

Terms of Reference for North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership

Adopted by the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership at its Annual General meeting on 10 July 2019

1. Aim and Scope

The North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership (NSCRP) aims to bring together local groups and partners at its stations to work with industry and deliver a range of community engagement and promotional activities. NSCRP promotes understanding of the importance of local railways, in terms of improving mobility and sustainable travel, community cohesion and wellbeing, and social and economic development.

The North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership (NSCRP) comprises representatives of:

- local authorities;
- train operating companies;
- Network Rail;
- station adopters;
- local rail promotion groups

NSCRP covers the Crewe to Derby line and elsewhere in North Staffordshire (hereafter called the NSCRP area).

2. Objectives

The aims of the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership are:

- 2.1 to connect local communities with their railway to deliver social benefit and local investment and to increase rail use
- 2.2 to promote rail as a sustainable, accessible and healthy means of travel through good integration with other forms of transport so that rail services meet the needs of local people, businesses and visitors while providing value for money for passengers and taxpayers, as well as benefitting the environment
- 2.3 to uphold station adoption as a way of promoting community cohesion as well as increasing rail passenger satisfaction and station footfall
- 2.4 to involve the community through the work of station adoption, arts initiatives and events and by improving links with local businesses, schools and colleges and community groups
- 2.5 to support the social, economic and tourism potential of rail travel through improving station facilities, supporting social enterprise and promoting local visitor attractions
- 2.6 to work with partner train operating companies to help achieve their objectives for community rail partnerships activities as set out in the Community Rail Partnership Agreement or any subsequent agreement
- 2.7 to meet the objectives set out in the Department for Transport Community Rail Development Strategy 2018

3. Partnership Area

- 3.1 Within the NSCRP area as defined in section 1 the local transport authorities are Cheshire East County Council, Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on Trent City Council.

4. Membership

- 4.1. Membership of NSCRP Management Group is open to all stakeholder organisations who contribute financially or through voluntary work towards furthering the aims. The membership is reviewed at the Annual General Meeting each year and is shown in Schedule 2 of these Terms of Reference.
- 4.2. The Partnership is a non-campaigning, non-party political organisation and therefore political parties are not eligible for membership.

5. Accountable Body

- 5.1 As an unincorporated association, North Staffordshire CRP has no separate legal status, but works closely with Stoke-on-Trent City Council which acts as the accountable body for accounting, purchasing and employment purposes.
- 5.2 NSCRP seeks to engage the services of a suitably qualified Community Rail Partnership Officer. This officer and any other persons employed and managed by the Accountable Body on behalf of NSCRP will, unless otherwise agreed, solely undertake tasks and duties agreed by the Management Group and in accordance with objectives set by the Management Group.
- 5.3 The Team Manager Transport Policy and Planning, Stoke City Council will ensure the Community Rail Partnership Officer complies with the employment terms and conditions set out in the contract of employment and will ensure they are managed by a suitable and relevant departmental or senior manager.

6. Management of the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership

The Management Group

The strategic direction of the Partnership will be provided by a Management Group comprising the Stakeholders listed in Schedule 2 and reviewed annually at the AGM.

- 6.1 The Management Group will have the business and terms of reference set out in **Schedule 1** to this Constitution.
- 6.2 The Management Group shall meet at least quarterly. Further meetings may be arranged with the agreement of the Chair. Not less than fourteen days' written notice shall be given of meetings. The notice shall set out the business to be considered.
- 6.3 The Management Group shall elect the Chair and Vice-Chair from among its members at the first meeting of the Management Group and annually after that. Meetings will be led by the Chair, or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair if present. In the absence of the Vice-Chair, the meeting shall be chaired by one of the other members of the Management Group who is present and elected to chair that meeting.
- 6.4 The Management Group will seek to reach its decisions by consensus, but in the event of a vote being taken each representative present at a meeting of the Management Group shall have one vote. In the event of an equality of votes, the chair shall not have a casting vote and the proposal will be deemed to have been not agreed.
- 6.5 The quorum for meetings of the Management Group shall be four members.
- 6.6 The North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership Officer and a representative from the Association of Community Rail Partnerships and from Network Rail shall be non-voting members of the Management Group.
- 6.7 The Management Group may invite officers from the organisations represented on the Management Group, or from third parties, to provide advice.

7 The Station Volunteers' Group

- 7.1 The Station Volunteers are invited to a gathering at least once a year. The meeting is primarily an occasion to express the CRP's thanks to its volunteers but is also an opportunity to provide information and updates and to seek volunteers' views on NSCRP policy and any issues of concern.
- 7.2 NSCRP encourages Station Volunteer groups to join ACoRP as station adoption groups in their own right but will ensure that all volunteers receive TOC safety briefings, relevant information from ACoRP and from other sources as required.
- 7.3 NSCRP aims to support station volunteers with encouragement, advice and equipment as required. It also seeks opportunities to recruit new volunteers, seeking to promote equality of opportunity for all.

8 Funding

- 8.1 NSCRP will identify the funding required to deliver an annual community rail activity plan agreed by all Management Group members and in line with guidance from the Association of Community Rail Partnerships and informed by the DfT Community Rail Development Strategy.
- 8.2 The Management Group will support the Community Rail Partnership Officer in ensuring that funding is collected in a timely manner from funding partners of the Community Rail Partnership and that this is kept in a ring-fenced account and that clear and accurate management accounts are provided at Management Group meetings.

9 Equalities

- 9.1 NSCRP will, in carrying out its business, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 and seek to promote equality of opportunity between all persons. Behaviour contrary to this, that causes offence on grounds of race, gender, disability or age, shall be deemed grounds for expulsion from membership.
- 9.2 Whilst wishing to encourage local economic and tourism development, it would be contrary to the spirit of the partnership for one organisation to seek advantage over another through membership of the partnership.
- 9.3 North Staffordshire is an independent organisation which will work closely with the train operating company(s) and infrastructure operator. Its role is not to discuss, feedback or relate to day-to-day operations of the railway except where these materially impact on the ambitions and objectives of the partnership or where constructive feedback is helpful in a closed environment of the Management Group as a critical friend.

10 Dissolution of the Partnership

A decision to suspend or disband the Partnership shall only be taken at an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting of the Management Group open to all stakeholders and shall require a two thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote and which will also include a representative from Stoke City Council.

Created October 2019

Schedule 1

Management Group Business and Terms of Reference

The Management Group shall be responsible for:

- providing the strategic direction of the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership and for the preparation and monitoring of an annual community rail activity plan aimed at achieving the Partnership's aims and objectives. Such plan to provide for the employment of a suitably qualified and competent person to be the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership Officer;
- approving the annual budget of the Partnership. The North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership Officer shall be designated as the budget holder for the annual budget of the Partnership. A monitoring report of income and expenditure compared to the annual budget shall be prepared by the Community Rail Partnership Officer and discussed at each meeting of the Management Group.

The Management Group shall have all the necessary powers to implement the approved annual community rail development plan.

Schedule 2

Members of the North Staffordshire CRP Management Group Stakeholder Group

East Midlands Railway	Donna Adams, Dave Carlisle
West Midlands Trains	Vicky Cropper
Network Rail	Julie Dale, Robert Goulding, Lisa Bruce
Cheshire East	Richard Hibbert
Staffordshire	Clare Horton
Stoke on Trent	Brian Edwards
Derbyshire	
Virgin Trains	Joanna Buckley, Laura Normansell
CrossCountry	Alex Bray; Jody Ball,
Campaign for Rail	Peter Cousins
Station Volunteers reps	Ian Clark, Austin Hannaby, Marika Latham
ACoRP	Paul Webster
NSCR	Claire Sandys (CRPO); Michael Willmot (chair)