

PURBECK COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP VIRTUAL MEETING THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2020



Present:

Cllrs Trite, Lacey-Clarke, and Bryan of DC, Cllr Whitwam of STC, Andy Harrowell and Phil Dominey of SWR, Kelly Flynn of DC (first part of meeting only), Mark Woolley and Mick Stone of SR, Rob Hodgkinson and Jonathan Cowe of NR, Paul Webster of CRN.

Apologies

Ade Parvin of Perenco, Dan Wright of CRN, Andrew Ardley of SWR, and Jaime Rockhill of NR.

Chairman's Opening Remarks - WST noted that it had been necessary again to hold the meeting virtually, as future meetings for the foreseeable were likely to be. He apologised for the lateness of sending out the agenda, and explained this was due to the need for an early meeting to discuss arrangements for both the replacement of the CRPO and the agreement for funding of the replacement bus shelter at Wareham station, and the uncertainty that key players would be available at short notice. In the event they were. He then asked all present to introduce themselves.

Minutes of Steering Group of 14th July 2020

These had been sent out originally in August and had been re-sent a day earlier. The minutes were accepted as a true record of proceedings (AH/MWm).

Matters Arising Therefrom and not on the Agenda

MS wanted to update the meeting on the matter of the lease and sub-lease of Furzebrook Sidings. He said that DC had advised that the formal Notice had now been served on Perenco UK by DC. It was hoped that a three-way virtual meeting to discuss Heads of Terms could follow within the next two weeks.

Arrangements for the Recruitment of a Replacement CRPO

After discussion, the view was that the recruitment process should commence asap. It was proposed that a sub-group be formed to progress the matter and it was agreed that KF/MS/MWy/AH/DW should form that group.

Discussion ensued about aspects of the job, as follows:

Hours - 25 hours per week. It was agreed that this could be afforded in light of existing Reserves, although it was acknowledged that the future of existing franchise commitments could not be guaranteed. It was hoped and currently expected that the £20k + RPI for the officer per annum would be paid by SWR through to the Franchise end date of August 2024.

Length of contract - 3 years.

MWy confirmed that SR was prepared to continue as the employer and accountable body for the post.

Salary - to be calculated on the same basis as existing, pro-rata'd and including RPI increases.

The remit given to the Sub-Group was to agree a Job Description, Person Specification, and job advert, then to proceed to advertise etc. Steering Group would expect updates from the Sub-Group as matters progressed, with a pencilled-in date for an extra Steering Group meeting in early November, to consider any issues which might arise and give further guidance as necessary.

Wareham Bus Shelter - Replacement

MS reported that KM had expressed the wish to remain as the Partnership's Volunteer Project Manager for this proposal in view of the urgent need to agree the final details of the specification and a funding package. KM's appointment was confirmed. ACTION: MS to advise KM (done).

The formal quote from the supplier/installer was in the sum of £19,377 plus VAT. MS understood that DC had proposed that it would bear £10,000 of that cost. Therefore, PCRCP would have to find the remainder (£9,377).

The intention was to apply for an ISTF grant from CRN, in the sum of £7,500, towards this sum. This application had to be submitted by 30th September. It was already in an advanced draft form.

There were two outstanding issues with DC which needed early resolution:

- how VAT should be treated.
- whether DC would project manage the installation of the replacement shelter, which was not a design which they were used to dealing with.

On the first item, there was discussion and agreement that VAT should not be a problem (subsequently, MWy confirmed that SR was registered for VAT and could reclaim it). On the second, NLC and RB said they would have a word with the officers to see if there was a significant problem or not.

PD asked if the intention was that real time rail information would be shown in the new shelter and, if so, would there be a data feed available. Further, PW asked about poster cases. He said that it was important to order enough cases for all of the information needed in such an inter-change, not just bus timetables. MS agreed to pass both of these comments to KM for her to deal with. ACTION: MS (done).

PW suggested that a fall back position, if ISTF not available or not at the suggested level, then an application to the CRN Small Grants Fund (up to £2,500) might be pursued. It was acknowledged that there might be a call on funds held in Reserves to ensure this project proceeded. All agreed that it was a project which the Partnership should be involved with in order to improve the inter-change at Wareham.

PW also sounded a warning that the Community Rail Development Fund might not be available in 2021/22, in view of the change from franchises to concessions or whatever might take their place.

Review of AGM

WST highlighted the attendance of some new or irregular attendees at the AGM. There were some new faces attending from DC and BC&P, and some old ones in Kulvinder Bassi (DfT) and Ade Parvin (Perenco UK). Cllr Hadley from BC&P had been away on holiday and unable to attend but he had asked an officer to be present. MS thought that the attendance of Amanda Evans (Community Transport at DC) would be a useful contact for the new CRPO in due course.

Any Urgent Business

PW asked if any of the other projects in the Activity Plan were likely to be progressed in the interim before a new Officer was in place, for example the proposed Compost Toilet at Herston. MWy said he would speak to SR's Project Manager to ask for an update (and KM subsequently said she would do likewise) and to see if there were issues, other than Covid, which might be holding the project up.

PD asked if SR had heard anything yet from DfT regarding its application to the Restore Your Railway (Reversing Beeching) fund. MWy said that there had been no response yet but one was anticipated shortly.

AH suggested that the Sub Group appointed earlier in the meeting to discuss the moving forward of the recruitment process for the CRPO post should stay on the call. This was agreed.

Date of Next Meeting - 1st December at 11.30, although an earlier meeting was likely in early November to discuss progress with the appointment of a new CRPO.

ENDS

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