

**POULTON AND WYRE RAILWAY SOCIETY**

**MINUTES OF INAUGURAL MEETING  
HELD ON 27 APRIL 2005**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE CIVIC CENTRE**

**Present:** Eddie Fisher (Chairman)  
John Pickering (Membership Secretary/Treasurer)  
Jan Cresswell (Secretary)  
Andy Blakeley  
Dave Evans  
Tony Gadd  
Duncan Reed

**1. Introduction**

Eddie Fisher explained that the origins of the Poulton and Wyre Rail Society (P & WRS) were rooted in the Wyre Rail and Cycle Partnership (WRCP). The WRCP had been set up by the Poulton Market Town Initiative to look into the viability of re-opening the rail link between Poulton and Fleetwood, together with laying down cycle paths linking the urban areas with the coastal areas. The proposed scheme will be the subject of an economic feasibility study over the coming months.

He also explained that, as the cycle paths element was growing and taking shape with the input of Lancashire County Council and other partners, it was felt that the two strands of the scheme should be split to allow them to be more easily managed, with the support of specific interest groups. It is envisaged, therefore, that the P & WRS will press forward with the railway element, informing and supporting the work of the WRCP in its efforts to reinstate the rail link to Fleetwood.

The WRCP has recently been joined by a team of Network Rail employees who wish to form a heritage group as part of the overall scheme, running their own heritage trains on the line. In order to be able to do this, however, the P & WRS would need to run the line privately, carrying a mix of heritage, commuter and freight services, and currently this is the preferred option for any rail link. However, ownership of the line will be determined by future discussions with Network Rail, and an initial meeting has been arranged for 12 May, 2006. In addition, at least until the outcome of the economic feasibility study is known, the P & WRS are only looking at running a service to the end of the current line.

The replacement of points at Poulton has been the subject of concern for some time, and it is understood that a decision on this is imminent. This will also be raised at the meeting on 12 May.

It was decided to take a show of hands to determine the support of those present for a heritage railway. The decision was carried unanimously.

## **2. Election of Officers**

It was agreed to defer this item until the Society was fully formed.

## **3. Proposed Acceptance of Basic Constitution**

A copy of the draft constitution was circulated for information and discussion. John Pickering had prepared this so that the Society could open a bank account. Any suggested amendments or additions would be circulated to members and voted on at the first Annual General Meeting, to be held in June.

It was agreed on a show of hands to adopt the draft constitution, with an amendment to state that an independent auditor would be appointed to examine the Society's accounts.

## **4. Membership Fees**

Membership forms were distributed. Following discussion, it was agreed by the majority of those present that the fees should be £12 per year.

## **5. Society Magazine**

Jan Cresswell explained that the P & WRS intended to produce a magazine on a quarterly basis, with contributions from officers of the Society, plus articles and letters from members. This would be distributed initially to members, and outlets such as libraries, although it was hoped a wider distribution network could be arranged in the future.

## **6. Website**

Two volunteers offered to help set up a website for the Society, and will take this forward with John Pickering.

## **7. Wennington Signal Box**

Eddie Fisher reported that Network Rail had donated the signal box to the Society. This was currently being dismantled and would be brought by lorry to a secure site on land owned by NPL Estates. Volunteers were required to help unload the flat-packed signal box and in its subsequent restoration. It is envisaged that the site will become a heritage museum with locomotives and maybe other transport.

## **8. Thornton Station Restoration**

Eddie explained that Poulton Station had already been adopted, and a Green Team were working to restore the flower beds and generally upgrade the appearance of the station. As part of the proposed overall scheme, it was envisaged that the other stations along the line would form a 'railway through the ages' theme, from Victorian Poulton through to a modern terminus at Fleetwood. Thornton Station was very neglected and unsightly, and the WRCP were in talks with Network Rail to determine how this site could be adopted and restored.

County Councillor Keith Tebbs explained that, as portfolio holder for economic development and tourism, he fully supported the proposed scheme as it fed into both those issues. He thanked Eddie for all his hard work in getting the scheme to this stage.

**9. Any Other Business**

- a) There will be a meeting with Network Rail on 12 May at which it is hoped they will give us a good idea if they will hand over the line to the Society. There will be a full update at the next meeting.

**10. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 21 June 2006 at the Civic Centre.