

BEDFORD COMMUTERS ASSOCIATION

BCA COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 20th January 2009

Present: Arthur Taylor Jim Allwood Jane Ramsell
John MacLeod Andrew Long

Apologies: Mark Spurgeon Eva Culleton-Oltay Ben Foley

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on November 18th 2008 were agreed.

2. Actions

AT reported that a total of 500 signatures were on the petition given to EMT by Patrick Hall MP.

3. Correspondence

Railwatch (December 2008) magazine

FCC Customer December newsletter.

Press Release from Alistair Burt MP re meeting with FCC/EMT.

Leaflet from Railfuture re East - West Rail link.

Letters of complaint from Mark Potter and Sam Villis about train services which AT has dealt with.

Survey from Passenger Focus which AT has filled in and returned.

Letter from British Transport Police Authority.

Leaflet on increased Car Park charges. **AT to reply to FCC with BCA views**

4. Treasurers Report

JA reported a continuing healthy balance in this years account of £1839.37.

5. Communications

AT reported continued interviews on local radio for the BCA and articles in both the BOS and T&C.

The draft February Newsletter was discussed and agreed. Articles to include details of the FCC March timetable changes, latest situation with EMT and the Thameslink Programme, Car Park charges.

6. Performance

EMT performance is getting worse (90%) of trains on time, down from the high 90's with MML.

FCC generally good.

7. Timetable

AT reported back on the meeting with FCC to discuss the March timetable. For Bedford and Flitwick there will be no changes to the times of trains both AM and PM. The only difference will be on the current trains that go to/from Moorgate. In the new timetable these will now go south of the river to places like Sevenoaks, Beckingham, Elephant and Castle. FCC have confirmed that due to some Suppliers to Bombardier going into Administration the delivery of 377's has been delayed which may have an effect on the March timetable. The BCA will be informed of any changes by FCC.

AT responded to EMT over the May timetable and the changes BCA would like to see.

8. East Midlands Trains

AT reported that Tim Shoveller had recently been to meetings with ORR and MP's to discuss amongst other things the new EMT timetable. The recent Press Notice from Alistair Burt has given a very strong indication of EMT's views about Bedford customers i.e. it is not EMT's responsibility to convey Bedford Commuters, it is the responsibility of FCC. The BCA have noted this and will monitor the situation carefully.

AT reported problems with the display of Pocket Timetables at Bedford and lack of a Poster informing customers of the first Off Peak train. The timetables are now displayed but the Poster has still to appear but yet again EMT were trying to put the blame on FCC.

AT has emailed EMT about the severe overcrowding in the 18.00 and 18.30. Despite being told the 18.00 would be a 10 car Meridian it is at present a 7 car Meridian and will only become 10 cars when the 4 Pioneer trains come from Hull Trains. Also yet again EMT are trying to get people to use FCC services. AT will continue to press for changes to these trains and report back

AT said that he had been informed that EMT were no longer going to accept Groupsave tickets from Bedford. AT was awaiting Larry to report back as he was investigating. **AT to report back once information was available.**

9. Thameslink Programme

AT/AL reported back on the recent Thameslink Consortium Meeting. There were presentations by Network Rail, FCC, Department of Transport. It was confirmed that ITT for the new trains had gone out to tender. Also confirmed that new trains would be either 8 car or 12 car. There was no further 'new' news other than that work had started.

10. Fares and Ticket Office Opening Hours

The recent increase in fares was discussed. All agreed that the percentage increases were far too high considering the economic outlook, inflation. A smaller increase would have been better. It was noted that EMT's 11%+ increase to stations north of Bedford was one of the highest in the UK. AT had written to both FCC and EMT expressing our objections to the increases.

The proposed cuts to FCC Ticket Office Hours was discussed and our response agreed. **AT to respond to Passenger Focus and London Travelwatch.**

11. Website

Nothing to report

12. Bedford Matters

AT/AL reported on the last Travel Plan meeting. Improved signage around St Johns station would be completed by the end of the financial year. There was council funding for a further 68 cycle spaces at Bedford station. Now awaiting FCC. Data from the recent passenger surveys and traffic movements in/out of station at both stations was still being analysed and should now be ready completed. Another meeting was scheduled for March 17th.

AL reported on the latest news from the Bedford Station Quarter Development. New proposals from Halcrow were to be presented on 21st January. **AL will attend and report back.**

13. Flitwick Matters

AT reported that a private car park at Flitwick station had started. This was probably a temporary measure pending talks between FCC and Cowlgrove. Tariff is Daily £5, Weekly £20 and Monthly £80, all lower than FCC.

14. EWRL

AL distributed a leaflet produced by Railfuture on the EWRL. Copies have also been sent to MP's, Councillors, Media etc.

15. AOB

It was agreed that the 2009 AGM would be held on Tuesday 12th May 2009 at Dom Pokski commencing at 19.30. **AT to book venue and invite FCC and EMT.**

The extension to Bedford Depot has been opened.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 10th March 2009 at John's house commencing at 19.30.