



**PRESENT:** Jody Ball (JB), Ian Clark (IC), Dave Dowbenko (DD), Cara Higgs (CH), Emma McIntosh (EM), Rowley Osborn (RO), Mark Osborne (MO), Claire Sandys (CS), Sam Smith (SS), Alexa Stott (AS), Luke Tinning (LT), Michael Willmot (MW) (Chair), Paul Webster (PW),

1.	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Rachel Selby, Brian Edwards, Rob Goulding, Neil Roberts, Paul Webster, Ruth Shaw, Yvonne Byatt</p>	<b>Action</b>
2.	<p><b>Minutes of the last meeting (18/04/24) &amp; Matters Arising</b></p> <p>Agreed with the included statement: “Jacqui Storer said that Hatton Parish Council is keen to see an improvement to the appearance of the Hatton signal box. It was noted that this is still in use by Network Rail but this message would be relayed to the appropriate NR department. (action by Alison Cotterill NR). MW will follow up AC</p>	<b>MW</b>
3.	<p><b>Welcome to Sam Smith, newly appointed CRPO</b></p> <p>Sam was welcomed to the meeting</p>	
4.	<p><b>CRPOs report</b></p> <p><b>CS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claire has managed to wrap up most projects,</li> <li>• Derby planters are looking good,</li> <li>• Meet the Manager at Kidsgrove a success,</li> <li>• Blythe Bridge volunteers want a mural on platform 2, gutter needs fixing, NR + EMR assistance required,</li> <li>• Longport window and doors progressing but still requires EMR to action,</li> </ul> <p><b>SS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Started 3 weeks ago and spent much of that time shadowing Claire, and meeting many volunteers across all stations,</li> <li>• There are several projects that Sam wishes to progress,</li> <li>• Sam thanked those present and some not present for all their assistance so far and yet to come.</li> <li>• Sam was reminded of the support that CRN can offer</li> </ul> <p><b>EM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awaiting photos from Wolgarston High to display in Penkrige exhibition cases</li> <li>• Station Approach at Stone is being resurfaced</li> <li>• Stone planters are to have signs, created by local school pupils, to dissuade sitting and causing accidental damage to the plants</li> <li>• Heritage Open Days talks and tours will take place again this September</li> <li>• Family open day at Stone: Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 10-12</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Other CRP Officer items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DD adds MP letters have been drafted and will shortly be sent,</li> <li>• Paul raised that the evidence of the pigeon netting at Longton needs to be submitted to enable the funds to be released. SS to submit Appendix B supported by EM</li> <li>• Paul enquired if there is an up to date Action Plan, Claire responded that it's a working document – ACTION: circulate with minutes</li> <li>• Kidsgrove refurbishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ground surveying will take place over winter 2024/2025 with outline design completed by Summer 2025. It is almost certain coal mining remediation work will be required and this should be completed by Spring 2026 with main construction work completed by Summer 2027.</li> <li>○ RO stated that works may be restricted by budget – will depend on cost of groundworks. Currently £2.5 million available</li> <li>○ AS outlined in broad terms the changes to the stations,</li> <li>○ MW raised 'Spotter Tea's' place in the new station, Alexa unable to offer complete clarity but noted conversations had taken place on community spaces,</li> <li>○ CS brought up the Canal project, RO viewed this as separate but it was acknowledged that they complement each other.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Macclesfield volunteer, Dave Roberts, interested in establishing links with NSCRP. At some point make contact and discuss options raised.</li> </ul>	EM/ SS
5	<p><b>CRN items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds now open. CRDF projects have until June 25 instead of March 25</li> <li>• Community Rail Network fund deadline being delayed,</li> <li>• Lord Hendy – appointed Minister of State at DfT – keen to get to know community rail and keen to get out too,</li> <li>• Railway 200 celebrations; start 9th September, website now live ( <a href="https://railway200.co.uk/">https://railway200.co.uk/</a> ), 5th August 14:30 Talks (repeating every 6 weeks), special train touring UK (with space onboard for community rail displays),</li> <li>• January 2026 New community rail officers training,</li> <li>• AS raised that Community Rail Awards open 2nd September and close late September. PW confirmed the awards will be 13<sup>th</sup> March in Newcastle, and expressed a desire to see many entries from NSCRP,</li> <li>• A corporate support page is now available on CRN website (<a href="https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/how-our-corporate-partners-support-our-members/">https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/how-our-corporate-partners-support-our-members/</a> ).</li> </ul>	
6.	<p><b>EMR items (a full report is provided alongside these minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baby on Board Badges now available,</li> <li>• 500 TALK cards have been distributed, EMR are very happy with this result,</li> <li>• Poor performance issues have been encountered,</li> <li>• Aurora fleet progressing onto 'resistance to derailment tests',</li> <li>• Regional fleet refurbishment will be progressed,</li> <li>• £39,000 of community fund still available for community projects, Alexa invites bids, 31st July Deadline,</li> <li>• Community projects funds 25/26 year also available for projects which contribute to station experience, such as new benches, lighting, PIDs, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ACTION - Opportunity to bid for Blythe Bridge benches.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 45,000 children have been through EMR rail safety sessions in schools,</li> <li>• 7th October EMR conference in Nottingham, 8th October CRN conference also in Nottingham,</li> <li>• Missing services Crewe – Newark Castle services are being reinstated from December, ACTION – remove the reinstate missing services petition and associated link from website, some debate as to if to proceed immediately or defer until publicly announced by EMR to enable benefiting from publicity</li> </ul>	<b>EM/SS</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>LNR items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core funding agreed and invoice raised</li> <li>• Regular station adopters on-line meetings will now take place quarterly</li> <li>• Delay in releasing the Station Adopter’s Toolkit due to CCIF. Will be released soon.</li> <li>• New linked charity for the forthcoming year: White Ribbon - engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls [ <a href="http://www.whiteribbon.org.uk">www.whiteribbon.org.uk</a> ]. Request for CRP to sign up and pledge to support. White Ribbon Day on 25<sup>th</sup> November. CH to circulate documents</li> <li>• CCIF 24/25 now closed and successful projects informed. One application was received from Penkridge but was unsuccessful. CCIF 25/26 closes end of August. Unsuccessful applicants for 24/25 to be supported for next year’s fund.</li> <li>• Proposal to extend Euston services to Manchester Victoria and Stafford – Crewe services to Manchester Airport</li> <li>• In the process of sending out information to new MPs which includes CRP work</li> </ul>	<b>CH</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>CrossCountry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project fund open. Successful with Foxfield application</li> <li>• Customer and Communities Investment Fund open to wider communities. Closes 23<sup>rd</sup> August</li> <li>• Alsager volunteer day on August 6th</li> </ul>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Avanti West Coast (A few PowerPoint slides are provided alongside these minutes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family tickets to be launched next week</li> <li>• ‘Feel Good Field Trips’ continuing successfully,</li> <li>• Stakeholder Conference to be held in September</li> <li>• PW asked about integrated travel project at Stafford. MO advised it is data focused at present Use of phone data and AI tools to support decisions regarding connectivity.</li> </ul>	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DD attended on-line Midland Connect Rail event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Less of a focus on North Staffs</li> <li>○ Promotion is to be the focus rather than enhancement,</li> </ul> </li> <li>• EM - NSCRP Volunteer Policy has been updated and will be circulated with the minutes</li> <li>• At the end of the meeting MW stepped down as Chair and wished DD well as he takes up the role. After 20 years in post MW said it was good to see the CRP in such good hands going forward. He expressed a particular thanks to Brian Edwards at Stoke City Council for the exceptional support he personally, and through him, Stoke City Council, has provided over the lifetime of the CRP</li> <li>• DD thanked MW for his service as Chair on behalf of the CRP</li> </ul>	
<b>11</b>	<b>Dates &amp; Times of Next Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October at 15.00 (face-to-face and on MS Teams, followed by AGM @ 17.00)</li> </ul>	