



Friends of WALKDEN Station

Annual General Meeting: 4th March 2009

Held at:

7 pm, Walkden British Legion Club

Attendees:

Peter Aust (PA - Chair)
Angela Critchley (AC - Minutes)
Steve Magner (GMPTE)
Chris Ingham (Northern Rail)
Cllr Ian Macdonald (IM)
Cllr Iain Lindley (IL)
Cllr Les Turner (LT)
Cllr Nicky Turner (NT)
Sarah Clarkson (SC)
Andy Barlow (AB)
Harry Merrick (HM)
Chris Tucker (CT)
Frank Bridge (FB)
Jennifer Reynolds (JR)
Dennis Reynolds (DR)
Michael Carney (MC)
Barbara Carney (BC)
Peter Hope (PH)
Paul Burgess (PB)
Sgt Ged Hindley (GH, British Transport Police)
Andrew Behan (ABe)
Joan Wallwork (JW)
Brian Farrow (BF)
Jean Farrow (JF)
Ben Jackson (BJ)
Tony Williams (TW, Jetclean)

Apologies:

Neil Stapleton (NS)
Barbara Keeley, MP (BK)
Kathleen Knowles (KK)
Cllr Karen Garrido (KG)
Cllr Robin Garrido (RG)
Cllr Graham Compton (GC)

Agenda

Item	Subject
1	<p>Chair's Welcome & Introductions</p> <p><i>The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and in particular the guest speakers, Tony Williams of Jetclean, Sarah Clarkson (from Barbara Keeley's office), and Sgt Ged Hindley (BTP).</i></p>
2	<p>Chair's Keynote</p> <p><i>PA thanked specific members of FOWS for their hard work over the previous year. In particular FB and JR for securing the Legion, HM for gardening and station cleanups, AC for organising gardening projects, and NS for all his efforts and especially the new-look website.</i></p> <p><i>PA reported that a number of passengers had voiced their concerns to him over the state of the station including the lack of CCTV and disabled access. Nearly two years after comparing the station to a scene from the 70's programme "Life on Mars" very little has changed at the station. PA reminded the meeting that these issues, along with others, are still on the agenda and that FOWS will be keeping up the pressure on those responsible in this coming year.</i></p>
3	<p>Secretary's Review of the Year</p> <p><i>AC read a statement from NS reviewing the major achievements of the past year and, whilst acknowledging their general support, challenging GMPTE and Northern Rail to match FOWS' efforts in practical improvements to the station.</i></p> <p><i>Chris Ingham was welcomed back to Walkden station and his personal support and assistance to FOWS applauded.</i></p>
4	<p>Guest Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Statement from Barbara Keeley MP <i>Sarah Clarkson delivered a specially prepared update from Barbara Keeley who was unable to attend due to Westminster commitments. Barbara's statement re-iterated her meetings and communications with Northern Rail in connection with improving facilities and services, and pledged to continue working for the station in the year ahead.</i> • Cllr Ian Macdonald (Worsley councillor and Chair of GMPTA Transport Network Committee) <i>Cllr Macdonald acknowledged FOWS frustration at the lack of progress at Walkden, but said that work was still underway to try and introduce a Sunday service in December this year. Northern Rail's initial quote was too high for GMPTE and they have been asked to see if a more competitive quote was possible.</i> <i>GMPTE are attempting to secure rolling stock released by the conversion of the Rochdale loop to trams for re-deployment in the GM area.</i> <i>Discussions are proceeding to attempt to provide a direct service to Piccadilly and the Airport by re-routing some trains that currently run via Bolton.</i> <i>A study will be launched in spring to assess future options for the operation of the Atherton line including electrification, tram-trains and a dedicated busway. The meeting was particularly concerned by the last option, and IL asked if FOWS will be allowed to contribute to the study.</i> • Chris Ingham (Station Manager, Northern Rail) <i>Reported that Northern Rail performance had improved in last 4-week period with 8 days of 95% reliability.</i>

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	<p><i>CI reported that Northern Rail are still waiting for feedback from Network Rail about proposals to lengthen the platform.</i></p> <p><i>He also reported that Northern are working with the DfT to acquire more carriages for the area.</i></p> <p><i>Finally, CI thanked Tony Williams of Jet Clean for their work to clean the station.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steve Magner (Rail Development Officer, GMPTE) <p><i>SM also acknowledged FOWS' frustration and complimented FOWS on their organisation and achievements, including the awards we have been nominated for this year.</i></p> <p><i>He was confident that FOWS can achieve more but cautioned that a much longer timescale will be needed to see material improvements.</i></p>
5	<p>Treasurer's Report & Accounts March 2008 to date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership Subscriptions for 2009 <p><i>AC gave a summary of this year's financial activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Total Income £3,671.02 ○ Total Expenditure: £3,594.70 ○ Current Balance: £89.01 <p><i>The full accounts are available for inspection on request to AC.</i></p> <p><i>PA asked for a volunteer to independently audit the accounts.</i></p> <p><i>5 new members joined on the evening bringing 2009 membership to 20.</i></p>
6	<p>Appointment of Officers: Chair/Secretary/Treasurer.</p> <p><i>The following people were re-elected unopposed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Aust (Chair): Proposed IL seconded HM • Neil Stapleton (Secretary): Proposed PB seconded AB • Angela Critchley (Treasurer): Proposed CT seconded PB
7	<p>Planning for 2009 – Setting Objectives and Priorities</p> <p><i>Carried over into Q&A session (below)</i></p>
8	<p>Audience Q&A session</p> <p><i>BJ asked if anything can be done to clean the track ?</i></p> <p><i>CI advised this is Network Rail's responsibility, in liason with Northern Rail.</i></p> <p><i>PB asked what is the Station Manager role and is there a budget for decorating the station ?</i></p> <p><i>CI replied he is responsible for mangement of 19 stations. The Northern franchise only requires each station to be decorated once during the lease but did not commit to when this would be done for Walkden.</i></p> <p><i>CT asked if CCTV cameras could be externally funded ?</i></p> <p><i>CI said the system would need to be compatible and maintenance costs would also need to be considered. SM added the PTE was committed to spending £1.5m to security enhancements but that Walkden was not included in the first set of stations to be treated in 2009/10. SM offered to check whether crime statistics may make a case for promoting Walkden's priority. IM advised that CCTV had not</i></p>

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	<p><i>been very effective in tackling anti-social behaviour problems in Worsley & Boothstown.</i></p> <p><i>ABe asked who is responsible for cleaning at Walkden station, and stated that he did not think that FOWS should be doing clean-ups ?</i></p> <p><i>AC said it was important that FOWS continued to perform a litter-picking and general tidying service, and that these small scale duties did not prevent Northern's contractors ISS from doing their job properly.</i></p> <p><i>CI confirmed he was concerned over ISS's effectiveness and intends to investigate their performance.</i></p> <p><i>AC asked if money was available for Northern to complete the deep cleaning of the station started by Jet Clean ?</i></p> <p><i>CI said he would look into it.</i></p> <p><i>AB asked what criteria had been used to place Walkden in the second phase of stations for improvements.</i></p> <p><i>IM was not aware of the criteria that had been used.</i></p> <p><i>HM asked why Sunday services were taking so long to implement and why the suggestion of a Christmas trial had not been adopted ?</i></p> <p><i>IM reported negotiations are continuing with Northern to try and start Sunday services. CI confirmed Northern Rail understand the level of likely demand there would be for Sunday services. SM said that there are a number of costs involved such as Network Rail access charges and staff wages to be met.</i></p> <p><i>IL asked when rail will get the same importance as bus & trams at GMPTA ?</i></p> <p><i>IM said there are lots of people already working on rail.</i></p> <p><i>PA asked why the tannoy has still not been installed ?</i></p> <p><i>SM informed us it has been agreed that GMPTA and Northern Rail will split the cost equally and the tannoy should be installed within the next few weeks.</i></p> <p><i>HM asked why Atherton station is manned for longer hours than Walkden ?</i></p> <p><i>CI explained it is due to the need to supervise the lift at Atherton.</i></p> <p><i>HM asked for progress on reducing the high platform step ?</i></p> <p><i>SM mentioned that plastic humps are currently being trialled at Harrington (Cumbria), costing around £25,000 each, and these may offer a possible solution in future. PA reminded CI that "Mind The Gap" warnings were supposed to have been painted on the platform last year and CI said he would look into it.</i></p> <p><i>PB asked if a guard rail could be installed running down the centre of the entrance steps to improve accessibility.</i></p> <p><i>CI said this would be looked into.</i></p>