

# Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

## REPORT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

**Derryhale Hotel, Dundalk, Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2002**

Norman Foster chaired the meeting. 42 members were present.

### **Apologies**

Lord O'Neill, J.Beaumont, C.Boomer, C.A.Boomer, H.Boomer, S.Boomer, P.Bowen-Walsh, P.Cox, M.Darragh, R.Gardiner, I.Gilmore, M.Glendinning, D.Henderson, B.Hill, C.Holliday, D.Houston, D.Humphries, P.Lockett, T.Lockett, H.Mills, G.Mooney, R.Morton, P.O'Brien, I.Sinclair, S.Somerville, J.Spencer, B.Spurle, S.Spurle.

### **Resolutions**

(i) *That the Society empower the Council to use the set-aside NIO compensation fund, as it sees fit, for the purpose of providing steel coaches suitable for continued operation both on NIR and IÉ.*

The Chairman asked J.Glendinning to outline the background of the Council proposal.

J.Glendinning reported that NIR had introduced a new operational proposal, one of the requirements of which was the cessation of wooden-bodied coaches on passenger carrying trains from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004. Also, the Northern Ireland Government is proposing to introduce legislation similar to that in GB whereby any rolling stock other than vehicles of integral construction will only be allowed to run on limited occasions and under restrictive operating conditions. In general, any vehicle not deemed to be of at least Mark 2 crash-worthiness would fall foul of the legislation. HMRI will be the body with responsibility for accepting safety cases and granting derogations. In view of these requirements, Paul Newell was co-opted on to Council to investigate the options open to the Society in obtaining a steel set.

P. Newell reported that Council had decided to put into traffic a set based on the ex-Mk2 coaches, currently stored at Whitehead. The current position is:

Number	Type	Seats	Braking	Location	Comment
547	Diner	22	Air	Whitehead	
916	Brake 2 <sup>nd</sup>	31	Air	Whitehead	Former Hunslet driving trailer
920	Open 2 <sup>nd</sup>	52	Air	Whitehead	
923	Open 2 <sup>nd</sup>	52	Air	York Road	For release when NIR obtain new coupler vehicle
924	Open 2 <sup>nd</sup>	52	Air	Whitehead	To be swapped to England for 13487
926	Open 2 <sup>nd</sup>	52	Air	Whitehead	To be swapped to England for 9382
934	Open 2 <sup>nd</sup>	62	Air	Whitehead	Bad order
935	Open 2 <sup>nd</sup>	62	Air	Whitehead	Bad order – to be fully stripped (future bar car?)
9382	Brake 2 <sup>nd</sup>	31	Vacuum	Heysham	Due in Whitehead in November
13475	Corridor 1 <sup>st</sup>	42	Vacuum	Heysham	Additional vehicle to be purchased and overhauled
13487	Corridor 1 <sup>st</sup>	42	Vacuum	Heysham	Due in Whitehead early October

Most of the Irish Rail Mk2 vehicles are air-conditioned and so are not acceptable. Stock from GB is in high demand due to other steam operators being in the same position as the RPSI. A request has been made to NIR for the 80-class railcar intermediates and trailers when they become available.

The vehicles will have vacuum brakes and steam heating and will be brought up to a standard acceptable to NIR, IÉ and our insurers. This will include overhaul of braking, bodywork, bogies and interiors. A generator large enough to provide light and power but not heating would be fitted. Central door locking is also a requirement of the new legislation and all coaches will have to be fitted. It is hoped to have 3 coaches in traffic by May 2003 and 6 by September or October 2003.

Cravens have been considered but earliest availability would be 2005 and the onus and significant cost would be on the Society to prove that the vehicles could be categorised as 'Mk2' under the legislation.

The Lancastrian Carriage & Wagon Company in Heysham, a Railtrack-certified body, has already put an ex-NIR vehicle into service in England, certified to run at 100mph. The same company has been engaged by the Society to overhaul the coaches, with their personnel to be based at Whitehead for 3 months. It will cost around £95,000 to make a set mechanically fit for traffic but more will be required to fit out internally. The aim is to fit out to as high a standard as is possible with the available resources. This would attract more of the valuable corporate entertainment market. Internal finish will be as 'vintage' as possible – the vehicles from Heysham will already be finished in wood panelling. A grant application has already been submitted in respect of repair work and a carriage shed extension.

A.Gray asked what life the Society expected to get from the overhauled coaches. J.Glendinning stated that proper sealing and a proposed extension to the carriage shed should see the coaches properly protected from the weather and hopefully a very long life.

E.Gilmore asked about acceptability of vacuum brakes. D.Grimshaw stated that safety cases are available in GB for the RPSI to copy. Also, all signalling requirements in Ireland are based on vacuum braking specifications. If air braking becomes a requirement in future, all vehicles currently have the equipment which can be blanked off or put in storage in the meantime.

N.Foster told J.Lockett that in a safety case, all-route availability had been requested for Cravens, but the outcome is not yet known. D.McCabe thought that there would not be the clear Mk1/Mk2 dividing line in the south that will be in GB and NI, and that Cravens may be permitted in future.

D.Grimshaw warned against the Society failing to provide a continuity of operations. Even a short cessation would result in great difficulty with re-starting due to crew training, etc.

J.Glendinning reported that the Society had already accepted NIR's offer to sell the 7 vehicles stored at Whitehead.

The Treasurer reported that the NIO fund had grown from the initial £360,000 to £480,000.

C.Smith offered to organise the exterior painting of the coaches. All present thanked him for his offer. P.Newell reported that a new livery, similar to UTA green, was being proposed.

C.Smith proposed the adoption of the resolution, seconded by B.Mullally.

***(ii) That the Society approve in principle the purchase of the Whitehead site and empower the Council to complete the purchase if it considers the terms acceptable.***

N.Foster outlined the case for the recommendation. There was some concern for the long-term tenure of the site, plus grant aid is more readily available for premises which are not leased. An approach was made to Carrickfergus Borough Council, the Society's landlords, to establish if they were interested in selling. An official valuation was carried out and a suggested value of £50,000 was set.

P.McCann told D.Grimshaw there were 22 years left to run on the current lease and he was not aware of any penalties for exiting mid-term. C.McAtee said early in a lease term was the best time to buy. E.Gilmore said the decision to buy was a wise one and the site would be an asset to the Society.

J.McBride proposed the adoption of the resolution, seconded by C.Smith.

### ***Ballots***

The Secretary stated that as 5 proxy votes had been received, it was necessary to carry out a paper ballot.

D.Mackie and A.Richardson were appointed as tellers.

The results of the ballots were:

- (i) 46 for, 1 against.
- (ii) 47 for, none against.

The Chairman deemed both resolutions accepted and thanked the members for their interest and attendance.

***Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman Date: \_\_\_\_\_***