

WEST SUSSEX RAIL USERS ASSOCIATION

64, Brampton Court, Stockbridge Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8PD

Tel: 01243 788028. E-mail: contact@wsrua.org.uk :

Website : www.wsrua.org.uk twitter.com/wsrua

NEWSLETTER No 5: SEPTEMBER 2018

Interim timetable introduced on Sunday, 15 July 2018

At last we seem to have a reliable timetable with a good performance especially by Southern. A performance marred by a number of Network Rail's infrastructure problems such as signal and points failures, emergency engineering works together with trespassers, suicides and storm damage. As you may recall from earlier Newsletters, the new full Southern timetable was actually introduced in May and has worked well. The interim weekday Thameslink timetable from 16 July omitted 4 trains between Horsham, London Bridge and Peterborough in each direction. There were the services from Horsham at 11.25, 14.55, 17.25 and 20.55 and those from London Bridge to Horsham at 10.00, 13.30, 16.00 and 22.00. Although "missing" Thameslink services have been put back into the timetable during September, none of these 8 trains have been restored; however to cover the missing 20.55 from Horsham there is a replacement bus leaving there at 20.35 which calls at Littlehaven 20.41, Ifield 20.58, Crawley 21.08 arriving Three Bridges at 21.15. We hope that these missing Thameslink trains will be restored within the next few weeks.

Annual General Meeting

This is formal notice that the Annual General Meeting of the Association will be on Saturday 3 November at 10am for 10.15am in the Studio of the Capitol at Horsham (the Horsham Arts Centre).

The AGM AGENDA is:

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Chairman's address.
3. Treasurer's report
4. Approval of Minutes of AGM on 11 November 2017 and Accounts for 2017 both attached.
5. Election of Officers:
 - Chairman (One nomination so far - Roger Keyworth)
 - Secretary/Treasurer (One nomination so far - Trevor Tupper)
6. Election of Committee members (Nominations so far for James Marchant, Michael Gill, Valerie Webb and Kevin Gordon)
7. Appointment of Accounts Examiner for 2018 (nomination - Clive Pritchard)
8. Questions to the committee
9. Close of formal business.

After the formal business our guest speaker will be Angie Doll, Southern's Passenger Services Director. Angie will talk to us about GTR's plans for the future, including any timetable changes planned for this December and next May, and whether we are now clear from the sort of industrial action still taking place on Northern and South Western Railway. We would also like some reassurance that any spare 377s are used on the West Coastway rather than going to South Eastern. There is a desperate need for these, particularly between Brighton and Portsmouth rather than the 40 year old toiletless class 313s. There will be ample time for you to ask questions on Southern's recent performance and other matters.

We hope that you will be able to attend the meeting. If you are unable to join us and have a question for the Committee or Angie Doll, please let me have the details as soon as possible.

Membership Renewal

Most members have now paid their 2018 subscriptions. If you have not paid, a renewal form is enclosed and we would be grateful if any outstanding amounts could be paid as soon as possible or, at the AGM if you attend. If you no longer wish to remain a member, please let me know by e-mail, post or telephone.

Trevor Tupper
Secretary/Treasurer

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Minutes of Annual General Meeting on 11 November 2017 at the Studio, Capitol, Horsham

The meeting opened with 2 minutes silence for Remembrance Day.

There were 30 members attending plus 3 guests from GTR. There were a number of apologies.

The Chairman welcomed members and guests to the meeting and in his Report he opened by repeating what he said at the last AGM about the industrial action and why we had made no formal comment on it. The simple reason is that this is not a normal franchise. It is a legally binding management contract with DfT with all the money from ticket sales going to DfT who then pay GTR an agreed sum to run the service. Effectively GTR are merely following the dictat prescribed within this document and so the dispute is really between DfT and RMT. WSRUA does not get involved in matters such as this. We must attempt to be impartial, though at the height of the GTR/Southern troubles both Chairman and Secretary were interviewed on TV and on Radio.

He said that personally he thought that this sort of franchise should never actually have been organised but it was done so because of the total rebuilding of London Bridge and the problems that would cause.

Comment has been made that on earlier strike days the trains ran to time, this is because there were fewer of them and the infrastructure was not being tested, as it is on every other single day of the year. There are far too many trains on a creaking infrastructure. Just over 50% of the delays are caused by this infrastructure -signals, points, track, tunnels, track circuit and bridges and these are matters that only Network Rail can repair. Indeed Network Rail have been given some £200 million to put towards these problems on Southern. Passengers themselves also cause problems and delays with things like illness, trespass or tragic suicides. Road users also add to these problems as they ignore Level Crossings. GTR/Southern's PR does not make the responsibility clear on the trains or on the platforms so passengers all blame Southern that gives it this terrible reputation.

He continued by saying that personally he preferred having an active second person on the train, checking tickets, answering questions, making announcements, correcting the non-working CIS screens and checking for behaviour and putting out the ramp for any disabled passengers when there are no station staff. The RMT is arguing about safety but DOO has actually been operating for 33 years safely but with a suitably qualified active "On Board Supervisor" to assist, passengers should certainly have no worry. Hopefully with the ASLEF agreement passengers will no longer be turfed off the train when it divides at Horsham should there be, alas, no OBS to take it on.

GTR/Southern's Public Relations has been appalling, something with which they agree, and that their personnel department are not much better having seen staff morale at, for instance, Chichester plummet and, as a result, a loss of trust. Staff did not believe them when they said that more "Qualified On Board Supervisors" have been appointed, but he does, having seen the figures, but they must regain the trust of their staff. He gets various different reports as to the state of the replacement of the Monitors in the 377 cabs and would like to hear the definitive statement and exactly when it will be completed. GTR/Southern will have to regain the trust of their staff and lay out, their honest plans for the rest of their franchise, setting out precisely what they are going to do. GTR/Southern might also review their own equipment such as the Dot Matrix indicator on Platform 2 at Horsham that has been faulty for very many months and though the software on the TVM's is being corrected he sincerely hoped that the views of Booking Office staff about refilling these machines will be listened to.

Finally GTR/Southern have a lot of very hard work to do to repair the damage and they must go out and not only talk but also, above all, listen and take action on what their staff on the ground everywhere tell them, such as ditching the Station Host idea. Their staff are their most important asset and regaining their trust and learning from them is vitally important. Be honest and explain problems to passengers, give better communication on the newly revamped Southern website of changes rather than refer everything to the National Rail website and then, maybe, the corner will have been turned.

The Secretary/Treasurer asked for approval of the 2016 accounts which had also already been circulated. The accounts were adopted.

The Secretary said that nominations for Officers and the Committee had already been circulated and that those nominated needed to be formally elected by members present at the AGM.

The elections followed and the Officers for 2017/18 are Chairman – Roger Keyworth, Secretary/Treasurer – Trevor Tupper. The Committee members are Valerie Webb (Pulborough), Michael Gill (Arundel), James Marchant (Billingshurst) and Kevin Gordon (Website).

The Minutes of the AGM were approved and the formal business of the AGM closed at 10.55am

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RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

2016 £	RECEIPTS	2017 £	2016 £	PAYMENTS	2017 £
280.00	Subscriptions received	378.00	40.00	Postage and stationery	0.00
41.00	Donations	6.00	111.00	Hall Hire	79.20
			200.00	Website	200.00
			100.00	Chairman's allowance	0.00
			21.00	Rail Future subscription	21.00
			<u>472.00</u>	Total payments	<u>300.20</u>
			151.00	Deficit (-) / Surplus for year	83.80
<u>321.00</u>	Total	<u>384.00</u>	<u>321.00</u>	Total	<u>384.00</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS 31 DECEMBER 2017

Community Account at 1 January 2017	1,649.55
Surplus for year	83.80
Community Account at 31 December 2017	<u>1,733.35</u>

Notes

1. Several Committee Members have not claimed travel and other expenses for which we are grateful.
2. Postage and stationery expenditure incurred in 2017 will be paid in a later year

Trevor Tupper OBE
Hon. Treasurer
27 September 2018

Accounts Examiner's Report

In my opinion the above Balance Sheet and Receipts and Payments Account have been correctly prepared, based on the information supplied to me.

25, Brampton Court
Stockbridge Road
Chichester
PO19 8PD

Clive Pritchard BA, LLB(Hons), LLM
27 September 2018