

Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Passengers' Association

Saturday 15th October 2022, 11:45

Railway Inn, Borth.

Present: Dennis Bates, James Davies, Angus Eickhoff, Roger Goodhew, Sarah Harvey^(r), Andrea Hughes, Hugh Hughes, Bill Redfern, Dave Taylor, Graham Taylor, Thomas Wheeler^(r), Cllr Michael Williams^(r).

^(r) – remote.

Apologies: Tony Harvey, Robert Knight, Gareth Marston, Ivor Morris, William Owen, Jeff Smith, Roger Whitehouse.

Angus chaired the meeting.

Minutes of Last Meeting (10th September):

The minutes of the September meeting were accepted noting that Thomas Wheeler attended remotely.

Matters Arising from the Minutes:

Nothing had been heard regarding TfW's offer to visit one of the new 197 trains in September so it is assumed that it won't be happening. Bill had heard that there is currently no progress in replacing the trolley bay on the 197s with seats. Thomas said that the seats will be very uncomfortable.

Officers Reports:

The Treasurer reported that we had no income this month and the spend on Newsletter 88 was £106 (Printing) and £80-95 (Postage etc.).

Dennis reported that he was pleased the Newsletter 88 was published on time in September. The next issue will be January, copy for it is welcomed.

Angus reported that he thinks that he has been removed from the parliamentary email list since he is no longer receiving emails regarding transport select committee.

Cambrian Lines News:

Bill reported that, today, the coast line had reopened following the first period of Barmouth Bridge engineering works. Dave Taylor said that in the next closure trains would be run from Barmouth to Pwllheli. Because it is a short (4 week) closure the units do not have to be returned to Machynlleth. It is thought that there are still fuelling facilities at Pwllheli.

Dennis reported that he had travelled from Bow Street to Pwllheli in early September and the journey had been fine.

Sarah reported that she had made a number of journeys between Shrewsbury and Birmingham a number of times without problems. On a Crosscountry journey from Leamington to Wolverhampton she was disturbed by an announcement that TfW tickets were not valid on the service, and nearly got off. Bill said it was probably meaning TfW Only tickets but it's important that announcements were made very clearly.

James said that complex tickets put people off travelling by train.

Roger also said that Shrewsbury to Birmingham was fine, but he had problems with Avanti services.

Angus reported quite a few good journeys.

Discussion:

Thomas and Angus said that they were not keen on hydrogen. However James said that there were new technologies for handling the hydrogen emerging with significant investment. Angus said that there was still not enough known about the, possibly poor, traction characteristics of hydrogen powered trains. Thomas said that there must be pantograph provision for running electric between Shrewsbury and Birmingham.

AOB:

Bill reported that at the recent AGM of the Talyllyn Railway the collection was to fund the provision of defibrillators on all Talyllyn trains. The ones chosen do not require any training to use. Whilst there is now increasing provision of defibrillators at main line stations, including TfW, and given that the window of effectiveness is very short, wouldn't it be a good idea if the mainline trains matched the Talyllyn and carried them. The meeting agreed it was a good idea, and Bill agreed to write to TfW about it.

Angie referred to the importance of the Cambrian rail service to Aberystwyth University and suggested that we should liase with senior management at the University and the Students Union. Angus said he would talk to Angie re University contacts after the meeting. It was noted that our December Aberystwyth meeting fell outside term time and we should consider this when setting dates for future Aberystwyth meetings. Angie also said that unreliable train service was a factor in Hywel Dda health board struggling to recruit.