



VALE OF BERKELEY RAILWAY

The Old Engine House, The Docks
Sharpness, Glos GL13 9UD

www.valeofberkeleyrailway.co.uk

E-mail: valeofberkeleyrailway@gmail.com

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Vale of Berkeley Railway Charitable Trust Saturday 15th October 2022

Introduction

1. The meeting opened at 10am in Sharpness Village Hall and was chaired by **Howard Parker, the VoBR Chairman**.
2. 44 fully paid-up members attended, 11 apologies and 8 proxy nominations were received (lists at the end of these minutes). The meeting was quorate.

Minutes of the 2021 AGM

3. Comments on the minutes of the AGM held 9th October 2021 were invited. None being received **Rob Gerrard** proposed that the minutes be signed as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by **Brian Bailey**. A vote was held by a show of hands with no-one voting against or abstaining.

Trustees' Report

4. **The Chairman** presented the Trustees' Report (reference AACZ0007) giving an update of progress during the year and invited comments or questions.
5. **Tony Goddard** recalled that there are two "ringfenced" sums of money held, for signalling and for the weighbridge building and enquired about progress on these since they are not mentioned in the report. **The Chairman** confirmed that funds are still held for these and explained that, whilst it is still the intention to acquire at least two redundant signal boxes, the timings of this are fully within Network Rail's (NR) control. Better progress has been made regarding the weighbridge building where replacement of the window lintel was done during the summer and the Nuclear Transport Solutions (NTS - formally Direct Rail Services) board considered the overall VoBR intentions for the Berkeley Station site, including the weighbridge building, at their August meeting. We have been told that the output of the NTS board deliberations is with their legal department for sign-off, following which NTS will meet with us and NR.

6. **Andrew Woodhall, Dick Dimmock and Tony Goddard** each questioned when the 8F group will finally remove their rolling stock, containers and equipment from the Engine Shed, noting that the delays are having a detrimental impact on VoBR volunteers. **Andrew Goodman** responded that the negotiations had been difficult, but agreement has at last been reached. The onus is now on the 8F group to make the agreed payments and remove their items. **Rob Gerrard** asked whether a “lessons learned” exercise had been carried out. **Graham Sturgess** replied that whilst a formal exercise hadn’t been done, the experience has already been incorporated into our written agreements (Restoration and Use Agreements – RUAs) and that we do not work on privately owned items until an RUA has been negotiated and signed.
7. **Derek Studd** noted that there is an urgent need to find someone who can help distribute VoBR magazines to members who live in the Berkeley area as this would save on postage costs. **Joe Sherman** kindly offered to help with this.
8. **Tony Goddard** noted that the VoBR project commenced in August 2015 and yet we still seem some time away from being able to operate train services and asked whether it was possible to forecast when services could start. **The Chairman** replied that much progress has been made, notably that we now have a lease to Oldminster Sidings (OS) and that discussions with NR have commenced for us to have a lease to the branch line between OS and Berkeley Station. In addition, we have two Pacer trains which could quickly be made available once the lease to the line and the necessary approvals are in place and work on the Safety Management System is well underway. Importantly once the branch line lease has been signed NR will require that we secure all necessary consents to operate trains within two years. **Steve Aston** added that obtaining agreement from Canal and River Trust for us to access OS from Bridge Road will be essential for us to be able to get equipment in.
9. There being no further questions or comments on the Trustees’ report **Julie Snell** proposed that it be accepted, seconded by **Dick Dimmock**. A vote was held by a show of hands with no-one voting against or abstaining.

Finance Report

10. **The Chairman** stated that the Treasurer (**Frank Wooldridge**) was unfortunately isolating as he has Covid and, assisted by **David Snell**, presented the accounts for the year (references AACZ0008 (finance report), AACZ0009 (Balance Sheet), AACZ0010 (Profit & Loss)), noting that despite the VoBR paying half of the rent for the Engine Shed for the first time, we still managed to end the year with a surplus (in previous years the leaseholder for the building (Railway Support Services), with whom we previously shared the facility, had funded all the rent but since VoBR is now the sole occupier of the building it is appropriate that we contribute). It was also noted that the VoBR now have some £66,000 worth of assets and that the value of our assets will in future be reported. All VoBR departments now operate under a budgetary control system which is enabling more effective management of VoBR finances.

11. Comments or questions were invited, and **Martin Pearson** stated that he had several questions but since the treasurer was not present it might be better if he emailed them. The text of Martin's subsequent email is appended to these minutes.
12. **Rob Gerrard** asked whether the budgetary control system includes an allowance for consumables used by volunteers. **David Snell** explained that in general individual projects have their own lines within the budgetary control system, which should include an allowance for general consumables, as this was preferential to having a catch-all consumables line which could have the effect of masking the true costs associated with a project. It was however recognised that there will always be minor activities that don't warrant raising as discrete projects and the budgetary control system will accommodate this.
13. There being no further questions **Steve Aston** proposed that the report be accepted. This was seconded by **David Snell**. A vote was held by a show of hands with no-one voting against or abstaining.

Propositions Raised by Members

14. No propositions from members had been received.

Election of New Trustees

15. The VoBR Constitution requires that a third of the Trustees stand down at each AGM but may stand for re-election. As we had seven Trustees at the time that the meeting was called, this means that two (**Paul Richardson** and **Graham Sturgess**) are standing down as the longest serving Trustees since election or re-election. **Graham Sturgess** has offered himself for re-election. In addition, nominations were received for **Rob Gerrard**, **Julie Snell**, **Bryan Whitfield** and **Andrew Woodhall**. Members were invited to consider the nominations in turn with a vote being held by a show of hands. No-one voted against or abstained. For the record the nominations were:

Rob Gerrard, proposed by **Howard Parker**, seconded by **David Snell**

Julie Snell, proposed by **Edgar Craggs**, seconded by **Stephen Aston**

Graham Sturgess, proposed by **Andy Thompson**, seconded by **Julie Snell**

Bryan Whitfield, proposed by **Peter Poliszewski**, seconded by **Frank Wooldridge**

Andrew Woodhall, proposed by **Ken Bailey**, seconded by **Frank Wooldridge**

"Looking to the Future" Address

10. **The Chairman** then gave a presentation (document reference AAXZ0012) detailing what has been achieved during 2021/22 and outlining what we will be focussing on for 2022/23.

11. **Rob Gerrard** wished to record appreciation for the work that **Dick Dimmock** had done to establish the scrap processing business and **Andy Thompson** added that **Sue Studden** is also generating significant revenue for VoBR from eBay sales.

The meeting closed at 12.30

Signed.....

Attendees: Andy Adams, Steve Aston, Brian Bailey, Ken Bailey, Peter Bennett, John Buckley, Terry Cox, Edgar Craggs, Joe Cuthbert, John Derrick, Dick Dimmock, Lisa Else, Peter Exley, Frances Gee, Rob Gerrard, Katie Goddard, Tony Goddard, Andrew Goodman, Keith Griffiths, Alan Hale, Roland Hall, Michael Jenkins, Richard Lloyd, Carole Mills, David Mullins, Paul Painter, Howard Parker, Martin Pearson, Bill Philips, Jennifer Poliszewski, Peter Poliszewski, Roy Pressland, Joe Sherman, David Smith, David Snell, Julie Snell, Derek Studd, Graham Sturgess, Clive Thompson, Paul Tucker, Paul White, Robert Williams, Andrew Woodhall, Terry Yates,

Apologies: Laurence Gulliford, Bryan Whitfield, Rob Carruthers, Chris Cresswick, Bryan Parsons, Trevor Clowes, Mervyn Reed, Jane Stone, Tad Stone, David Rowley, David Leach

Proxies: Held by the Chairman for: Chris Cresswick, Trevor Clowes, Jane Stone, Tad Stone

Held by David Snell for: Laurence Gulliford, David Rowley

Held by Julie Snell for: Bryan Whitfield

Held by Graham Sturgess for: Rob Carruthers

Text of emailed questions from Martin Pearson

As promised, here are my queries about the VoBR Finance Report – specifically, file AACZ0008 v0.0 as received by email on 29th September – from this morning’s AGM. For completeness, (a) and (b) are the two queries I mentioned at the meeting:

- a. At the top of page 2, the introduction states “for the year ended 30 September 2020” (should read 2021).
- b. Notes 9 and 10 are referred to but missing.
- c. The “Fund balance” (page 3) and “Total assets less total liabilities” (page 4) at £141,838 do not match the “Income funds” total (page 4) at £141,842. (I’d accept a £1 discrepancy from rounding, but I feel that £4 – while still small – warrants mentioning.) Additionally, neither of these figures appears in the Balance Sheet, file AACZ0009 v0.0 (assuming of course they’re supposed to...!).
- d. In Note 7 (Tangible assets), the total of £12,969 doesn’t match the figure in the Accounts of £20,450 (this latter figure appears as “Stock” in the Balance Sheet, file AACZ0009 v0.0).
- e. In Note 8 (Debtors), the figure of £1,382 (which also appears in the Balance Sheet, file AACZ0009 v0.0) doesn’t match the figure in the Accounts of £1,749.

Hopefully I’m simply misunderstanding something, and haven’t uncovered any egregious errors! Either way, I’m sure you and Frank Wooldridge will be able to put my mind at ease.

I confess I was in two minds about whether to email Frank with these queries in advance of the meeting or wait until today; on reflection I think the best approach would have been to have emailed him in advance. My apologies for not doing so.

Best wishes,
Martin.