



SRC BOARD BRIEFING

January 2018

At Board Meetings on Saturdays 20th January 2018 the following items were discussed and action decided upon. The SRC Board considers that information on these items should be shared with Shareholders, Volunteers, Employees and SRA Members.

Board Meetings

The meeting had been pre-planned to be a joint meeting with SRA Directors present to deal with common areas of business arising. They were present for the whole meeting.

Chairman's Report

Douglas Norris intimated HRA Committee and Forum dates at Edinburgh and Bo'ness on the 25th January and over the weekend 10th/11th March respectively. It was hoped we would be represented by Douglas and/or Stephen Muirhead. FEDECRAIL planned to visit Aviemore on the 24th April between 12.00 and 16.00 and plans would be made to accommodate a train with catering, if required.

The impressive performance of Locomotive No 828 and Crews over the Festive period was acknowledged by all and the Board agreed a £1000 payment which would be put directly into materials needed for the locomotive.

Agreement had been reached with regard to the departure of Austerity No 48 for refurbishment by its owner, Stephen Wood, off site. Final details were being agreed with Stephen for a planned move, likely to be before the end of March.

The Board discussed and agreed the return of Calum Titley as Traction Inspector on a salaried, part-time basis, providing his current Employer was comfortable with the arrangement. Calum would formally start in March.

Finances

Bob Anderson advised that the Festive Services improved the Company's Financial position considerably and that there had been an improvement in the overall financial performance for Catering, which although still showing costs of start-up and bed-in, losses were less. Both services are also being commended by Customers.

The Board acknowledged the work of all people who had contributed to the delivery of the Festive Services, which had been well received. The weather had been kind with only a couple of days of really cold weather which had required that services were cancelled on the 3rd January.

The internally resourced Bookkeeping and Finance function were discussed. Bob reported that progress using the Cloud based Quick Books system had not made the progress in reporting planned though a plan to recover the situation existed.

STRATHSPEY RAILWAY COMPANY BOARD BRIEFING

It was therefore decided to externally resource the Finance function to Chris Beaton CA. Use would be made of our technology to effect the transition in as smooth a manner as possible during the closed season. Heather Fitton would run the books.

Some processing changes would be required in all areas to ensure the Accountants were as close to the business as they needed to be to ensure a workable arrangement. As a consequence of these changes, David Richards will be leaving the business with immediate effect.

Locomotives & Sheds

The situation over the unavailability of Locomotive 46512 was discussed with what seemed like an ill-timed plan to dismantle the brake valve (just before the Festive Services) which, although working, had been giving trouble in service. Brian Thomson was available by conference phone to explain the position with attempts to remedy matters still ongoing. On enquiry by Colin Stirling as to why we were essentially "messing about", Doug Scott interjected to suggest that as the valve was of a standard pattern, we should seek to obtain drawings and/or search for an alternative, on loan or otherwise, from elsewhere. Other work related to super-heater tube replacement and attention to motion would also take place during this period of maintenance. The matter was regarded as a real "faux-pas", so to speak.

Mike Tough tabled plans for the planned Locomotive Running Shed advising the Board that related work was ongoing as regards power, drainage and site clearance. We would require to liaise with SSE in order to verify the position of HV cables etc.

Ian Stanworth gave an update on the Storage Shed planned for Boat of Garten and the need to gather funding in order to start the project.

Timetable & Ticketing 2018

Graham Sutherland was in the process of compiling and proofing the "soft" timetable and printed leaflet for both web and leaflet publisher's use. A meeting was planned for 24th January at which Maureen Cuthbertson, Graham Sutherland, Colin Stirling and Advanced Ticketing (by conference phone) would discuss the process of compiling the on-line offering for 2018. It was seen as important that all players knew their role, particularly as there had been significant staff changes since last year. This is an important income stream, particularly at this time of year.

Health & Safety

Doug Scott reported that the Fire Awareness Training Course offered recently by MacGregor Fire had taken place on site with ten people trained.

The Aviemore Scottish Fire & Rescue Service would be invited to discuss the Roy Hamilton Carriage Storage Shed Fire Risk Assessment where an additional "direct from kitchen car" exit was planned. This would take people directly outside away from immediate risk of falling whilst dis-embarking stock.

Doug requested that the current Safety Management System documentation be reviewed with a view of bringing it into line with current systems.

Property & Infrastructure

Mike Tough reported on re-sleepering and fishplate oiling and the work to connect Morley Mansions onto the main line north of the Bridge at Boat of Garten ... ongoing.

STRATHSPEY RAILWAY COMPANY BOARD BRIEFING

Mike envisaged that further work relating to the Tom Nan Clach Windfarm cable Wayleave would be required before March. This was seen as a worthwhile source of income to the railway whilst supporting national "Green Infrastructure".

Mike also intimated that there was scope to "underground" SSE overhead wires in and around Drumuillie though this was not immediate.

Mike advised that agreement and signing of a lease for the Bike Hire Shop at Boat of Garten was in its final stages of conclusion and we looked forward seeing Nash Masson's business opening.

No more has been heard from CTIL in relation to the 4G GSM Mobile Masts so it is assumed that either the provision of power was difficult or overly expensive or the results from their line of sight/signal strength surveys deemed locations explored marginal or unworkable.

Catering

Ken Donaldson joined the Meeting by conference phone for a report on progress with the Catering for 2018. Ken and Vanessa, with Bob, had identified several areas where administrative improvements would make the smooth running an easier task. In the provision of some kind of on Board Till and in automated hourly staff time recording, which would ease the burden and backlog of maintaining timesheets.

The food offerings were being discussed with suppliers and costing built up such that customer pricing was at a stage that it was ready to be presented for sale. That information had been passed to Maureen for incorporation into the Advanced On-line System. Colin Stirling and others would review and assist implementation over the next two weeks.

The subject of the day train and Dining Set was discussed notably in the provision of hot water and the need to have water heaters repaired, seemingly in both sets. Given amount of work, the costs and available time and labour, not all of the aspirational requirements for the day train RU may be possible by the start of the season. The Board had not seen Keith's report on the RU, which detailed what was required.

Staff and HACCP Food Safety System were in progress with Environmental Health for 2018 as new staff and equipment were required to be trained and assessed accordingly.

Admin & Secretariat

As part of "Good Governance", Duncan Gilmour had circulated a Conflicts of interest Register which he asked Directors to complete.

The subject of Coach TSO 5053 was discussed as a letter had been received from a Shareholder relating to its ownership and had raised obligations on the Company's part to repair. A number of Directors were able to provide the necessary historical information to Duncan to enable a response to be provided, settling the matter.

*By order of the Board
Strathspey Railway Company
31st January 2018*