

Milton Keynes and Bletchley Rail User Group

Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday 10 April 2007

Present: Louise Green, Alan Francis, Sean Hickey, Peter J Smith, Chris Wright (OBRAC), Stuart Nightingale, Paul Bryan (Silverlink Trains), Steve Leyland (Virgin Trains), Mark Lancaster MP

Apologies: Andrew Fisher

1. Alan Francis explained that this month's meeting had been postponed by one week to allow Mark Lancaster MP to attend and to enable Steve Leyland to give his presentation on the 2008 timetable. He therefore suggested that the meeting began with Steve's presentation and the Committee would deal with its routine matters later.

2. Presentation on Virgin's 2008 Timetable

Steve Leyland gave a presentation on the 2008 timetable, which marks the end of the West Coast Main Line modernisation. The main features of the timetable are as follows:

- 3 trains per hour to Manchester
- 3 trains per hour to the West Midlands
- 1 train per hour Anglo-Scots
- 1 train per hour to Liverpool
- 1 train per hour to Chester/ North Wales
- 1 train per hour to Scotland via Birmingham

Steve also noted that the railway would then be back to seven day operation with journey times around the same duration both during the week and at weekends.

For MKC there will be an hourly service to Manchester, Birmingham and Chester and, during the peak, to Liverpool and Glasgow. On the West Midlands Franchise there will be a hourly semi-fast service from London to Crewe via Northampton and Stoke.

Andrew Couldrake asked about the am and pm peak service for travellers from MKC to Euston and Steve Leyland confirmed there will be no change other than the West Midlands Franchise which will use the new platform for its service to and from

Crewe. This could provide a couple of extra fast services for MKC commuters.

Mark Lancaster asked what improvements there will be in peak southbound services from MKC and Steve Leyland confirmed that there will be none from Virgin as they do not serve the commuter market. He suggested that the Group contact the West Midlands Franchise.

Alan Francis stated that it would appear that the Group needs to focus on the West Midlands Franchise. He thanked Steve for his presentation.

3. Comments from Mark Lancaster

The Committee asked Mark to comment on the Conservative's policy on trains. He replied by stating that the whole issue is currently under review and as soon as he knows what their policy is he will let the Group know.

Mark reported that the Shadow Transport Minister, Chris Grayling, is due to visit MKC in July to look at the rather unique way the city handles transport, including redways and roads. He will also be bringing their rail specialist with them and he invited the group to meet them during their visit. He believes that the Government cannot force the city to expand without providing an adequate communications network.

Mark confirmed that there are some parliamentary questions already logged and he will be adding some more on Monday.

Sean Hickey stated that the Chamber is very concerned about the number of trains provided to bring workers into and out of the city, as well as train services providing links to the regions airports.

Peter Smith asked that Mark Lancaster also mention the East/West rail link.

Alan Francis thanked Mark Lancaster for attending.

4. Update from Silverlink Trains

Paul Bryan reported that performance recently had been excellent with the Passenger Charter at 96.4% and the All Day Performance for March standing at 93.9%.

Paul asked Mark Lancaster to note that no public toilets were planned for the new Platform 5/6 and that there is only one disabled toilet for the entire station. He also mentioned that car parking is currently at capacity.

Paul reported that the Retail Manager for Silverlink is leaving on Friday and another will probably not be appointed until the new franchisee takes over.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes were approved and there were no further matters arising.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 1 May 2007 at 19.30