

## Milton Keynes and Bletchley Rail User Group

Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday 7 November 2006

**Present:** Louise Green, Alan Francis, Andrew Fisher, Sean Hickey, Peter J Smith, Chris Wright (OBRAC), Andrew Couldrake

**Apologies:** Paul Bryan (Silverlink Trains), Stuart Nightingale, Keeley Eaton

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2. Matters Arising

Louise Green will write to Silverink regarding tactile on platforms 3 and 4.

3. Elect Chair, Secretary and Treasurer

Alan Francis asked if there were any volunteers for the above posts. Noone came forward and he therefore agreed to re-stand as Chair. Louise Green agreed to continue as Secretary for one more year and Andrew Fisher agreed to continue as Treasurer. The nominations were supported by the Committee.

4. Membership Fee

The Committee agreed that as there was still most of last year's memberships fee left, a fee should not be levied for the coming year. There is enough to cover any expenses which may arise.

5. Update from Silverlink Trains

Alan Francis reported that the group's comments on the new franchise have been sent in a letter to the DfT and a response has been received. This response will be placed on our web site together with the links to the Stakeholder Briefing Document. Alan suggested that we lobby bidders outlining our wish-list for the new service and asked for suggestions as to how we might do this. The Committee agreed that stakeholders should be invited to a meeting. They should be seen individually in three, half hour slots. Alan Francis will invite the relevant stakeholders offering them the opportunity to attend the meetings on either the 5 December or 9 January 2007. **Action: AF**

Stuart Nightingale had emailed to ask that the condition of the gentlemen's toilets on platform 3 be highlighted. The floor beneath the urinals is always in a dreadful state. This comment will be passed to Paul Bryan via the minutes. **Action: PB**

6. Update from Virgin Train Services

Noone was present from Virgin.

7. Matters Arising from the AGM

Alan Franics reported that Silverlink Trains have offered us the use of their meeting room for our monthly meetings. After some discussion it was agreed that the Committee would continue to use the Chamber of Commerce offices but were grateful to Paul Bryan for his offer.

Peter Smith informed the meeting that Steve Leyland had been unhappy about the poor turnout at the AGM and the lack of constructive discussion. Peter asked whether the group should continue to exist. There was a good deal of discussion but the Committee felt that it was important that Milton Keynes and Bletchley rail users have a voice regarding their service.

The Committee agreed that it was important to ask Mark Lancaster to lobby the Transport Minister. Phyllis Starkey has already been doing this but as 50% of rail users are in Mark Lancaster's constituency the Committee felt it important to ascertain his views. Louise Green will write to him and invite him to come and give us his views on the railway service.  
**Action: LG**

Louise Green read out an email that had been received from a member of the group asking for information regarding how his £5 membership fee had been spent. Andrew Fisher will draw up the accounts and send them to Andrew Couldrake for posting on the web site. **Action: Andrew F/Andrew C**

8. Report from Milton Keynes Stations Group Meeting

Alan Francis attended the above meeting last week. He reported that there had been a discussion about the loss of car parking spaces whilst the new platform work is under way. It now appears that fewer will be lost than first thought. A second multi-storey car park may be provided and the lead for progressing this will be taken by the Central Milton Keynes Board. Alan has been informed that the blockades associated with the new platform work will only be at weekends and on bank holidays.

Alan was pleased to report that Her Majesty's Railway Inspector is to be consulted by Network Rail regarding the possibility of reversing a train on a gradient on the high level line at Bletchley Station. This is a very positive move. As an alternative Bedford trains might use platform 5, allowing passengers to link with the main slow lines North and South.

The report on the East/West Rail Link is now complete and a presentation was made to the EWRL consortium last week. A range of options and prices has been tabled but the information is not likely to be in the public domain until after Christmas.

9. Any Other Business

Peter Smith raised the issue of car parking at Milton Keynes Station and the lack of drop off/pick up spaces. Alan Francis explained that Milton Keynes Partnership had been looking at this issue as part of the Station Square re-development and he has been pushing for the Station Square re-development to be completed by Dec 08 when the new trains service starts.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 5 December at 19.30