



SHREWSBURY ABERYSTWYTH RAIL LIAISON COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of a meeting held at The Town Hall Welshpool on

Friday 16th February 2018 at 11.15am

1. Record of attendance

Present were

Name	Representing
Cllr Trevor Roberts	Chair
Cllr Michael Williams	Vice Chair & Machynlleth Town and Powys County Councils
Robert Robinson	Secretary & Welshpool Town Council
Cllr Roy Norris	Newtown Town Council
Cllr Alun Williams	Ceredigion County Council
Roger Whitehouse	Talylyn Railway
Claire Williams	Cambrian Rail Partnership
Ben Davies	Arriva Trains Wales
David Crunkhorn	Arriva Trains Wales
Angus Eickhoff	S.A.R.P.A.

Apologies received

Name	Representing
D Taylor	Rail FutuCre
D Lewis	Aberystwyth Town Council
Cllr Ray Quant	Ceredigion County Council
Chris Wilson	Ceredigion County Council
Ann Elias	Growing Mid Wales Partnership

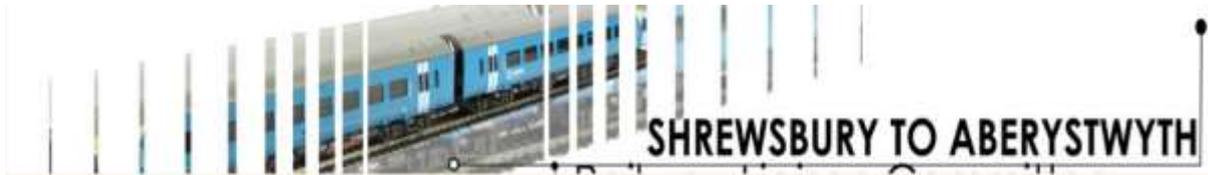
2. Minutes of the last meeting

The meeting approved the minutes of the last combined meeting – see web site.

3. Actions taken since the last meeting

The meeting received a report on actions taken since the last meeting.

- i) Report to Minister was adjusted with recommendations.
- ii) The Dovey Junction shelter is not progressing due to platform widths.



- iii) The Secretary did chase up Welshpool Shelter installation
- iv) The Secretary has reported back on various meetings.

4. Financial report

The meeting considered the financial report. Approx £400 is in the bank account. There is still no receipt of payment from Powys County Council.

5. Reports:

5.1 Arriva Trains Wales

The following were the main points of the report:

- i) The main issues were around communication. The meeting asked that better communication takes place in a number of areas identified as follows:
 - a. Notifying stakeholders of delays and cancellations with details of why if possible. (ie Welshpool, Newtown and Machynlleth Town Councils who can get information out to their local communities).
 - b. Train information not always accurate.
- ii) It was confirmed that WiFi is now available on all Arriva Trains in Wales.
- iii) Station WiFi is being rolled out with larger stations first (ie Aberystwyth first).
- iv) More rolling stock is being made available to strengthen the existing stock.
- v) The early morning busy commuter trains are now often 6 carriages.
- vi) All trains must be disabled compliant by 2020 with no exceptions.
- vii) Arriva Trains has done very well in overall train standards of service.
- viii) Storm issues have meant that 100 trains out of 128 have had to be subject to wheel refurbishment.
- ix) The fare increases have not affected passenger numbers.
- x) Arriva Trains will issue growth figures for the last 12 months in a few weeks.
- xi) Consultation on the May 2018 timetable is due to be issued in a few weeks time.
- xii) Details of the Machynlleth refurbishment of shelters was outlined
- xiii) Comment was made regarding the Aberystwyth Station Toilets and their opening hours. Arriva Trains Wales confirmed that there will be no change due to misuse.



5.2 Network Rail

The following were the main points of the report:

- i) The meeting expressed concern over works being carried out during weekends during the holiday periods.
- ii) 3.7m of work on the Cambrian Line is continuing but is often over running which has caused issues. The works are now being scheduled to end early to allow a better finishing time.
- iii) The fact there 3 trains were cancelled on 3 consecutive days was not good news. Things are improving again.
- iv) Network Rail was concerned at the overruns to the extent that the MD did attend to see what is happening.

5.3 Cambrian Rail Partnership

The report is attached to these minutes and is posted on the web site.

- i) An offer of 2 for 1 entry at CADW castles and buildings on production of a rail ticket is to be announced.
- ii) Although there is a social media tourism campaign there will also be paper based material.
- iii) The orange wallet scheme continues
- iv) Big Trains Little Trains is being launched again this year.

5.4 British Transport Police

There was no report from the British Transport Police.

However the following was notified to the meeting:

- i) There has been a reduction in antisocial behaviour between Machynlleth and Aberystwyth on the trains.
- ii) A reduction in drug related incidents at Aberystwyth has been recorded.
- iii) The waiting room on platform 3 is now closed on occasions due to misuse.

6 Franchise

The meeting received an update on the current situation.

- i) A formal announcement is expected during May 2018.
- ii) It has been confirmed that the current rail service is to be the minimum.



7 Welshpool Station

The meeting received a short report on the initial proposals.

- a) A new direction sign is being located on the bridge facing the ramp to the platform in the next 24 hours.
- b) A new station plan was tabled (see attached report).
Cllr R Whitehouse proposed and Cllr M Williams seconded supporting the proposals. The meeting was unanimous in its support.
Welshpool Town Council will now prepare an artists perspective and take the matter forward to Welsh Government and Network Rail.

8 Freight on the railway

This subject is to be added to the next agenda.

Before the next meeting Welshpool Town Council will carry out a survey of the industrial estate to see who would use rail freight if it were available.

9. Date of next meeting

The meeting noted the dates for meetings during the year as follows:

SARLC Meetings:

- Friday 11th May 2018 in Welshpool
- Friday 5th October 2018 in Welshpool
- Friday 8th February 2019 in Welshpool

Joint Meetings:

- Friday 13th July 2018 in Machynlleth

All meetings start at 11.15am

10. Actions to be taken forward

The following actions are to be taken forward:

- a) Rail Freight to be added to the next meetings agenda.
- b) Welshpool Town Council to complete the survey on freight.
- c) Rail Crossings to be added to next agenda.
- d) Welshpool Town Council to take forward Welshpool Station proposals.
- e) Both Ben Davies and Robert Robinson to chase up the extra shelters.
- f) Ben Davies to pass on comments on rail information.
- g) Letter to be sent to Network Rail expressing disappointment at weekend working during holiday periods.



Continued:

- h) Arriva Trains is to issue growth figures for the last 12 months in a few weeks. The secretary will then pass them onto members.



Rail Development Officers Report February 2018

Improving links with local communities and their railway

Community and engagement work is continuing with Arriva Trains Wales and Network Rail. We recently ran a level crossing safety competition with Ysgol Maenoffferren- Blaenau Ffestiniog, Ysgol y Traeth- Barmouth and Ysgol Tan y Castel- Harlech, as part of our partnership with Network Rail to change the historical mind set of how level crossings are not important to young people and to show them the dangers of not using them correctly. The winner and two runners up received free family tickets to see Santa on the Highlands and Ffestiniog Railway and book tokens courtesy of the Cambrian Railway Partnership and the Welsh Books Council.

Continual improvement and development of existing rail services and infrastructure

Strategic stake holder meetings take place on a monthly basis for the development of Bow Street with the chair of the SARLC also attending these meetings. I have recently been asked by Welsh Government and Network Rail to be the lead on the Equality and Diversity element of the project. The plans are shortly going out to consultation and we are currently working with a substantial number disability and equality groups to ensure that the plans do not have a detrimental effect on service users.



Local line-specific timetable production

The December 2017- May 2018 pocket timetable has now been produced and distributed to relevant TIC's, stations and other relevant outlets. I will also be working closely with ATW, TFW and WG in discussions as to whether there will be a new timetable for May or when the new franchise takes over with new or extra stock being ordered of the current timetable if necessary.

Surveys

The Cambrian Railways Partnership was delighted to work with the Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Liaison Committee and to commission a survey that was undertaken in spring 2017 as part of our grant from the Welsh Government. The surveys follow on from the success of the 2013 and 2015 surveys which resulted in improved services on the Cambrian Lines. The results of this survey were presented to Gareth Evans, Rail Economist for Welsh Government along with other WG officials by the Committee November 17th 2017 at a meeting in Cathays Park. WG then disseminated this information to the franchise bidders as supporting information for their final bid which had to be submitted to WG and TFW in December 2017.

2018/2019 Promotional Campaign

The RDO has also agreed with the partnership that to make the best of the Visit Wales "2018 Year of the Sea" thematic year and its potential for increasing tourism to the regions that it would be best to issue an Invitation to Tender for the creation and management of a complete Year of the Sea social media campaign along with continued management and maintenance of the new Wales on rails website. The invitation was sent out in December with responses to be received by Mid-January. The contract has been awarded to Equinox Communications in Cardiff, who have already started making significant changes and fixes to the website and social media platforms, with the new website due to go live Mid-March in readiness for Easter. Equinox is a highly reputable company with a wealth of knowledge in the tourism and rail industry. They are also currently working partners of Arriva Trains Wales, Cadw and Visit Wales.



Reports and Meetings

Unfortunately I was unable to attend the Cambrian Coast Railway Liaison Committee in November due to moving house from South Wales to Mid Wales; however a report was submitted and presented by Mr Ben Davies of Arriva Trains Wales. I am also attending a number of town council meetings to raise the profile of making the Cambrian Railway a Dementia Friendly Community in its own entity. A number of towns such as Machynlleth, Welshpool and Newtown are already Dementia Friendly Communities and are now adding travel as part of their action plans and I am assisting them along with the Dementia Friendly Communities Co-ordinator to support them in gaining the status for their stations.

Claire Williams
Rail Development Officer
Cambrian Railways Partnership
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31/01/2018



WELSHPOOL TOWN COUNCIL

WELSHPOOL MAIN LINE RAILWAY STATION



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**R A Robinson FRICS FSLCC
28.12.2017**



1. Introduction

This paper sets out the case for improved facilities at Welshpool Station which I probably the station with the least facilities for a town of its size (catchment area 20,000 people) along the Cambrian and Coast lines.

Since the new timetable was introduced in May 2015 the number of passengers using the station has increased by over 100%. Taking this into account the limited facilities on the station platform are now far from acceptable.

This paper sets out the recent history, the issues and a proposal which could improve the station for its passengers.

2. Recent History

The most relevant recent history is as follows:

- a) The railway station was relocated into its current position in the mid 1970's when the bypass was constructed.
- b) The railway station constructed at that time was never adequate but in recent times (with the new timetable) the facilities are even less adequate.
- c) The new rail timetable has increased passenger traffic substantially.
- d) A new car park was constructed by the Town Council on land to the east side the station which is now well used.
- e) The access bridge has received a new surface in recent years, however as the walkway is not covered it does not take much for ice to form and create a hazardous journey to the platforms.
- f) The Town Council has provided two new litter bins (each side of the bridge) and cleans the bridge on a regular basis, this has improved the litter situation.
- g) The Town Council is providing a new signboard on the bridge to enable passengers to find their way around much easier.

3. The issues

The issues surrounding the need for station improvements are:

- a) The number of persons now using the station (an increase of approx. 120% since the new rail timetable introduced in May 2015).
- b) The shelter is well short of what is needed to accommodate the number of passengers using the trains.
- c) There are no toilet facilities on the station and no public toilets close to the station.



Cont...

- d) The access arrangements for disabled are very poor with the only access being via the very steep and long ramp.

4. The proposal

The proposal to improve facilities at Welshpool Main Line Station takes into account the following factors:

- a) The site layout and boundary confines.
- b) The ongoing maintenance of any facilities' provided.

The proposal includes the following elements:

Access

Access for disabled is very poor with a long winding ramp being the only way to the platforms. The proposal includes for lifts at both the car park entrance and down to the platform.

Car Parking

The on site car parking is limited but there is little room to improve this situation without extensive land acquisition. Approx. 6-8 cars extra could be gained by minor alterations to the main car park area.

Station building

At present there is only one single shelter with a ticket machine housed within. You can get approx. 10-12 persons inside the shelter at a push. Many trains have at least 30 passengers to board the Shrewsbury bound train and another 10 or so for the Aberystwyth bound train. Both trains arrive around the same time.

The proposal is to move the shelter down the platform and to provide a building above the tracks accessed from the existing bridge.

The design would allow for a walkway to the platform even when the buildings are locked.

The new building would provide seating, ticket machines, vending machine, two toilets (one disabled) and indicator boards to show when trains are getting near.



A CCV camera will need to be installed within the building for security.

Services

Electrical services are on site. Water and sewage services will need to be installed to allow for the toilet accommodation.

Cleaning and maintenance

The Town Council is willing to provide toilet cleaning and emptying of bins along with general tidy up of the new building. Repairing liability would remain with the railway companies. An arrangement could be agreed to cover what is needed by agreement.

5. Plan of proposals

An outline layout plan showing the proposals is set out below:



WELSHPOOL STATION (General View)



Pictures of the Old Station building adjacent the current station



Pictures showing bridge access





Pictures of current car parking



Pictures of new car park area



Pictures of station platform





Picture of suggested information board in new building



Images of ticket machine and lift



Proposed seating type





Possible look of station from the Shrewsbury Platform end.