

# **BEDFORD COMMUTERS ASSOCIATION**

## **BCA COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

Present:                    Arthur Taylor                    John MacLeod  
                                  Mark Spurgeon                   Jim Allwood

Apologies:                Andrew Long

### **1.        Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the committee meeting held on May 8<sup>th</sup> 2006 were agreed.

### **2.        Actions**

AT has responded to the letter from John Handley regarding fare to/from Wimbledon.  
AT and JA had both put up copies of the FCC Peak Timetable on the Bedford and Flitwick notice boards.

AT had advised the committee by email of the outcome of the 319 interior mock up at Bedford Depot.

MS had updated the website. Initial costs of getting someone to update the website were high (£30 per hour) and further investigation was required.

### **3.        Correspondence**

A letter was received from Garry Raven MD MML introducing himself.

An email was received from MML outlining changes to their Advance Purchase Fares with effect from 11<sup>th</sup> June. This change means that you must travel on the specified train that you have reserved a seat on. If you travel on a different train you will have to buy a new ticket at full price as the other ticket will not be valid.

A letter was received from John Pilgrim re the Commuter Quiz whose date has been changes again to 22<sup>nd</sup> July. AT informed John that due to the date change this year we would not be able to put a team in.

Letter received from FCC apologising for delays due to fir near Kings Cross station.

Email received from MML asking for a meeting with BCA. This will be discussed later in the meeting.

Copy of Railwatch received.

Considerable number of emails received regarding the Ticket restrictions and the service given by FCC Customer Service, all negative.

### **4.        Treasurers Report**

JA reported a healthy balance i.e. £1050.

4 new members signed up at the AGM.

### **5.        Communications**

Media coverage remained good. Articles have appeared in the local press with comments from BCA regarding the Ticket Restrictions. AT has been on Three Counties radio also.

It was agreed to get a newsletter out at the beginning of September which would also have a

membership renewal form attached. Again the newsletter would be printed and posted out. **Arthur would speak to Dan** regarding who else to send out the newsletter to i.e. MP's etc.

## **6. Performance**

Performance continues to be good on MML.

It was agreed that in the committee's opinion the present FCC performance was no better than that when it was Thameslink. Once engineering is 'in house' at Hornsey and Bedford it will be interesting to see if performance improves. The latest information is that it is hoped that maintenance of 319's at Hornsey would start at the end of July.

## **7. Timetable**

FCC - AT met Paul French FCC Head of Train Planning. He will be our contact for the time being until the train planning team is finalised. AT had informed Paul of our relationship with Thameslink train planners and he hoped that this would continue with FCC. He confirmed the only real change for December 2006 would be the new train from Bedford at 05.56 to Moorgate calling at Flitwick, Luton, Harpenden, St Albans, Kings Cross, Farringdon, Barbican and Moorgate arriving at 06.59. Paul anticipated that the December 2007 timetable would be the first to enjoy additional rolling stock and a consequential review of the timetable to get the best from the fleet.

MML - AT reported that at the recently requested meeting with the BCA the December 2006 timetable changes will be discussed.

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

Nothing to report on the actual 'box' fitout.

At the main St Pancras Station MML moved from the east side to the new permanent home on the west side over the weekend of 15/16 July. As a consequence the 1<sup>st</sup> Lounge will be closed until August, the present ticket office will remain but a new one on the west side will open in August. Catering, Lost Property, information screens, lift and seating will move to the west side and the toilets also within 2 weeks.

## **9. East Midlands Franchise**

AT and AL attended a meeting in Nottingham organised by Travelwatch East Midlands to outline the new East Midlands Franchise. This franchise will include the present MML. National Express contacted the BCA asking if we would like to attend a Stakeholder meeting in London which we have accepted. Details to follow.

AT received a copy of the franchise Consultation Document. In this document the intended MML timetable is outlined which will affect northbound Bedford users. It is proposed to cut back one of the two stopping services at Kettering (for possible extension to Corby at some time) with no onward connection thus reducing to a hourly service trains to Leicester and beyond. The meeting discussed this proposal and agreed that the BCA view is that the present half hourly service to Leicester and beyond must be maintained. If a service is to be run to Corby it must be an additional service and not at the expense of the present service. **AT would reply to the Consultation Document expressing the view of the BCA.**

## **10. TL2K/EWRL**

AT reported that the decision about Willington Lake was due this week which if approved would cut the Bedford to Cambridge line east of Bedford.

#### **11. Membership renewal**

The meeting agreed dates for the membership renewal. These were:

Bedford	Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> September AM and PM
	Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> September PM
Flitwick	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> September AM and PM

JA would revise the membership form and arrange for 3000 copies. He will also look at a revised membership card and the possibility of using Direct Debit/Standing Order. **JA to deal**

It was agreed that the membership rate remains at £5.

AT would write to FCC asking for permission to be on the stations and give out the forms etc. **AT to deal.**

#### **12. Website**

MS reported that he had updated the website. The cost of getting someone external to do the work was £30 per hour. Further investigation was required. **MS would look into it and report back.**

No progress had been made yet on the emailing problems. **MS would continue to investigate**

#### **13. Bedford Matters**

JA reported that it had taken 4 weeks to repair some loose bricks.

#### **14. Flitwick Matters**

Nothing to report.

#### **15. Meeting with MML**

AT reported that MML had asked for a meeting with BCA to meet the new MD Gary Raven, discuss the December 2006 timetable and any other relevant topics. MML had suggested Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September at Bedford Station. The meeting agreed Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September commencing at 6pm at Bedford Station. **AT to contact MML confirming meeting and FCC to arrange a meeting room at Bedford Station.**

#### **16. AOB**

AT reported back on a meeting with Kerry Williamson of Passenger Focus to discuss current issues which primarily were the introduction of the ticket restrictions. She was made aware of the views of the BCA on this subject. A further meeting will take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

AT reported back on a meeting with Hugh Clancy FCC re the ticket restrictions. He explained why Radlett was no longer restricted, this being because the overcrowding problem was not on the slow trains but the first stop St Albans and stations to Bedford trains. A review will take place in October with Passenger Focus and London Travelwatch. AT had taken the opportunity to reinforce the view of BCA on these restrictions. At present FCC are

not going to budge on this issue. They are still receiving very negative media coverage on this matter.

BABUS have asked for a meeting with BCA. We await a date.

The Car Park contract is to be renewed from October 2006.

AT reported back on the GN Rail Capacity meeting he had attended.

**17. Date of Next Meeting**

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