

Milton Keynes and Bletchley Rail User Group
Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday 4 April 2006

Present: Louise Green, Andrew Fisher, Alan Francis, Peter J Smith, Sean Hickey, Paul Bryan (Silverlink Trains), Steve Leyland (Virgin Trains), Bob Dolley (Virgin Trains), Phyllis Starkey MP

Apologies: Robert Prosser, Andrew Couldrake, Stuart Nightingale, Mark Lancaster MP

Peter Smith asked for it to be noted in the minutes that he was very angry that the NRUG's offer to attend the meeting had been turned down. He felt this was an excellent opportunity for the two groups to discuss common issues and they had been very keen to attend. Alan Francis explained that he had thought that the notice given was too short. He also had not appreciated that parliament was in recess and this would be the only date Sally Keeble could attend. He assured Peter that they would be invited to a future meeting.

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Outstanding Issues

Point 1: Alan Francis asked if Nicky Simpson had sent the letters. Louise Green will check with her. **Action: LG**

Point 2.2: Paul Bryan confirmed that he is still dealing with the community notice board and poster. He has been very busy recently following the departure of Julian Drury. Mark Steward is the new route director for Silverlink County.

Point 3.5: Louise Green noted that the word "veto" should read "vet". The file copy has been changed.

2. Update from Silverlink Train Services

2.1 Paul Bryan confirmed that there was little to report other than the departure of Julian Drury. Performance figures are currently excellent with punctuality standing at 92.12% compared with 88.12% thirteen periods ago. The numbers travelling has also increased.

2.2 The work on the new lifts is due to start in September with Platforms 1, 2 and 5. Work on Platforms 3, 4 and the service lift will start in January 2007.

2.3 The Marks and Spencer negotiations are still on hold. He thanked the group for their letter supporting this.

3. Passenger Focus Fares Conference

Alan Francis asked if anyone would be able to attend the above conference. He explained that he could attend if travel expenses were paid. Steve Leyland stated that he will, where possible, arrange complimentary tickets for anyone travelling on RUG business. Silverlink will also do the same. Alan therefore agreed to attend.

4. Focus Topic – Proposed Meeting with NRUG and the East/West Rail Link

The Committee agreed that it would be very useful to meet with the NRUG to identify areas of common ground. Andrew Fisher suggested that we offer to attend their next meeting, particularly as we had been unable to accommodate them this month. The Committee felt with was an excellent idea and Louise Green will write to them to ask if this might be possible. Peter Smith will let Louise Green have the NRUG contact details. **Action: LG/PJS**

Peter Smith also confirmed that NRUG are interested in the proposed East/West rail link. Phyllis Starkey stated that the idea of re-opening of the Oxford to Cambridge line has been kept alive by a consortium of local authorities. It is clear that money will not be given for the entire stretch of line but an obvious first stage would be the Bicester to Bletchley section as the track bed is already there. She informed the Committee that a feasibility study is currently looking at a proposal for a half hourly service from Oxford to Bedford, and Aylesbury to Bedford. It is important that this service links through Bletchley to Milton Keynes. She hopes that there will be an announcement soon.

Alan Francis has another meeting of the MK Stations WG this month where the issue of the high level platform at Bletchley for Bedford and Oxford trains will be discussed again.

5. Feedback from Alan Francis

This item has already been covered.

6. Group Admin'

6.1 Alan Francis informed the Committee that he had received an email from Robert Webb who wishes to stand down from the Committee due to family and work commitments. The Committee noted that he is the only Bletchley commuter. Louise Green agreed to check through the membership forms and contact any Bletchley commuters to see if they would be willing to stand. **Action: LG**

6.2 Andrew Fisher confirmed that the group's bank account was almost complete.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 2 May 2006 at 19.30