

Record of Meeting on 10th November 2021

By Zoom

Present

Peter Blackburn	<i>Chairman</i>	Peter Chidley	
Graham Ellis	<i>Vice Chair</i>	Lee Fletcher	
Roger Witt	<i>Minute Secretary</i>	David Phillips	WC
Kevin Hayes	<i>Admin Secretary</i>	Peter Tapscott	
Shirley McArthay			
Mark Harris	<i>MWPC</i>		

Apologies

Peter Glover	Judith Gradwell
Tom Price	
John Hamley	

Abbreviations:

<i>CCIF - Customer and Community Improvement Fund</i>	<i>MRUG – Melksham Railway User Group</i>
<i>GWR – Great Western Railway</i>	<i>SNTB - subNational Transport Bodies</i>
<i>LEP - Local Enterprise Partnership</i>	<i>TWCIC - TransWilts Community Interest Company</i>
<i>MTC - Melksham Town Council</i>	<i>TWCRP – TransWilts Community Rail Partnership</i>
<i>MWPC - Melksham Without Parish Council</i>	<i>WC – Wiltshire Council</i>
<i>ACoRP - Association of Community Rail Partnerships, -now CRN, Community Rail Network</i>	<i>WWRUG-- West Wilts Rail Users Group</i>

1. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting on 15th September were agreed

2, Rail & Bus Service Update

Train service cancellations approx. 10% in September resulting in a decision not to do any marketing. Cancellations 4% to 5% in October. Observed loadings about 90% pre-Covid levels off-peak but only about 50% at peak times.

Cardiff to Portsmouth services are still regularly short formed leading to capacity problems. There are generally only minor changes from December although the evening service to Southampton will terminate at Warminster

Bus running is good but services being delayed by congestion in Bath over last few days which is likely to get worse as Christmas approaches.

Town bus service has been reduced using only one vehicle on some days because of staff shortages.

3. Trans Wilts Update

A defibrillator is now located outside the hub building at Melksham. The Halloween events were successful.

"Restore your Railway" bids have been successful for Devizes and Corsham. Initial costs for Wilton are being met by developers.

4. Option 24/7

Discussions are ongoing with WC, with communities now becoming involved.

The "Bus Service Improvement Plan" has now been published. This proposes two buses per hour on town services together with the introduction of evening and Sunday services where these do not currently exist. Work is now moving forward on an enhanced phasing plan. Some improvements to services have already been announced but are dependent upon recruitment of additional drivers so probably will not be implemented before mid 2022. Locally these are evening and Sunday services on X34 and improved frequency on the "Zigzag" service.

A major survey on bus usage is planned for the new year.

Thanks were given to Lee for all the work he has put in on this matter.

5. WWRUG report

The group is heavily involved with the campaign against the proposed withdrawal by SWR of the Bristol to Waterloo service in December.

6. Forthcoming Events

A decision was made not to run the Santa trip this year on health and safety grounds. Services will be actively marketed in the new year with off peak travel perceived to be a growth area.

7. Treasurers Report

There has been little recent expenditure. A good price was obtained for the press advert.

8. Station adoption

Little is happening on this at present. Graham has a supply of sacks for the rubbish bins. Some funding may be available from Community Rail Network in respect of station adoption.

9. Other Matters

WC is preparing a briefing note on transport matters for local MPs.

A FOI request has been submitted for the SWR report on cross boundary services

9. Dates of next Meetings

19th January, 9th March, 18th May (AGM). Venue to be announced

9. Websites for Reference

- MTUG www.mtug.org.uk
- TransWilts <https://transwilts.org>
- Station Hub <https://melkshamhub.co.uk/home>
- GWR <https://www.gwr.com>

- **Railfuture** <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Severnside+Branch>
- **Coffee Shop** <http://www.firstgreatwestern.info/coffeeshop/index.php>.
- **Neighbourhood Plan** <https://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org/copy-of-housing>
- **Faresaver Buses** <http://www.faresaver.co.uk/>
- **Frome Buses** <http://www.fromebus.co.uk>
- **Travelwatch SW** <http://www.travelwatchsouthwest.org>
- **Community Rail Network** (was ACoRP) <http://communityrail.org.uk/>

- **Trans Wilts leisure Leaflets** <https://transwilts.org/2020/09/29/transwilts-walking-and-cycling-leaflets/>

The meeting closed at 21.10