

**Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways  
Extraordinary General Meeting  
7<sup>th</sup> May 2022**



Attending: David Redgewell, Ian Buckie, Rob Dixon (Chair), Tony Lloyd (committee), Tim Weekes (media), Lionel White, Tina Biggs, Chris Orlik, Lucy MacKilligan.

Apologies: Julie Boston, Carol Durrant, Mark Maggs

**Formal Business:**

**AGM minutes from 2021, together with the 2020 and 2021 financial reports** were approved unanimously. It was noted that these had been uploaded to the FoSBR website soon after the meetings concerned.

Following a discussion about the impact of self-renewing online subscriptions, it was proposed and agreed unanimously that section 4 of the constitution be amended as follows,

~~“Subscriptions are paid on an annual basis due on 1<sup>st</sup> January at a rate set by the General Meeting. New members joining in November and December will have their subscriptions carried forward to the following December.”~~

**Discussion:**

1) RD, DR, TW, LM and others noted that the constitution does not specify a **quorum**. This was discussed, including in relation to a potential need for this if FoSBR works jointly with public or other bodies.

Action: The committee will explore this issue. It will be discussed at the next AGM.

2) Similarly the potential need for **liability insurance** for some public events was discussed and will be explored by the committee.

Action: The committee will explore this issue.

3) IB informed the meeting that Bristol Library Service are planning an **exhibition of work by Mike Baker**, an active FoSBR supporter. He will forward an email inviting organisations with whom Mike was involved to participate in this.

Action: The committee will discuss this issue and liaise with Bristol Library Service.

4) Attendees reported **difficulty contacting Severnside Community Rail Partnership**. DR suggested that they contact Jane Jones at GWR.

5) The **dates of and plans for rail schemes have changed** since discussed at the AGM and it would be helpful for updated information to be provided to members.

Action: This will be taken forward.

6) DR reported that the government has told WECA and North Somerset that they expect them to join together and to create an **Integrated Transport Authority**, with the West of

England Local Enterprise Partnership being subsumed into WECA in line with government policy. Government have told the local authorities that they are unlikely to be successful in funding bids with their current structure.

DR added that the Scrutiny Committee of the West of England Joint Committee (which includes North Somerset) is producing a **report to be presented to WECA**.

Actions:

Attendees agreed that FoSBR should submit a response to this in favour of an ITA, which Tina Biggs agreed to write.

The issues will be discussed at the committee meeting on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May.

Tina Biggs will read the minutes of the WECA meetings and report to the committee.

**7) Portishead delay and funding problems:**

WECA has £110 million of funding, which covered the costs of the scheme before Development Consent Order process started. Repeated government delays to this process have led to a £27 million funding gap, of which about £11 million is rolling stock hire.

WECA have never agreed funding for rolling stock hire, which would have been expected to have been agreed before the scheme was developed.

Government have told WECA that the funding must be available for the scheme and rolling stock before the scheme can proceed.

Actions:

- Attendees agree that FoSBR would arrange an event in June in Pill to promote the importance of Portishead and put pressure on government, WECA and the local authorities.

- A statement will be submitted and presented to WECA committees (late June & early July).

8) DR reported that **Western Gateway Regional Body** have been given powers to oversee rail studies.

9) **Henbury line:** Attendees expressed concerns at rumours that divergent views in the local authorities about funding of rolling stock are delaying further work and government funding. It is also rumoured that YTL are keen on a turnback being installed at North Filton, which would allow trains to run to the arena before the line is completed to Henbury, and that they are pushing for the Henbury Loop.

Actions:

- FoSBR will attempt to arrange a meeting with Mark Weston and YTL.

- A statement will be made to South Glos cabinet and WECA

10) **Malvern to Brighton service has been cut** on the orders of DfT, which removes five services per day to our local stations. DR requested that FoSBR record our opposition to this.

Action: a short statement will be made of our opposition and the importance of services being restored.

11) **Rolling stock changes:** DR reported that the loss of direct London services to Pewsey has led to IET rolling stock being used for Cardiff- Penzance services. This was considered more appropriate and has far lower CO2 emissions than the old HSTs currently used.

## 12) **Interchanges**

Following FoSBR's event at Filton Abbeywood and Lawrence Hill stations and bus stops, an email was received from Paul Baker at WECA asking for information about the reasons for our actions. RD emailed him and requested a meeting but has had no response. DR suggested forwarding this email to Dan Norris and senior officers, which Tina Biggs did during the meeting.

Action: Committee to chase up response from WECA about interchanges campaign.

13) **Timetables no longer being printed** after DfT have told train operators that they no longer need to do this to save money. Some local authorities have chosen to promote bus and train services by printing and distributing timetables, such as in Devon and Cornwall. WECA and First Group should be encouraged to do the same.