

Abingdon and District Model Railway Club

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 24th February 2021 @ 20.00 On Line.

1. Opening remarks

Bill Marnane, acting as chairman in the absence of Eric Young welcomed all to the meeting and gave a brief synopsis of the agenda.

2. Trustees present and apologies

Present: Peter Hunt. **Apologies:** Andrew Skinner, Eric Young.

Committee Members present and apologies

Present: James Barclay, Fraser Clarke, David Lloyd, Bill Marnane, Mike Taylor.

Apologies: Dominic Hardisty.

3. Minutes of previous meeting (28th October)

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record.

4. Treasurer's report

The Treasurer began by informing the committee that he now had full access to the bank account and statements. He appraised the committee that we currently had £1,884.72 in the current account and £19,651.88 in the saving account which included a grant of £3000 from the Vale of White Horse district council which had been received on 21st of this month. This brought the total to £21,536.60. He continued by saying that he was currently working with the retiring Treasurer because he was unsure of the position of subscriptions by some members. Some were paying more than the required amount per month and one or two were paying less. Most paid by monthly standing order, but some paid annually, six monthly and one member paid with cash. It was agreed that the Secretary would provide the Treasurer with a list of what we believed to be the current membership details.

The Treasurer suggested that we really needed someone to take on the role of membership secretary who could keep track of members in and out. The member in this role would also be important as the person who would organise visits to the club and would follow up interest potential members.

This was agreed that a member to fill this role would be sought.

5. Building Maintenance (See attached sheet)

Chris Maycock has put together an annual club maintenance programme and this had been distributed to the committee prior to the meeting. It was recognised that maintenance of the premises had been sadly lacking and as a result a number of serious issues have arisen.

There are also jobs which have to be tasked annually and this programme has highlighted these issues.

Building Maintenance Cont.

Chris had agreed to lead maintenance and it is envisaged that when the current lockdown ends, we can have a number of 'work days' arranged with members being allotted specific tasks in alignment with their skills. It is hoped that we can commence this work at the end of March in accordance with current government guidance.

It was brought to the attention of the committee that we currently did not appear to be paying service (Electricity and Water bills) The Secretary was tasked with enquiring from our landlords if we should be paying these service charges as we did not want a bill for arrears being dropped on us.

6. Discuss viability of new club premises

The Vale of White Horse district council has released plans to build a new housing development in conjunction with a new South bound slip road onto the A34 close to our premises. While there was at this time no current threat to the land we are on it is felt by a number of our members that our time on the site could in the near future be under threat.

It was the feeling of the committee that we should at least be looking for a suitable new site, We have in recent times been made aware of other clubs that have had the 'Rug pulled from under them' at short notice and therefore it was better to be looking for suitable premises that are on an established industrial site rather than on privately owned land that could be sold for development on a whim.

It was agreed that all the committee should be quietly looking for suitable premises of around 4000 sq ft in size, This did not necessarily need to be in Abingdon itself. As one member pointed out 'It would be better for us to give notice rather than be given notice and have nowhere to go'.

7. On Line meeting-ups and demos

It has been suggested that we should consider holding on-line open nights for members while we are unable to attend the club. The suggestion is that these meetings could have a member giving a short talk or demonstration on a subject of their choice, a 'show and tell' or what they have been doing during lockdown, or just generally getting together to chat. It was agreed to trial this and the secretary would make the membership aware of a date for the first meet.

8. 0 Gauge Abingdon Branch Layout

An offer of this Exhibition standard layout has been made to the club by its owner. It had originally been offered to the Abingdon Museum, but at a length of 30 ft the museum had no space for it, so it was offered to the club. As an accurate historical model of the now defunct local G.W.R. Abingdon branchline, it was agreed that it should not be scrapped and a place to store and work on the layout has been generously offered by a member of the club. The '*Not 4mm*' group within the club have adopted it and as soon as restrictions permit it will be transferred into our care from its current home.

9. A.O.B.

PAT testing; Exhibition premises require that any electrical equipment used on their premises requires a *PAT* test certificate. It was therefore deemed necessary that the club should be able to carry out this test on all electrical items we would use. It was agreed that we should investigate the purchase a *PAT* testing machine and the secretary would ask within the membership if anyone currently holds a *PAT* testing certificate.

Didcot Exhibition; In view of the pending relaxation of the current Lockdown rules, it was felt that it may be possible to hold our annual Didcot exhibition in October. The Secretary said that he intended to contact the Exhibitors and Traders that had been invited to attend our cancelled 2020 show to assess their willingness to support the exhibition this October if it went ahead. This would also depend on the availability and cost of the Didcot Civic Hall, our preferred venue. While it was too early to make a definitive decision, it was agreed that we would work on the assumption that the exhibition will go ahead if possible and planning would proceed.

200 Club draw

It was agreed that the 200 club draw would resume at the first on-line membership meeting. The draw has not been done since lockdown first commenced in March 2020. It was agreed that we would do two draws each meeting until we caught up.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 21.58

Addendum; *Charities Commission Report;* Although not spoken about at the meeting the report for 2020 has been signed off by trustees, Andrew Skinner and Peter Hunt and sent in February as required. It was agreed by the Treasurer and Secretary that it was important this should be recorded.

Peter Hunt – Secretary

February 2021