



Meeting minutes

Location: Microsoft Teams

Date: 13/06/2023

Time: 11:00

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

Melanie Lawton (ML) Community Rail Manager TFW

Phillip Ellison (PE) Cambrian Heritage Railway

Jackie Allen (JA) Director Severn Dee Travel

Roger Date (RD) Gobowen Station

Rachel Penman (RP) Wrexham County Borough Council

Rhiannon-Jane Raftery (RJR) Community Rail

Joe Bickerton (JB) This is Wrexham, Wrexham (NEW)

Antonio Carrino (AC) British Transport Police (NEW)

Tony Parsons (TP) Shropshire Council

Hanna Clarke (HC) Group Head of Marketing GWNW

Nicola Said (NS) Visit England (NEW)

Alex (Llangollen Heritage Railway) (NEW)

Apologies: Josie Rayworth (JR) Community Rail Officer

1. Welcome and Introductions

KB - welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced NS.

Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

JA raised the following points.

- Members were still to see the business plan (activity plan) and financials. JA feels that these should be provided prior to and discussed at everyone full meeting for transparency.
- Terms of reference are still to be seen with clear references to the partnership's aims and objectives.

ACTION HC / ML to arrange the circulation of these documents.

2. Chairperson update

ML - advert was published after the last meeting with one expression of interest received from NS. NS provided a comprehensive CV and had a background in community and tourism projects. NS has declared that she is a Trustee of GWNW and is happy to commit as a volunteer.

ML and Nick Smith from Avanti have had a meeting and conversation with NS regarding the role. The aims and objectives of the partnership and what is expected of the Chair.

NS attended the Community Rail workshop event in Shrewsbury in May to gain further understanding of a CRP and how they work.

ML is happy to put NS forward and endorse as chair but it is up to the members to make the decision.

NS - gave a short introduction to herself. NS has worked in tourism and economic development for the past 20 plus years. Forging many relationships with transport providers. Sustainable tourism is a particular passion of NS and living within Wrexham gives her a personal view into the partnership. NS has strengths in regard to PR and social media.

NS has been a trustee with GWN for the past 3 years and it was JR's presentation at a GWNW board meeting early in the year that sparked her interest in the role. NS is currently Chair of her child's school's PTA.

NS has seen the great work the partnership has already completed in terms of stations.

KB asked if anyone had any questions for NS.

JA asked if NS had seen the aims and objectives of the partnerships.

NS responded that she has had several conversations with ML and is aware of the aims and objectives of the partnership along with the priority actions.

RJR welcomed NS and explained that NS had attended the Community Rail workshops in Shrewsbury recently which allowed her to gain a wide breadth of understanding as to how CRP's work.

KB asked if there was a formal process/protocol that has previously been followed regarding appointing a chair.

NS suggested that she leave the meeting while this was discussed which was agreed.

RJR explained that when there is a nomination form within there is usually a vote but as no one from within had nominated RJR suggested that NS is appointed as acting chair for 3 months and then formally appointed after 2 months.

KB felt that 3 months did not give enough opportunity for NS to assess and make a difference.

RJR suggested NS act as chair until the AGM and then look to appoint permanently. RJR highlighted that it is not currently easy to find chairs across the CRP network.

JA - normal protocol / previous protocol was to elect chair at AGM and though this practice should continue. A new chair being appointed annually allowing a wider range of stakeholder engagement.

TP - in agreement with running as interim chair until AGM. Repeated that there wasn't a rush of people to oppose and was happy to support NS.

JB wanted to endorse NS. Stating that NS was held in high esteem across the region for her work within tourism. Expressing concern that if she isn't appointed now her time may be limited due to it being in demand when the AGM happens.

RP- Endorse NS being voted in as acting chair until the AGM. Raised a concern re Governance as without the governance documents referenced at the start of the meeting what is NS being elected chair of.

KB agreed with JB on the endorsement of NS and with RP, JA and TP on NS being acting chair until AGM to follow good governance. KB asked if all agreed, and all were. KB welcomed NS back into the meeting and welcomed her as acting chair until AGM when an official vote would take place.

NS asked for proposed date of next AGM.

ML suggested this would be towards the end of the financial year.

3. Community Rail Officer update

4. Activity plan Priorities 2023.

HC explained that lots of the information contained in the update can be found on the website www.3countiesocnnected.org.uk and across the social media channels (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter).

- **Wrenbury, station artwork project**

Workshops have started, Cathy and I were at the school last Thursday for an introduction, there were two classes totaling about 45 children, we introduced the project and Cathy gave them some homework to go around the village taking photos of their special places and to bring them in this week. They also did some observational art drawing of their hands to introduce them to the drawing technique that will be used for the project. There will be 4 more classes over the next two weeks, installation will be complete by September. The work is going to be transferred to digital vinyl which will be adhered to the glass of the waiting shelters. Original artwork will be displayed in doctors' surgery and a local nursing home.

- **Wrexham station artwork project**

Sophia Leadill has stated the sessions last week, with the Walliwch (homeless Shelter) , she will also be working with Housing Justice, Victoria Primary School and also a couple of open sessions to the public in Ty Pawb in August, installation will be in September

- **Nantwich Station**

Have met with the station adopters and artist, schools have been approached, project will begin in September when Cathy Williams (artist) who is doing the Wrenbury project will be able to start at Nantwich.

- **Wrenbury Model engineers open day.**

We are supporter their open day in July, we will have a stand there, the celebrity Jackie Weaver will be opening the event. Great opportunity to showcase the work for the art project and display artwork created to the local community.

- **Brymbo stitching History Project**

We have been working with the Brymbo community exploring their industrial heritage and the four railway stations and lines that formed the mineral lines that ran to Minera. The lines will feature on the mural that we are creating that will be displayed in the enterprise centre. As part of the project, we took 17 members out on a train trip to Shrewsbury museum, most of the group had never visited Shrewsbury before, along the route I gave a talk about the amazing work at Cambrian heritage museum, Severn Dee travel and the Glyn Valley tramway. This really interested the group, one of them getting emotional saying how exciting it was to see the lines come back to life and that she hoped one day she would get the chance to travel on them.

- **Chirk Station Walk**

Our new volunteer David Edwards took a group of 11 on a 3.2 mile walk from Chirk Station. There is a lot of interest in the walks to continue, we will be promoting more walks from July.

Feedback “Thank you for organising a lovely rail walk, it was very enjoyable. Also, the coffee and cake was a definite bonus. Very interested in future walks”.

- **Walkabout Wrexham**

Are doing some walks for us starting from getting the train Wrexham General station travelling to chirk then continuing on a walk around the Ceiriog Valley.

- **Parish Hall Victorian Day (175 Celebrations)**

Victorian Day Parish Hall		
		Description
Date	9 th August	
Admission	Free Entry	
Time	11 till 3.30	
Set up event	9 to 11	

Break down event	3.30 to 5pm	
Entertainment	Ballet Pod	Children Victorian activities, colouring in, slates, dressing up, live music, Victorian character, display
	Christopher Williams Amazeology Show	Victorian themed circus and sideshow, 4 shows 30 mins each
Thomas Brassey association		Meet thomas Brassey the Victorian engineer, heritage group display
Friends of Chirk Station	Thomas the tank engine raffle	Display of train and stand showcasing projects at the station, a general raffle
Josie Rayworth 3CC	Victorian Posies	Activity Free of charge take home
Catering (Foodbank team TBC)	Refreshments, donation only for foodbank	Spoke with Karen at Parish Hall, she is going to talk with foodbank team next week
Photo booth railway carriage	Photo opportunity	Need to source volunteers to make it

Comments and questions

ML added that JR had been working on the wider development of the partnership with various community stakeholders, adding new partners to the group and getting to know the line and the other CRP's.

KB took the opportunity to introduce AC a sergeant with BTP who will be taking over [KCarl](#) Anderson role in the partnership since his retirement.

RD mentioned that Gobowen Station will be hosting an event as part of the 175th anniversary celebrations and wanted to ensure that none of current activity conflicts with their date in Sept.

ML confirmed that the Chirk event is Aug 9th and the larger Chester event is Aug 1st and that other events had already taken place such as the lantern parade in Wrexham in March.

ACTION JR C/O HC full list of dates to be circulated and links to website and social media shared when uploaded.

ACTION ML to invite RD to the June 26th planning meeting.

JA added that the Severn Dee Valley is an ideal place for a Friend's of Group, and could this be something the partnership could facilitate. The planters at the station were looking a little forlorn and this isn't something they have the capacity to keep on top of.

ML stated that this is something that she can pick up on and she can look at budget to replace planters.

ACTION ML to pick up Friends of group and look at facilitating budget for new planters at Gobowen.

5. Accreditation

RJR explained this should now take place in September after membership is approved which is on July 5th, 2023. A session is required with RJR, JR and NS on procedure for this. All governance documents need to be compiled, including hosting agreement and various HR policies.

HC added that JR and ML have looked at this last week and have all the documents required.

NS has asked for information to be sent on the process and previous examples.

ACTION RJR to send info over to NS.

6. AOB

KB - farewell looking forward to seeing how the partnership develops, happy to handover as felt aware of a slight conflict with GWNW being the hosts.

ML has asked for the next meeting date 6 weeks for the main steering group and then Sept for the wider stakeholder group (dates will be circulated with minutes).

ACTION NS has asked ML to send her a list of who is who and in which group.

NS happy for any members to contact her on her email nicola.said@visitengland.org

RJR mentioned the chairs network and asked if NS could be invited to it.

RJR wanted to Thank Karen for her time as interim chair.

ACTION RJR to send NS invite to the Chairs network.

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

Minutes approved by the Chair

Signed on behalf of 3 Counties Connected Date