomeryshire has a copy of our Future Plan.

vi) The last train along the coast does not stop at all stations.

vii) The gap of 1 hour at Machynlleth before the last train (although unofficially the last train can be caught if you miss it it would be unfortunate) was raised at the meeting with the Ministers Office & Simon Pickering who are looking to see if the timetable can be improved.

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

I have suggested two dates for joint meetings for next year.

### **Rail Franchise - meetings**

I have arranged for two companies to meet us in January.

The cost of facilities and space etc at Machynlleth is extensive.

At Welshpool the accommodation and facilities are free.

I suggest that these meetings are held at the Town Hall Welshpool at no cost.

I am still making arrangements for the 2nd two companies.

The first meetings are planned for Friday 6th January. One at 10.am and one at 12noon

Cllr Williams identified that if the cost of using Y Plas was too much, there is now another new venue available in Machynlleth "St Peters Church".

The Chair raised the issue of elected members being unable to meet with bidders for the Franchise due to *"probity period has started. Part of this probity period means that bidders can no longer talk to elected officials at any level of government"*. There was concern raised that that wanted we opportunity to engage with bidders.

**Action:** - To write to Transport for Wales to voice concerns.

## 5. Reports:

Arriva Trains Wales – apologised for summer of interruptions to service performance, much of this has been out of their control due to staffing issues. ATW would like to provide more trains but there is none available, the long-term strategy for rolling stock needs be addressed. May 2017 timetable is available on the web site for consultation until Jan 2017. All 24 185 trains are being fitted with Wi-Fi.

Q Does the ERTMS signal interfere with G4 mobile connectivity? ATW confirm they were not aware of any issues.

Q. Car parking provision for Machynlleth and Caersws were raised. It was confirmed that this is being pursued but is subject to funding being made available and suitable locations being identified. RM confirmed they were waiting for confirmation on Welsh Government funding which would assist Fairbourne carpark. DC confirmed there was additional car-parking at Machynlleth in the Mid Wales Storage site with a fee of £4 all day.

Q. There is a drive by the Welsh Government to connect to rail by public transport, this is ok in the morning but there is now so few services that run after 6pm that it makes travelling home very difficult and therefore deters the public from undertaking the journeys by train.

**Action** :- To write to the Welsh Government highlighting the issue and copy to Simon Thomas AM

Q Car-parking in Aberystwyth is very difficult and especially during the holiday period, could car parking not be leased from one of the adjoining private carpark?

Q There was also concern that also during holiday period there was overcrowding on the trains, which put visitors off from travelling by train.

Q Machynlleth Station new footbridge and lifts have now obstructed the footway off platform 1, this is considered important to user's access from industrial estate and from customers being dropped off from this side. It was felt that the installation of steps would resolve this issue. This is a matter for Network Rail and the Committee advised SARPA to raise the matter directly.

Network Rail – Written report to the Coast meeting last week. Barmouth Bridge refurbishment would continue until the end of 2017. There was concern that there should not be a long closure like Pont Briwet.

Talerddig Crossings work will start 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017 and run until Dec 2017 this would see the removal of five crossing. It was confirmed that there would be no disruptions to services as bridges would be moved over night.

There are going to be two planned line closure in February 2017, and that closure on the Cambrian lines would not take place during school holidays due to demand for holiday travel on the lines.

Cambrian Rail Partnership **Insert Rhydian written report.**

It was confirmed that there would be a carol service on the morning service on the 16<sup>th</sup> Dec with mince pies – Details to follow.

Q There is an opportunity to encourage the children that use the railway to get to school to make the railway their future career, and is there an opportunity to identify training opportunities?

6. Future Plan for Shrewsbury Aberystwyth Rail Line was accepted by the committee.

## **7. Infrastructure**

Is there an opportunity to identify how to introduce another train? Does the timings allow for this?

Would the “westbury Loop” need to re-instated for a full hourly service?

## **8. Tourism matters**

Barmouth Tourist Information Centre being taken over by Town Council and will sell Tickets

## **9. New stations along the line**

Bow Street application being submitted for New Stations fund

Carno- waiting for a meeting with the Minister.

## **10. Rail Franchise**

There still hasn't been any identification of what roll stock provision will be required within the new franchise.

## **11. AOB**

Next year is 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations of the opening of Barmouth Bridge Oct 2017; the Town Council is planning events around the railway and update as they are confirmed.

## **12. Date of next meeting**

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 11.15am at Y Plas Machynlleth

Joint Main and Coast Line meeting

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at 11.15am at Y Plas Machynlleth

Joint Main and Coast Line meeting