

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Pavilion, Whitehead, Saturday 21st April 2007

Sir Kenneth Bloomfield chaired the meeting and 45 members were present.

Apologies

Lord O'Neill, Dr Garret FitzGerald, H.Beaumont, J.Beaumont, J.Darling, N.Foster, J.Friel, M.Glendinning, M.Harding, R.Henderson, D.Houston, J.Houston, F.Lee, J.Lockett, J.McBride, C.McLeod, D.McNamara, A.McRobert, C.Meredith, R.Morton, D.O'Murchú.

Minutes of the 2006 AGM

The minutes, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of W.Riddall, seconded by B.Mullally.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman read an addendum to his published report.

In reply to D.Henderson, J.Glendinning stated that there was no guarantee that the Irish Rail and NIR candidates for driver training later in the year would necessarily remain available for working on Society trains as promotions, transfers and sickness had to be expected, nor was it likely that refund of training costs would be feasible, especially as the southern costs were being met by FAS. D.Humphries added that negotiations with Irish Rail had been difficult at times but he was pushing for a written agreement with the company which might allay some of the fears expressed. S.Boomer noted that the UK Heritage Lottery funding was under threat from the London Olympics and the Society should be adding to the objections.

D.Grimshaw said the turntable situation needed addressed and may need funding. J.Glendinning said Council was seeking a meeting with Irish Rail to progress the matter before No.4 comes out of traffic. B.Mullally recommended moving quickly as developments in Cork would make a solution difficult.

The report and addendum were adopted on the proposal of J.Darling, seconded by S.Boomer.

Secretary's Report

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of D.Mackie, seconded by T.O'Shaughnessy.

Treasurer's Report

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of B.King-Wood, seconded by S.Boomer.

Appointment Of Auditors

Dunne McNulty Nannery were re-appointed on the proposal of D.Humphries, seconded by E.Gilmore.

Reports Of Operations Officers

M.Tyrrell circulated his report and thanked all the Dublin volunteers for the excellent response made to the Railway Safety Inspectorate survey on the trains at Christmas.

The reports of the Operations Officers were adopted on the proposal of G.Mooney, seconded by W.Riddall.

Reports Of Locomotive And Carriage Officers

The reports, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of F.McDonnell, seconded by M.Walsh.

Election Of Council and Office Bearers For 2007

The Secretary reported that nominations had been received for all posts and there were no contests.

The following members were elected to serve on Council:

Chairman:

Vice-Chairman:

Johnny Glendinning

David Houston

<i>Secretary:</i>	Paul McCann
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Stephen McAteer
<i>Locomotive Officer:</i>	Peter Scott
<i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Southern):</i>	Tony O'Shaughnessy
<i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Whitehead):</i>	Francis Richards
<i>Belfast Area Operations Officer:</i>	Mervyn Darragh
<i>Dublin Area Operations Officer:</i>	Mark Tyrrell
<i>Business Development Officer:</i>	Fergus McDonnell
<i>General Officer:</i>	Norman Foster
<i>General Officer:</i>	Mark Walsh

Any Other Business

Sir Kenneth Bloomfield said he enjoyed immensely the recent function to celebrating Peter Scott's MBE.

G.Mooney commented on the driver training programme proposed for later in the year. It will be enormous in scope and he hoped there would be a good response to an appeal for help from locomotive crews. He also wished to thank D.Humphries for the significant amount of work put into arrange funding from FAS and agreement to the project from Irish Rail.

I.Pryce said he had been asked by a number of Whitehead volunteers to raise a number of issues which were giving concern: rising costs - £3,400 make a locomotive available for an operation and £700 for NIR to move a set to free up a platform; outside contracts taking precedent over Society locomotives, e.g. dining car overhaul was stagnating, as was generator van, brake coach and open coach, and central door locking has to be installed in the Mk2 coaches by the end of 2007; £400,000 grant for carriage work has hardly been touched and will be lost if not taken up by the end of the grant period; Society vehicles left outside while Downpatrick and Donegal items are under cover; until recently volunteer effort was not been charged to contracts; hire of No.3 to DCDR is a ridiculously low £90 per month.

G.Mooney added that the lack of a standby engine meant that a number of expensive light engine movements would soon be required, plus the lack of a diner means the loss of a substantial income source.

J.Glendinning replied that Council were well aware of the issues but there were no easy solutions. The 5 paid employees were funded by the contracts which were needed to ensure continuity of experience. At present there was no allocated money for No.461 as the amount raised by the appeal had been spent. To ensure continuity of Society projects members would need to put their hands deep into their pockets. Sir Kenneth Bloomfield said it was important that such issues were raised and it was up to Council to strike a balance between funded contracts and RPSI projects.

L.McAllister noted that it would be his wish that No.171 would be in traffic again in his lifetime. He also noted, as a GB resident, that RPSI fares were very low and recommended they be raised. He praised the excellent email bulletins and said they were an excellent way to keep in touch for members outside Ireland. As a member of "The Syndicate" he was in the business of putting his hand in other people's pockets and from the profits raised from book sales he was delighted to be able to pass a substantial cheque to the Treasurer.

P.Scott said that he appreciated the concerns raised from the floor but it was his view that with the risks to mainline operations, and with the facilities available in the Dunleath Workshop, the Society should be less parochial and should become more involved in all aspects of heritage steam, and narrow gauge is an important part of that scene. He noted the issue of the phenomenal costs for restorations, and indeed operations, and was unsure where the money would come from to complete No.461 let alone start overhauling No.171.

F.Richards said the £400,000 was not a direct grant but a 40% rebate of expenditure and £600,000 will have to be raised to make full use of it.

D.Henderson asked if a date could be given for the return to traffic of the much-missed diner. J.Glendinning said it was scheduled for assessment by NIR in September 2007, along with a generator van and brake coach.

G.Mooney said everybody needs to be realistic and the future may not hold all that members might wish. Council need to be exploring all avenues of fund raising, e.g. branch lines, Irish and UK lottery schemes, etc.

That being all the business, Sir Kenneth thanked all those present for attending and closed the meeting.

Signed: _____ *Chairman* _____ *Date:* _____