

# PURBECK COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP RE-CONVENED MEETING 18 HELD VIRTUALLY VIA TEAMS ON 9 JUNE 2022



## Present:

Cllr Mike Whitwam (MWm) of Swanage Town Council (Chair), Cllr Beryl Ezzard (Vice Chair) (BE) and Kelly Flynn (KF) of Dorset Council, Mick Stone (MS) of Swanage Railway (Secretary), Jonathan Cowe (JC) and Jack Wharton (JW) of Network Rail, Paula Aldridge (PA) of SWR, Josephine Foley (JF) Purbeck CRPO, Ade Parvin of Perenco UK (AP), Dan Wright (DW) of Community Rail Network

**Apologies:** Jaime Rockhill (JR) of Network Rail, Gavin Johns (GJ) and Jonathan Evans (JE) of Swanage Railway, Andrew Ardley (AA) of SWR, and Fiona King (FK) of Dorset Council.

The meeting was quorate.

## Agenda item 1 - Chairman's Opening Remarks and Welcome -

MWm welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that the main item of business for the meeting was expediting the recruitment of a replacement for JF as CRPO (Item 3). He also welcomed Jack Wharton to his first meeting.

## Agenda Item 2 - Draft Minutes of the Steering Group Meeting on 12th May 2022 (Meeting number 17)

The minutes were approved, nem. con.

## Agenda Item 3 - Consideration of a draft report on options for employing a new CRPO

A report by MS had gone out to Steering Group ahead of the meeting. The report explained that time was of the essence if PCRCP wanted a replacement Officer in place by 1st September.

Contact had been made with both Hampshire CRP and Southeast CRP about the possibility of them employing that Officer on PCRCP's behalf. The latter had responded with an offer to help PCRCP become a CiC or CLG, rather than to employ the member of staff. The basic terms of what HCRP would require for employing an Officer were circulated in the report. GJ, on behalf of SR, had offered to 'start the ball rolling' by advertising the role, even though another body might employ the officer.

Further, the report suggested that discussions with HCRP and others should continue, to identify further options for co-working, for example on the potential contract for renovating Wool Goods Shed. Finally, the report suggested that a 3 or 4 person panel might be appointed to deal with these issues, but principally recruitment.

Various comments were made on the principles involved. DW wondered whether PCRCP itself could advertise the post. PA supported this view and suggested that she and DW could assist to get the job advert finalised and distributed, on the basis that HCRP would be the employer and Accountable Body from the outset of the employment contract, thus avoiding any potential TUPE problems at a later date. MS said that he thought it would be appropriate to go back to HCRP to iron out any details before finalising a deal with HCRP. This was agreed **ACTION: MS**.

JF asked how soon the process could be achieved. PA said that HCRP had experience of what PCRCP was proposing and thought it could be quite quick. Decisions on matters such as where the Officer might be based and how managed, were matters which could be dealt with by a subcommittee/panel, to be appointed by Steering Group.

MS referred to an Appraisal undertaken with JF by GJ recently. There were some learning points to be taken into account from that exercise.

Line management was a key issue. MS confirmed that would describe his current role with JF as a Mentor, but not a Line Manager. He confirmed that he would be happy to continue that mentoring role with a new Officer. PA advised that HCRP performed the Line Management role for another of the CRPs for which she was responsible. It was acknowledged that the Line Manager and the Mentor could, in future, be the same person.

The Chair asked MS to finalise discussions with HCRP on the employment and Accountable Body aspects as soon as possible. It was agreed that the subcommittee/panel should be comprised of: MWm, MS, PA, and DW. JF said she was happy to help the process.

At this point, DW asked about SR's future contribution to the Partnership. It would not be offering either funds or 'in kind' contributions, and he asked if it was right that SWR should support the SR stations from its core funding. This needs clarification. BE affirmed her view that it was important that SR remains a full partner. Clearly, it would be important for joint marketing etc. to continue between SWR and SR. This led to KF re-iterating that the Swanage - Wareham Service is in the LTP, but there are financial constraints preventing assistance at present. KF noted there is a potential source of funding from DC which could be added to the SWR core funding. This might be a relatively low amount but could assist. DW wondered whether SR could provide some funding, too, in lieu of its in-kind assistance. JF thought that the role of PCRCP was not well understood at SR. Covid had made things difficult. It was agreed that:

- MS to finalise the proposal from HCRP and then share with the sub-group above.
- Options for additional co-working on other contracts should continue.
- The issue of a vision for the future of PCRCP, including possible Incorporation, would be dealt with after the above work streams.

**ACTION:** the above-named subgroup (MWm, MS, PA, and DW) to meet separately to finalise arrangements with HCRP and to work up a new Job Description and Person Specification etc. with a view to an early advertising of the post.

### **Agenda Item 4 - Consideration of Financial Commitments Paper**

JF apologised that it had not been possible to produce a final version of this paper. This was because of the upcoming 175th celebrations and the resources needed to make it a success.

Understanding of the Reserves available was important in making any decision about salary, working hours etc. for the new Officer. **ACTION:** JF to produce the final report once the 175th celebrations are over.

Wool Goods Shed - JF reported that she had been keen to progress with funding applications for the renovation of the Goods Shed, but was concerned that she would be leaving, and funders required to know if the project would proceed in her absence. PA confirmed that SWR would be offering £6,000 project funding if that assurance could be given. JF had also asked the Railway Heritage Trust if it could assist with some matched funding, and proposed to apply for a Community Rail Development Fund grant to assist, too.

It was agreed that this was a worthwhile project but it was not possible to make a decision on it until the Commitments paper referred to above was available and understood and a timeline for a new officer was in sight.

On the subject of Wool, JW advised that the NR license application for the land adjoining the building was being undertaken.

**Agenda Item 5 - Dates for Steering and Stakeholder Group Meetings for the remainder of 2022**

The following dates were proposed:

- Tuesday 26th July (in person) 11.00 at the Furzebrook offices of Perenco UK;
- Thursday 1st September - Stakeholder Group/AGM - Online;
- Tuesday 8th November - Steering Group In person or online - to be agreed.
- Tuesday 13th December - Steering Group (placeholder only at this stage).
- January 2023 - next Stakeholder meeting?

Other potential locations for future in-person meetings in Wareham and surrounding area were discussed and enquiries made as appropriate. **ACTION: BE**

**Agenda Item 6 - Any Other Business**

- JF gave an update on arrangements for celebrating the 175th Anniversary of the Southampton & Dorchester Railway. **ACTION: JF** to pass copies of press releases to Erin at CRN and to SWR.
- The trial minibus service from Wareham Station to RSPB at Arne had commenced. **ACTION: JF** to publicise once the 175th is over.
- JF showed an example of the proposed Line Guide.
- BE advised of the upcoming judging for the 'In Bloom' competition on 9th July, both at Wareham and Swanage stations.
- DW referred to the Community Rail Awards and asked that all consider taking photos of events locally, and send them to CRN, so they could be judged at the Awards.

Purbeck Community Rail Officer  
Josephine Foley  
josephine.foley@swanagerailway.co.uk  
Tel: 07508 513354

