



**North Staffordshire
Community Rail
Partnership**

www.northstaffsrail.org.uk

**MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT
GROUP MEETING ON THURSDAY 16TH
January 2025, 10:00-12:00 ONLINE**

Present: David Dowbenko (Chair) [DD], Sam Smith (CRPO) [SS], Emma McIntosh (CRPO) [EM], Yvonne Byatt (East Staffordshire Bough Council) [YB], Paul Webster (Community Rail Network) [PW], Rowley Osbourn (Staffordshire County Council) [RO], Mark Osborne (Avanti West Coast) [MO], Jody Ball (XC) [JB], Sarah Grattage (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) [SG], Ian Tamburello (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) [IT], Hannah Lilburne (Network Rail, on behalf of Carol Bayliss) [HL].

	The meeting opened with a brief introduction of people’s roles,	Action
1.	Apologies for Absence: Rob Goulding (Network Rail), Neil Roberts (Cheshire East Council), Cara Higgs (West Midlands Trains).	
2.	Minutes of last Management Group Meeting (17th October 2024) The minutes were agreed. There were no matters arising.	
3.	<p>CRPO’s Report</p> <p>DD announced that SS was leaving his post for a role at EMR at the end of Month, therefore the workload of officers will be impacted whilst the recruitment process takes place. IT thanked SS for his efforts over last year and asked the Management Group to submit to Stoke-on-Trent City Council an instruction to recruit. DD asked group to agree; the group unanimously agreed. Formal request to recruit ASAP submitted shortly thereafter.</p> <p>SS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has delivered a safety session with the Scout Group Local to Peartree; the group is now progressing with refurbishment of several bird houses for installation at Peartree and selected other locations. Our thanks to XC for financial support. Completed Derby Station Area Consultation and attended their engagement session. Keen to make sure community engagement and community rail opportunities are sought while undertaking area improvements. 	DD

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spotter Tea. The incumbent vender has retired, a new vender has been found and we are progressing through the process to reopen. • In late December the Longport Station Adopters travelled up and down distributing Christmas chocolates to passengers and staff. • We have tentatively been developing realistic Rail 200 and SoT 100 events: a minor involvement in a June event and a more substantial role in an October event – due to staff changes, the latter event will currently have to be paused. • We have been approached by the FoxField Railway, who wish to run their successful ‘Summer Fun Days Event’; we will ask funders if this is something they would like to support • Longport door & window panels have been delivered and are just awaiting EMR SST to install. • Skills Builder is a mixed bag, core life skill education is progressing well but scheduling the Rail Safety element has proved challenging. There are learning points, SS happy to answer questions. • Given the likely ongoing lack of resources, Peartree action day is not now a priority; SS has explored working with Community Payback Schemes but local businesses have been reluctant to allow Community Payback operatives access to toilets and handwashing facilities. • Longport Action day has been proposed as a possible Network Rail or Siemens employee volunteer day, conversations ongoing. • NEW MEMBER SUGGESTION - SS questions why Northern are not members of NSCRP Management Group given the hourly services Stoke and Kidsgrove receive. PW thinks there is merit in their involvement, but is 	<p>?</p> <p>EMR</p> <p>SS/ EM</p> <p>SS?</p> <p>EM</p>
--	--	--

	<p>unsure if they would contribute to core funding, they might however contribute to projects, and suggests Becky might be the person to approach. Emma to invite.</p> <p>EM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanked PW and others for the reaccreditation meeting and various guidance provided, PW advised that the full reaccreditation meeting will be finished shortly. • Some projects will need to be placed 'on hold' following SS departure. • 'Don't sit on plants' signs ready for installation. • Penkridge underpass artwork provided by local schools will be replenished at Easter with Penkridge Heritage Centre historical information. • Bee friendly Stafford, quotes have been received and EM will be submitting a funding application to Avanti, NR volunteer day opportunity being explored. • Awaiting confirmation of CCIF for Stone Station mural. • FINANCE REPORT – Reporting will now be done against each project, full breakdown attached. 	<p>EM/ DD</p> <p>EM/ DD</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Community Rail Network Items (PW)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaccreditation meeting went well, no major concerns. DD & EM will pick up any recommendations once report received. • Reminder that the Community Rail Development Fund remains available for projects to be completed by June. • CR Awards are being held in March in Newcastle (on Tyne); North Staffs have an Entry in the Photo Competition for "Our railway themed poems are in this booklet" 	<p>DD/ EM</p> <p>ALL</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial action every Sunday until May. • Additional services from December 24. • Low alcohol beer popular on run up to Christmas. • Taken part in White Ribbon campaign. • Polesworth OHL is currently a constraint. • Held their community rail conference in December. • Held their 'Feel Good Field Trips' parliamentary reception earlier in week. DD asked about 'Feel Good Field Trips' coming to an end; MO said a new programme is being formulated. <p>PLEASE ALSO SEE ATTACHED AWC UPDATE</p>	
9.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Spending Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SS and EM outlined how officers currently do not have required level of control of volunteer spending, and spending is not always being conducted in the most equitable manor because of this, they request the Management Group review the document and provide any comments or amendments by the end of January. ○ Following discussion about timeframes to implement, 1st April is the proposed date subject to change. ○ Draft policy to be circulated with minutes. Any comments to be sent in by end of January. 	ALL
10.	<p>Dates and times of forthcoming Management Group Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10th April 2025 10am (in person), • 17th July 2025 10am (online), • 23rd October 2025 11am (in person – followed by AGM/community event at 1400 – subject to change) 	ALL