

Approved Minutes of the 11th Annual General Meeting of the Railway Development Society Ltd
Held at the Savoy Hotel, Promenade in Blackpool
On Sat 16th May 2015 - 11:00 to 16:30

Lists of those present, apologies for absence, and proxy votes received, are tabled as appendices.

Morning Session.

This consisted of: -

- A Welcome by Chris Page, National Vice Chairman
- The meeting remembered some of the active Railfuture members and ex-members who had died in the last year. These included Brian Hastings, emeritus chairman of the Lincolnshire branch, Bob Imrie, also of the Lincolnshire branch who was national treasurer for a short time, Ian Creighton of the London & South East branch who had been national treasurer for many years, Geoffrey Evison, an active campaigner who attended many national events, and well-known ex-member Richard Pout of London & South East branch.
- Main Speaker - Stephan Macfarlane, Head of Community and Stakeholder Engagement at HS2 talked about Phase 2 (i.e. beyond Birmingham, with proposed East Midlands Hub, Sheffield, Leeds, Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport stations). The vision was to be a catalyst for growth across Britain. He said there was overcrowding in the south (people in the north suffer too) and poor connectivity in the north, and rail demand is continuing to rise. Doing nothing is not an option. HS2 will connect over 100 cities and towns, including eight of our largest cities, with fast, frequent and reliable train services. It would 'protect the environment and community', 'regenerate our cities', 'support our knowledge economy' and be a 'catalyst for wider transport debate'. A benefit to Britain would be upskilling the rail and construction industries (science, technology and engineering). His final slide said: "The result should be a situation in which London grows sustainably, and the Midlands and the North achieve their full potential."
- Railfuture Speaker N^o 1, Peter Wakefield, Chairman of East Anglia branch, on Railfuture's active and very successful campaign in persuading local and national politicians plus Network Rail to support the reopening of the March-Wisbech railway line and fund all of the necessary studies.
- Railfuture Speaker N^o 2, Roger Blake, Director, on how Railfuture had been campaigning for the Lewes-Uckfield line to be reopened focusing on how to successfully engage with the decision makers and decision influencers, which raised Railfuture's profile and standing.
- Railfuture Speaker N^o 3, Chrs Fribbins, Director and Head of Passenger Group on Railfuture's Disruption survey, study and report including working with the rail industry and seizing media opportunities.

Afternoon Session - formal proceedings of the AGM

This consisted of: -

- 1) The national Vice Chairman, Chris Page, took the Chair for the 11th Annual General Meeting of the Railway Development Society Limited, which campaigns as Railfuture.
- 2) A Welcome from the Mayor of Blackpool, Valerie Haynes. In her brief but friendly and humorous address she mentioned that both she and her consort were ex-railway workers. She looked forward to the tram being extended to Blackpool North station, mentioning that the old rails were probably still under the tarmac. She was eager to have a frequent direct rail service

between Blackpool and London and called upon Railfuture to push for that as much as possible. The Mayor departed at this point and all six of the directors present joined the top table.

- 3) The draft Minutes of the 2014 AGM had been circulated; and these were duly approved. Proposed by Chris Dale seconded by William Whiting.
- 4) There were no specific matters arising from those Minutes.
- 5) The Honorary President, Christian Wolmar, was unable to be present owing to his need to be in London that day to promote his campaign to become London Mayor from 2016. However, a brief video address, recorded over Skype from his London home just after the General Election, was played.
- 6) Out-going David Berman was not present. Chris Page read out his report from the “glossy” Annual Review 2014, which members had been sent. Chris then highlighted some of the achievements of Railfuture since David became chairman in May 2012. He mentioned how greater professionalism and focusing on realistic campaigns with a single consistent voice means that that Railfuture is now viewed seriously, including at Westminster, the DfT and TfL, explaining the role that David had played in helping to transform Railfuture.
- 7) Annual Accounts and Report to Members. Jerry Alderson, Director of Finance & Corporate Governance, introduced David Harby, Finance Officer, who gave some highlights from the annual accounts. He pointed out that there would have been a deficit of almost £8,000 had it not been for the legacies received from deceased members. Jerry explained that the way some expenditure items are allocated in the accounts (such as Railwatch printing costs) may give a misleading impression that bureaucratic overheads are high, but much of it is productive campaigning. David Harby in consultation with Reporting Accountant, Tony Sheward, agreed to see if the figures could be presented more appropriately in future. The accounts were proposed for acceptance and adoption by Ian Wood seconded by Chris Norton, and passed “nem con”.
- 8) The Reporting Accountant, Tony Sheward, issued his certificate. It is an internal audit, as the turnover is insufficient to require a full independent audit. He was asked to briefly mention his new book on history of railway finances, which is for sale on the Railfuture web-site ('shop').
- 9) Tony Sheward was re-appointed for the following year - proposed William Whiting seconded by Malcolm Conway, and passed “nem con”. He mentioned that this would be his tenth year and it would be good practice if someone else took over from him in 2016.
- 10) Chris Brown from the Lincolnshire branch was the only nomination for Chairman; and was therefore elected unopposed to succeed David Berman. The results of the election for Directors appear in Appendix C. Jerry Alderson offered congratulations to the two new directors (neither were present) and welcomed the re-election of Chris Page, listing some of the important work he had done in the last two years (particularly the Have Your Say survey and adding valuable campaigning and passenger information to the website). Jerry also thanked Chris Fribbins for his contribution as a director and hoped he would continue his hard work as Head of Passenger Group. Jerry then gave some thoughts on the election results, raising a concern that for the first time all candidates were over 60 and there was no longer anyone on the board under 50. Two brief discussions took place: a) how many votes that family memberships should fairly be entitled to; b) whether the chairman should continue to be elected (in reality there is no election since there has not been a competition since 2005) or appointed from within the elected directors (as would happen if there was no nomination for chairman). Chris Brown took the chair from this point. He is leading a complete review of the Articles of Association and asked for thoughts on these matters to be e-mailed to him (chairman@railfuture.org.uk).

- 11) The Honorary President, Christian Wolmar, was re-appointed by the Meeting. The existing Honorary Vice Presidents were all re-appointed. Four editors of specialist modern rail magazines had been approached to become Vice Presidents and two had accepted the invitation. Both were appointed by the Meeting. They are tabled in Appendix D.
- 12) Jerry Alderson gave a PowerPoint presentation on behalf of the Board entitled “More for Less” on the review that Ian Brown, who was unable to be present, had undertaken of his directorate since he became Director of Policy in May 2014. Ian’s proposals to restructure the Policy Directorate aimed to become more relevant to members’ concerns, become more modern and efficient in its working practices, and focus more on productive campaigning, including a wider remit. This had been unanimously accepted by the Board and he would be implementing it later in the year after consultation with all members of his directorate. The most significant changes concerned international rail campaigning, where the scope would be substantially increased to include freight, infrastructure and worldwide best practice, with all of Railfuture’s campaigning asking the question “what do they do in other countries?”
- 13) Five motions had been received but one had been withdrawn and one had no seconder. The three formal motions were discussed in the following order:
 1. Proposed by Nigel Perkins, seconded by Ronald Schwarz. Both were concerned about the restructuring of the Policy Directorate where it concerned international campaigning and criticised the lack of direct consultation with members of the International Group before a decision was made. The motion called upon the Board to reconsider its decision in respect of international group and EPF membership. Prior to the motion being read out Chris Brown explained that whilst an ‘in principle’ decision had been made the implementation plan was still being produced and the matter would be an agenda item on the next Board meeting on 30th May regardless of the motion, which was effectively redundant. However, the motion was put and carried. The only votes against were from directors, most of whom abstained. As a matter of record, there were very few criticisms from anyone else about the changes being implemented by the Board, which were intended to strengthen Railfuture’s campaigning and give volunteers more opportunities, apart from one person who was involved with EPF. *POST-MEETING NOTE:* Since the AGM the Board asked Ian Brown, Director of Policy, to conduct a thorough review of EPF and he produced proposals that addressed all of the Board’s concerns about its relationship with EPF. As a result the Board voted unanimously to remain a full member of EPF and has agreed with EPF how the two organisations will engage in future. Following consultation and one-to-one engagement, all but one member of the former International Group have chosen to be part of the revised Policy Directorate.
 2. Proposed by Colin Elliff, seconded by Nina Smith and Peter Yates. This called upon the Board to engage with the Westminster Government: to press for an independent Inquiry into HS2 to address its multiple connectivity and capacity deficiencies; develop HS rail to conform with a National Transport Plan; ensure that all alternative proposals are fairly and properly considered. Concerns were raised from the floor about the value of proposer’s own ideas for HS2 and that any inquiry would play into the hands of the road lobby. The motion failed: 13 for, 22 against.
 3. Proposed by Hugh Jaeger, seconded by Colin Elliff. The proposer felt that the @RfChairman Twitter account had been inappropriately used (in terms of the tone and language used) in 2013 when debating with critics of HS2 (a controversial and divisive subject at the best of times) and that there had been abusive posts by at least one user on the Railfuture Campaigners Facebook page (which is open to anyone and administered by a Railfuture member). The motion sought to censure the Board for not taking disciplinary action and demanded an apology be given by the Board to anyone who was unhappy with any comment posted. Hugh Jaeger was the only person to have made a formal complaint. No further Tweets about HS2 have been made. The Board has since produced guidelines

for social media (these were to be published in June 2015). The motion failed: 4 for, 17 against, 3 abstained. Note: some people had left by this point hence the lower total than for motion 2.

- 14) Chris Brown had intended to review the meeting and reveal his hopes and plans for the year ahead. However, because of the time spent discussing the three motions there was insufficient time and the meeting ended at 16:38. Note: because of ill-health Chris Brown stepped down as national chairman in June. The position of national chairman remains vacant until May 2016, with meetings being chaired by the national Vice Chairman.

Note: it was not necessary to use the proxy votes at any point.

These minutes were agreed at the AGM on Saturday 21st May 2016.

Appendix A - Members & Visitors Present

This list is available only in the full minutes given to members.

Appendix B - Apologies for Absence

This list is available only in the full minutes given to members.

Appendix C - Election of Directors

Three Directors were required; and there were five nominations. The votes cast were:-

Stewart Palmer	243	Elected
Chris Page	220	Elected
Trevor Garrod	180	Elected
Ian McDonald	168	
Chris Fribbins	163	

348 ballots submitted - 179 electronically & 169 postal - votes cast = 976 out of possible 1044
Three postal arrived too late to be considered including one at the AGM. Deadline was 30th April.

(2014: 419 ballots submitted - 178 electronically & 241 postal)

Appendix D - Appointment of Rail Media Vice Presidents

Paul Abell	Editor, Today's Railway
Lorna Slade	Editor, Rail Professional

Both were informed of their appointment shortly after the AGM.

All existing Vice Presidents who wished to continue were re-appointed. Their names and photographs are shown on the Railfuture web-site at www.railfuture.org.uk/vice+presidents.

Appendix E - Proxy Votes

This list is available only in the full minutes given to members.

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