

# BEDFORD COMMUTERS ASSOCIATION

## BCA COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2006

Present:                    Arthur Taylor                    John MacLeod  
                                 Andrew Long                    Mark Spurgeon  
                                 Dan Levene                    Jim Allwood

### 1. Minutes of Last Meeting

Due to illness the minutes of the last meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2005 have yet to be written up.

### 2. Matters Arising

There were none.

### 3. Correspondence

The latest copy of Railwatch was circulated.

Letter from Beds County Council re InfoPoint Database. **AT will complete form and return.**

Letter from Highways Agency re M1 Junctions 10 - 13 widening - preferred route announcement.

Email from MML re reorganisation within MML. We now await name of new contact.

Thameslink Newsletter - December 2005.

DL reported many emails from members - all positive. However one email referred to the recent Fares increase by MML of the first cheap fare northbound now being after 9am. The BCA had not been consulted on this. **AT to investigate.**

### 4. Treasurers Report

JA distributed copies of the audited Income and Expenditure Account for 1<sup>st</sup> September 2004 to 31st August 2005.

Nothing to report on the current financial year.

DL asked the committee to consider whether to make membership free instead of the present £5. The meeting agreed to discuss this at a later meeting.

### 5. Communications

DL reported that the latest newsletter had gone out. A special newsletter outlining our recent meeting with Elaine Holt MD First Capital Connect will be sent out soon.

### 6. Performance

Generally performance is good but week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> January had been bad. It was noted that Xmas week services were disrupted by severe weather, especially south of the river with the consequence knock on affect north of the river.

It was not that the 5% discount for poor service was reinstated recently. What happens when FCC take over. **AT to try and find out.**

## 7. Timetable

Thameslink - as from Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January the 19.06 Kings Cross TL to Bedford will stop additionally at West Hampstead.

MML - AT had received a letter recently in reply to the BCA suggestions for the December 2006 timetable change. All our requests are listed plus the overcrowding issue on the 16.30 St Pancras to Nottingham (Bedford 17.08).

## 8. St Pancras TL Station Fit Out

AT reported that the BCA was still lobbying via local MP's to get a decision on funding for the station fit out. It is anticipated that Alistair Burt will be asking another question in Parliament shortly. A meeting with Nadine Dorries MP for Mid Beds has been arranged for 24<sup>th</sup> February. There was a report in a recent edition of Modern Railways that funding was close to finalisation, however a letter from the DfT dated December 19<sup>th</sup> 2005 said the department was considering the value for money case and as yet no decision had been made. At the recent TL2K Consortium meeting a DfT representative was in attendance and AT asked him what the latest situation was. His reply was that it was with the minister awaiting sign off of funds and the DfT supported the need for this fitout before TL2K but funding was the issue.

## 9. TL/GN Franchise

AT reported back on the meeting between BCA/APTU and Elaine Holt MD FCC on 6<sup>th</sup> January. Notes of the meeting (compiled by the APTU Chairman) and notes by AL were distributed prior to the committee meeting. A detailed discussion on points raised at this meeting took place. All agreed that the franchise details were very disappointing and Managing Aspirations Downwards was an apt phrase for the meeting. Great concern was expressed over the transfer or lack of transfer of the remaining class 319's with Southern (a definitive decision still awaited) which will mean no additional 'peak seats' and the very basic refurbishment on offer. All agreed that Elaine Holt's frank and open discussion at this meeting was appreciated. **DL would produce a special newsletter for members solely concentrating on this meeting.**

Since the committee meeting AT has received an invitation from FCC to attend an Stakeholders Presentation at the Bedford Swan Hotel on February 15<sup>th</sup>. A report back will be made at the next committee meeting.

## 10. TL2K/EWRL

AT reported back on the TL2K Consortium meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> January. AT circulated his notes of the meeting. A discussion took place over details of the meeting. It was noted that the outlook for this project was more upbeat and positive. The DfT were looking favourably on it and it was hoped that a positive outcome from the second enquiry and a positive funding decision would be made by the summer. All programmes at present assumed agreement this summer. A further meeting will be held in May.

Closure notices for Kings Cross TL station and the Moorgate branch were on notice boards for public consultation (views to be in by January 13<sup>th</sup>).

## 11. AGM 2006

It was agreed to hold the AGM on either Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May or Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May at Dom Polski Club. **DL will contact Dom Polski to arrange and AT would formally invite FCC and MML.**

Since the meeting DL has arranged Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May at 19.45.  
**DL would include AGM details in next newsletter.**

**12. Website**

MS reported that the website needs updating. **MS to arrange.**

**13. Bedford Matters**

It was reported that posters were not being put up at the station.

**14. Flitwick Matters**

A start had been made on the construction of new toilets. This work would take approx 3 months.

At a meeting to discuss Flitwick Car Parking held on 31st January the Thameslink representative reported that remedial work on the footbridge will commence on 26<sup>th</sup> February. There is still no news on the town centre renewal.

**15. AOB**

a) AT reported back on the MML All Party Group meeting held on 30<sup>TH</sup> November at the Houses of parliament. MP's from along the MML plus Paul Bunting MD MML attended. The BCA was the only user group to attend. There was a need for a voice and higher profile for the MML as the route was the poor relation sandwiched between the WCML and ECML. The line would reach capacity by 2008 and having only 4 platforms at St Pancras would also give capacity problems. A feasibility study into a Kettering to Corby link will be undertaken. Network Rail will be pulling together a list of schemes for the MML. It was anticipated that the East Midlands Parkway station would be ready for the December 2007 timetable change. All agreed that this group should be made permanent and met again.

b) AT reported back on a meeting with Thameslink on the new fares for 2006.

c) AL reported back on a LTP2 presentation held at County Hall on 19<sup>th</sup> January. There was very little to report on rail issues.

**16. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March at Jim's house commencing at 19.45.