



Meeting minutes

Location: Microsoft Teams

Date: 23/02/2023

Time: 11:00

Attendees: Karen Balmer (KB) CEO Groundwork (Chair of Meeting)

Melanie Lawton (ML) Community Rail Manager TFW

Josie Rayworth (JR) Community Rail Officer

Phillip Ellison (PE) Cambrian Heritage Railway

Jackie Allen (JA) Director Severn Dee Travel

Roger Date (RD) Gobowen Station

Anna Pollard (AP) Marketing Coordinator Groundworks

1. Welcome and Introductions

KB welcomed everyone to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves. Apologies were received from Darren Williams, Gerrard Rhodes, Tony Parsons, Joe Buckley, Robin Wall, Hanna Clarke. Rhiannon Rafferty was to joining the meeting at 11:30

JA raised the following points.

- There were no minutes of the previous meeting
- What were the terms of reference
- Was there a quorum for the meeting
- What are the objectives of the partnership and the liabilities for the stakeholders.
- Questions of expenditure and wanting to see a business plan and a robust audit trail
- Questioned was it best practice to advertise for an outside chair and would it not be custom for the host to chair.

- KB- Apologized for there not being minutes from the previous meeting stating that the partnership has been in a state of flux. ML added that the previous meeting was mostly about introducing Josie and that there was little to report on activity as the role had been vacant. The partnership has only just got going again since September and the partnership is currently working through the accreditation process.
- KB added that she was not in favour of the host to be the chair as there needs to be a level of independence outside of the host from a good governance perspective around monitoring the money and the business plan.
- ML and JR have been working on the Terms of reference and management plans at so we're in a much better place from a governance perspective.

ML - Offers reassurance to JA

- This is our first CRP meeting since Josie has been in place .
- There is a Terms of Reference and all of this under Code of Conduct and the Activity Plan will form part of the accreditation with Community Rail network for Welsh Government and DfT.
- JA said that the priorities for JR should be familiarization and understanding the stations and the people and meeting the people in the existing partnership and new members.
- JR has undertaken some social value training where we are identifying priorities.
- ML agreed with KB, it is good practice that the host organization is not the chair of the partnership because we need to maintain this independence.

JA commented that- we shouldn't be making any decisions without a stronger stakeholder base.

KB- Do we have any decisions to make on the agenda today? Can I just clarify?

ML- There are no decisions to be made today and I can share the terms of reference

ACTION ML

KB- Happy to continue with the update meeting that as outlined in the agenda JR to make sure that papers are circulated a week before future Community Rail Partnership meetings.

ACTION JR

2. Chairperson update

JR- The Role for the position of Chair was advertised and no interest was received. It has been put out again and this time the new 3 Counties Connected website has been launched which hopefully will assist in encouraging some applications.

AP- The advert has gone out again this week and hoping for some more coverage for it.

KB- JA raised earlier about whether the chair post could be remunerated?

ML- It is a voluntary role across the CRP's. Expenses are reimbursed.

JA-stated that the role should not be remunerated. JA added that she meant to say that if you haven't got nobody and you thought of re advertised with remuneration, k I was trying to say don't. JA raised another point as it's part of the Welsh rail network, that there is no

desire for Welsh. The Welsh language. I'm not saying it should be necessary, but desirable in the advert might be looked on more favorably.

KB- Was not aware that it wasn't but think that's was a good point. ACTION AP We can put before it goes back out or tweak the current advert to say Welsh language desirable if it is not included but she thought that it was.

3. Community Rail Officer update

- A Christmas tree was erected at Chester Station, passengers, staff were encouraged to hang tags on the tree to make wishes or tell us about destinations they're going to.
- JR is involved in a new project called Stitching History in Brymbo making a large mural with the local community that will be displayed in the Brymbo Enterprise Centre featuring the railway lines that used to go through the village.
- Spent time with Warm Wednesday's group at Brymbo and the Marchweil Makers exploring future trips out on the train.
- JR has delivered a lantern making workshop in Ruabon as part of the Lantern parade which the partnership are involved with where a giant willow locomotive will lead the procession in Wrexham from Queens square.
- JR has been working on the recruitment for the post of the Chair
- JR has been working on accreditation with RR.
- Delivered wool felting classes at Llangollen Heritage Railway, the 6 week course was fully booked and had high attendance. Results from the project were possibility of another course as it was so well received. Links to The Rainbow Trust through one of the participants, who has also become a volunteer for the partnership.

ML- I just wanted to thank Josie, really, for the work that she has done so far.

RR - Thanks JR for work so far.

KB -Asks for any further questions for JR on the update. ACTION JR to share presentation to partnership

4. Activity plan Priorities 2023.

- 175th anniversary of the Chester to Shrewsbury line. Organizations and stations have been approached for ideas, partnership invited to contribute. A draft plan has been produced that can be circulated and added to. ACTION JR to circulate Draft Plan to the partnership
- Wrenbury station is having artwork installed in the waiting shelters on both platforms, working with a local artist based in Nantwich and Wrenbury Primary School
- Wrexham station will be having artwork put in the waiting room, working with local community artist Sophia Leadil and local schools/organisations yet to be identified.
- Well being walks from stations, to be confirmed.

- Building up the partnership up some new members to join the partnership.

ML- JR has been busy applying for grant applications as well with Tfw and with Avanti. We're hoping to have the outcomes of that by the end of next week, and that is to support a change maker fund, a resilience fund where small grants can be issued to communities.

RR-I was just going to add that if it was possible to delay that very slightly, hopefully the next round of the CRDF fund should be open and should be able to apply for match funding, but you might be affected by the dates of the end of the financial year. And if that's so, I'm sure we can find another project to go after Community Rail Development funding

KB- Any further questions on the activity plan priorities?

5. Accreditation

ML- All Community Rail partnerships in Wales and Borders are required to be accredited.

- We are looking to apply for accreditation probably April/May, that gives Josie time to settle in to really bring together an activity plan with all the members in the partnership and with the communities.
- A Chair in post is required before the partnership can apply for accreditation. The Activity Plan needs to be delivered by all the stakeholders in the partnership, not just the Community Rail officer.
- RR and I are supporting JR and KB through the process.

RR- Community Rail Network would want to see the new people coming into the partnership before we do the accreditation.

- The partnership would need to look at the reserves as there is some carryover of funding inherited from the previous CRP.
- KB agreed to be Chair for four to six months, due to circumstances that's extended. Community Rail Network would want to see the new chair at least recruited if not in place, so that we're aware of what the succession is.

6. Website

AP - It is a simple website, easy to update and it will feature.

- A section about bringing communities together where you can go to the different stations along the line and find out tourist information or different projects that are going along those stations.
- A section for projects. All the new projects that JR is developing, we'll have a section about each of those people can find out what's going on and when things are going on.
- A section on news.
- The website toggles between Welsh and English

KB - Any questions

JA -How are you promoting this and letting people know that that website is out there?

AP- Through social media talking about the new website and posting into other groups and for partners to share and JR to promote through community engagement

KB -A query has been made as to why in England we were putting the Welsh title first and querying the maps layout and asked MLI to advise

ML- All CRPs in Wales and Borders to be bilingual. When you do post on social media and on websites, we ask for Welsh and English Welsh first.

KB- Any questions?

ML - Would like to see the analytics of the website when it has been up and running.

KB- AP can bring some reports on that to the next meeting **.ACTION AP**

7. AOB

RD- could we agree perhaps two or three dates for the next few meetings so everybody can definitely put it in their diaries?

KB Agrees , we will do a doodle poll then people can tick the boxes and then we can see which ones will get the best attendance.

There being no further business, KB declared the meeting closed.

Minutes approved by the Chair

Signed on behalf of 3 Counties Connected Date