

Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group

11 December 2014, 7:30PM

Elin Way Community Room, Meldreth

Minutes

1. Present: Sue Hanson, Jim Eggleton, Mark Wyatt, Beatrice Fisher, Peter Wakefield, Paul Hollinghurst, John Clark, Susan van de Ven, Andy Hart (FCC), Karen Gregson (FCC), Geoff Barnes, Mark Howard, Janet Cottenden, Malcolm Howe, Denise Permaine, Linda Permaine
2. Apologies: Ann Barnes, Christine Adams, Christiane Lea (Travel for Work CCC), Rebecca Willers (Shepreth Wildlife Park), Petrina Lodge (Meldreth Manor School)
3. Minutes of previous meeting were approved.
4. Foxton Level Crossing:
 - Foxton Parish Council now has a DVD of the report.
 - Network Rail (NR) are proposing to fund the whole scheme.
 - Other Cambridgeshire schemes are only part funded by NR, with the County Council needing to make a contribution.
 - There will be a working group with wide membership including local representation by Foxton Parish Council, MSFRUG and Sustrans.
5. Thameslink Franchise
 - PH described the issue with the Thameslink Franchise Minimum Service Specification, which specifies the level of service which is guaranteed.
 - The guaranteed service is only hourly in a couple of places where Meldreth currently has a half-hourly service; namely in the morning peak from Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton to Cambridge and in the mid to late evening service in both directions.
 - This was been brought to the attention of the DfT, MPs and bidders.
 - The DfT replied pointing out that bidders can earn extra points for proposing a timetable which retains at least the exiting service level.
 - There is a general feeling that it is very unlikely that the service will be reduced as these services are well used, and it is possible this same situation existed during the bidding process for the current franchise.
 - However, as these services are well used and important to the local transport corridor, the DfT should have protected them in their minimum service specification, and should at least have informed the RUG about their plans especially as it goes against our consultation submission.
 - Susan suggested everyone writing to the bidders. [Post meeting note - the bids are due in 24th December so this would not help but the bidders have already received briefings about this from the RUG].

6. Add-on Bus Fare to the City Centre

- Susan has spoken to Andy Campbell about providing a bus add-on fare from Cambridge station to the City Centre as a cheaper alternative to the zone based day ticket available with PlusBus.
- PlusBus adds on a disproportional amount for a simple return journey compared to the Super-Off peak fare from the village stations.
- Andy Campbell said they could not afford a lower fare.
- Whippet was suggested; however there are already very frequent Stagecoach buses so it is an issue of fares rather than the service.
- For reference Plusbus is £3.10 for a day, £2.05 for a Railcard holder, £1.55 for a child.
- A Stagecoach Day ticket is £3.90. A Super-Off Peak return from Meldreth to Cambridge is £2.70.
- Karen (KG) said she would speak to Larry Heyman (FCC Integration and Partnership Manager) about this.

7. Shepreth Station

- Risk taking. FCC are working with Network Rail about this.
- A light on the building facing station road would help.

8. Missing posters at Shepreth (Thank You poster) and Foxton (both the Thank You poster and the RUG poster).

- Andy H explained that statutory posters had used up the previous boards. He will add new ones.

9. The bench has been replaced Shepreth Cambridge-bound platform, and thanks given to FCC.

10. Station Access Campaign

- Janet presented progress.
- Susan and Janet are in contact with Meldreth Manor who will conduct an accessibility audit of the entire village, and station.
- Plan to launch the accessibility campaign in the press in January.
- Karen (KG) reported on progress on other stations on the line.
- There was a significant amount of work ongoing at the moment, due for completion in March/April. There would then be opportunities to look for other schemes. She appreciated Meldreth was a special case due to local users including Meldreth Manor School.
 - Hatfield - footbridge and lift work complete.
 - Stevenage - lifts being replaced. They will be passenger only in future. Work started on Monday. Please be aware there a contingency route while the lifts are closed via Welwyn until March 5th – there will be staff to help and FCC can be contacted in advance for help.
 - Hitchin - lift being added.
 - Letchworth - ground work being done.

- St Neots - new footbridge work underway.
- The first meeting of the CRP will be tomorrow. Accessibility will be discussed.
- Wed 8th Jan is the accessibility event arranged with local papers. Fri 10th January is the rainy day backup.
- Let Karen (KG) know what is proposed. MSFRUG will also check with the landowner. Likely to be on the Melbourn side of the station near the step only access.
- Need to contact Anna from Shape your Place to film.
- John Clark's offer to take photos was welcomed.

9. AOB

Cycles on trains

- FCC are monitoring cycles at the moment. There are up to 40 cycles on the 07:39 from Royston to Cambridge which is unsafe.
- After monitoring FCC will update the rules. Greater Anglia are doing the same at Cambridge.
- PH asked for FCC to keep MSFRUG informed about any changes to rules. In the past MSFRUG have helped publicise them.

10. Date of next meeting: 12 March, 7:30, Melbourn Village College.