

# BEDFORD COMMUTERS ASSOCIATION

## BCA COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2006

Present: Arthur Taylor Andrew Long  
John MacLeod Jim Allwood

Apologies: Mark Spurgeon Kerry Williamson (Passenger Focus)  
Ben Foley

It was intended that Kerry would attend to introduce herself, give a presentation and discuss any relevant topics, however she is on annual leave and now intends to come to the next committee meeting.

### 1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on September 5th 2006 were agreed.

### 2. Actions

MS provided FCC with details of the BCA website.

JA has paid the BABUS renewal fee.

EM Franchise - see later report back.

AT collected membership renewal forms.

AT has asked FCC for a tour of West Hampstead Control Room. Now awaiting FCC.

MS was still investigating ways of improving website and also the emailing problems in sending out newsletter.

### 3. Correspondence

A invitation to the Bedford Carol Service has been received. AL will attend

Letter from FCC re St Albans Carnet Ticket trial.

ACORP Train Times magazine received.

Railfuture - The Rail User newsletter received.

### 4. Treasurers Report

JA reported that last years accounts have gone to the Auditors.

A healthy balance as reported for this years accounts to date.

### 5. Communications

Media coverage continues to remain good.

Content for the December newsletter was discussed. AT/AL/JA will finalise the newsletter so that JA can get to the printers at the end of November. **JM will provide an insert into the newsletter reminding people who have not renewed that they now need to do so.**

### 6. Performance

Nothing of note to report.

## **7. Timetable**

FCC - Nothing to report

MML - MML reported the following changes to their timetable from December: additional train at 21.30 calling all stations from St Pancras to Nottingham. As result of this the 23.15 will now be formed of 4 cars. A recast of the Sunday timetable means that Bedford will have a half hourly service northbound and southbound throughout the day.

## **8. St Pancras TL Station Fit Out**

Fitout on course for December 2007 opening. FCC will have a separate Ticket Office.

## **9. East Midlands Franchise**

AT and AL attended the National Express Roadshow in London on 14<sup>th</sup> September. Julien Drury head of their bid team gave an excellent presentation which was followed by questions and answers. AT restated the BCA view on the proposed timetable and its effects on Bedford. The whole meeting agreed that the present timetable should be left alone and any trains for Corby should be over and above the present timetable. It was noted that this view was echoed throughout the route at different stakeholder meetings.

A meeting with First Group was scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> November (subsequently cancelled by First and a new date still to be arranged).

Since the meeting an invitation from Passenger Focus to attend a 'Meet the Bidders' event in Leicester on 11<sup>th</sup> December has been received. AL will attend and report back.

## **10. TL2K/EWRL**

AT reported that the remaining planning elements of TL2K have been agreed by the government, however funding was still to be agreed.

The next Thameslink Consortium Meeting will be held on January 28<sup>th</sup> 2007. AT and AL will attend and report back.

AL reported that the Oxford to MK and Bedford section of the EWRL looks good with final plans to government next year. However east of Bedford is still from certain.

## **11. Membership renewal**

JM reported that to date there were 162 members, some totally new. A reminder to those who did not renew will be sent out with the next newsletter.

## **12. Website**

MS reported that he was still looking at improving the website.

## **13. Reports Back**

FCC Timetable Planners : AT and AL meet the FCC Timetable Planners for a get to know session. BCA timetable aspirations for FCC services were outlined. It was agreed that until further 319's were made available very little could be done with the timetable. However a review of current loadings will be undertaken with the aim to benefit most number of people.

FCC reported the reopening of Cricklewood sidings for light mtce work, cleaning and stabling of stock (13 units) from December 2006. Mtce will be undertaken at Hornsey with trains getting there under their own power. As a result of this and less use being made of Selhurst Blackfriars terminators/starters in shoulder peaks will revert to using Moorgate. Regular information flows on proposed timetable changes will be provided by FCC. Further meetings will be arranged as necessary.

Apu Bagchi : AT/AL meet Apu who is the transport portfolio holder for Bedford Borough Council. We took the opportunity to let him know the views of the BCA on all current issues with FCC/MML which we felt he found very useful.

Passenger Focus Meeting Houses of Parliament 25<sup>th</sup> October 2006 : AT/AL attended along with other user groups of FCC north of Thames services, MP's to discuss Peak Ticket Restrictions. Everyone agreed that the restrictions must be lifted and more rolling stock provided. Passenger Focus/MP's will continue to press FCC on this matter.

Class 319 Refresh Event 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006 : AT/AL/JA attended the naming of the first refreshed 319 and the subsequent trip to Brighton and back. All agreed that with the money available (£27M) they had done a good job. A proper half life refurbishment was really needed. Keeping them clean will be the next challenge.

#### **14. Bedford Matters**

Nothing to report.

#### **15. Flitwick Matters**

Nothing to report.

#### **16. Meeting with MML**

The committee met with MML management on 18th October and were introduced to Gary Raven the new MD. The BCA congratulated them on winning the Train Operator of the Year Award. They outlined the December timetable changes (see timetable section above). MML said that they were trialling a 5 car Meridian by removing one coach from a 9 car unit. If successful a total of 7 x 5 car Meridians will be provided and 7 x 8 car Meridians. (subsequently the trial was successful and changes will be made for the December timetable changes). Providing 5 car Meridians should improve capacity on the present 4 car trains. They was some disquiet regarding signs on seats which were felt to be ineffective and luggage/wheel chair space which MML will look at. MML confirmed that Advance Tickets can be obtained for travel from Bedford to the North.

#### **17. AOB**

AL will attend the Bedford Town Centre Transport Stakeholders Meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **18. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting is Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2007 at Jim's house commencing at 19.45.