

Held at:

7.15 pm, Walkden British Legion Club

Attendees:

Peter Aust (PA - Chair)
Marion Bainbridge (MBb)
Martin Bainbridge
Mark Barker (MB, Northern Rail)
Andy Barlow (AB)
Andrew Behan (ABe)
Frank Bridge (FB)
Paul Burgess (PB)
Michael Carney (MC)
Barbara Carney
Elizabeth Charnley (FRECCLES)
Stephen Clark (SC, GMPTE)
Angela Critchley (AC)
Preva Crossley (PC, Friends of Hindley Station)
Peter Hope (PH)
Keith Ingram (KI)
Tracy Jacobs (TJ, Salford City Council)
Nina Keshishian (FRoPS)
Kathy Knowles (KK)
Cllr Iain Lindley (IL)
Cllr Ian Macdonald (IM)
Steve Magner (SM, GMPTE)
Harry Merrick (HM)
Jennifer Reynolds (JR)
Dennis Reynolds
Malcolm Stansfield (MS, Worsley College)
Neil Stapleton (NS - Minutes)
Pam Williams (PW, Northern Rail)

Apologies:

Cllr Eric Burgoyne
Cllr Jillian Collinson
Brian Hewitt
Barbara Keeley MP
Dave Lindley
Keith Lumley (Network Rail)
PC Dave Morgan (BTP)
Cllr Les Turner
Cllr Nicky Turner
Cllr Karen Garrido
Cllr Robin Garrido

Agenda

Item	Subject
1	<p>Chair's Welcome & Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies for Absence <p><i>Apologies received from the people listed above.</i></p> <p><i>A special welcome to first-time visitors and special guests from GMPTe and Northern Rail.</i></p>
2	<p>Chair's Keynote</p> <p><i>PA said it was impossible to thank everyone who had helped FOWS this year but wanted to make special mention of Cllr Ian Macdonald who is retiring from council and GMITA this spring, and who has offered invaluable guidance and support to FOWS, particularly over the establishment on Sunday services.</i></p> <p><i>PA also thanked the Walkden Legion, FB and JR for arranging the use of the Legion's rooms.</i></p>
3	<p>Minutes of 2010 AGM</p> <p><i>Acceptance of the minutes of last year's AGM, available on the FOWS website, was proposed by HM and seconded by IL.</i></p>
4	<p>Secretary's Review of the Year</p> <p><i>NS gave a month-by-month review of the activities of FOWS over the previous year</i></p> <p><i>Including the following highlights:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cleaning of the station and surroundings in preparation for gala – with especial thanks to PW at Northern Rail.</i> • <i>Installation of anti-pigeon netting in the platform canopy.</i> • <i>Launch of Sunday services and success of station gala, with wide community involvement</i> • <i>Spate of plant thefts and anti-social behaviour at the station, successfully tackled by concerted BTP efforts leading to 3 arrests.</i> • <i>Innovative joint-funding scheme devised by Salford City Council's Community Committee and Northern Rail to fund installation of CCTV cameras. The cameras were installed in Sept. and brought anti-social behaviour to an almost overnight halt.</i> • <i>FOWS awarded 2nd place in National Community Rail Awards for Best Marketing Award (for station gala).</i> • <i>November's passenger count disrupted by heavy overnight rain causing delays and cancellations, and violent drunks. Results were confused by events of the day, but appear to show a continuing upward trend in passenger numbers.</i> • <i>Walkden station's Facebook page launched.</i> • <i>Sunday services in December were even more popular than usual: thanked Northern Rail for strengthening some services but noted many passengers were still unable to board trains due to number of people travelling.</i> • <i>Northern Rail's "Santa Special" day out to Southport.</i> • <i>Fare increases of 5-11% in January</i> • <i>Confirmation that Sunday service funding for May 2011-12 will be provided by GMITA.</i> • <i>Retirement of much-loved Ticket Office clerk Marion Bainbridge.</i>
5	Treasurer's Report

Item	Subject
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Accounts March 2010 to date • Membership Subscriptions for 2011 <p><i>AC provided a summary of the financial position and confirmed the accounts for the previous year have been audited by JR.</i></p> <p><i>The bank balance is £193.66, having started the period at £56.42.</i></p> <p><i>Total expenditure and income for the period were £476.81 and £614.05 respectively.</i></p> <p><i>AC gave a breakdown of the main items of income and expenditure, and said copies of the financial summary are available on request.</i></p>
6	<p>Presentation</p> <p><i>AC presented a bouquet of flowers, gardening voucher, and card to Marion Bainbridge, in recognition of FOWS' deep appreciation for her help and support over the years (picture below).</i></p>
7	<p>Service Improvement Officer's Report</p> <p><i>AB reported that responses had been submitted to the following consultations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Network Rail Manchester Hub (now Northern Hub)</i> • <i>Network Rail Northern Route Utilisation Strategy</i> • <i>GMPTE/GMITA Local Transport Plan 3</i> • <i>Manchester City Centre Strategy</i> <p><i>AB re-iterated that FOWS aim to keep responses practical and realistic.</i></p> <p><i>PA thanked AB for his expertise and time spent producing responses for FOWS.</i></p>
8	<p>Webmaster's Report</p> <p><i>NS reported FOWS blog has no running costs and average visits per day have – with the exception of a surge around the time of the station gala – remained steadily around 20.</i></p> <p><i>The FOWS website has also seen similar usage to the previous year with around 50-70 "real" (i.e. not robot) visitors per day. "Walkden Today", "Along the Line" and "Signal Box History" are the most viewed pages.</i></p>
9	<p>Gardening Projects Report</p> <p><i>AC reported that a spring refresh will be planned to replenish the beds and planters after damage caused by an unusually harsh winter.</i></p>
10	<p>Summary of crime statistics, British Transport Police</p> <p><i>Apologies were received from BTP as rota changes meant the planned speaker was unable to attend.</i></p> <p><i>NS advised he understands crime to have been greatly reduced since the CCTV cameras were installed, and thanked PC Maxine Southwell for a magnificent response to the problems at the station last summer.</i></p>
11	<p>Election of Officers: Chair/Secretary/Treasurer/Service Improvement Officer.</p> <p>The following people are willing to stand for re-appointment to the Committee of Officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Aust (Chair) • Neil Stapleton (Secretary) • Angela Critchley (Treasurer) • Service Improvement Officer (Andy Barlow)

Item	Subject
	<p><i>Each current serving officer was re-elected unopposed.</i></p> <p><i>Peter Aust: Proposed IL, Seconded JR</i></p> <p><i>Neil Stapleton: Proposed JR, Seconded BC</i></p> <p><i>Angela Critchley: Proposed IL, Seconded HM</i></p> <p><i>Andy Barlow: Proposed FB, Seconded PH</i></p>
12	<p>Election of Auditors</p> <p><i>JR was willing to serve as auditor again and unanimously re-elected.</i></p>
13	<p>Planning for 2011</p> <p><i>PA suggested priorities for 2011:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Indoor Waiting Room</i> <i>• Maintenance of Sunday services</i> <i>• Raising of Platform Level</i> <i>• Recruitment of more members</i> <p><i>IM advised FOWS should campaign for Sunday services to be written into next franchise contract.</i></p>
14	<p>Guest Speaker: Stephen Clark, Rail Programme Director, GMPTe</p> <p><i>SC outlined the long-term priorities for the ITA and PTE, and observed they are well aligned with FOWS.</i></p> <p><i>Sunday services are a welcome improvement and align with GMPTe objective of improving Sunday services in the area.</i></p> <p><i>Reducing over-crowding is an objective GMPTe have been pressing the government on for 2 years. The outlook has "waxed and waned" but is currently looking fairly promising although still no absolute commitment from DfT on the number of carriages to be supplied to Manchester.</i></p> <p><i>Electrification work on the Eccles line begins this spring and is a £300m investment in the region's rail infrastructure.</i></p> <p><i>Network Rail's Northern (Manchester) Hub proposals are very exciting and GMPTe is ensuring that local services are not displaced by increasing numbers of longer distance services.</i></p> <p><i>Refranchising of Northern and TransPennine Express services takes place in Sept. 2013, so the time for FOWS to try and influence bidders is late 2011. Challenge will be for DfT to find an operator who can improve efficiency and services.</i></p> <p><i>SM clarified a point made in the Secretary's Review of the Year: in fact the Station Improvement Strategy work planned for Walkden has not been frozen. The project is running behind schedule but design work for Walkden is complete and going to tender soon. Delivery is expected within 6 months. Work is also underway to improve road-signage as requested by FOWS. NS thanked SM for a most welcome correction !</i></p>
15	<p>Audience Questions & Answers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• FB asked if there has been any progress on getting the platform level raised, and warned the gap is so large "one day someone will be killed"</i> <p><i>SC offered to raise the issue with Network Rail and mentioned the possibility of a "Harrington Hump" solution. HM advised this would likely be unsuitable for Walkden due to the curvature of the station and track camber.</i></p> <p><i>MB reported Northwich and Whaley Bridge are being fitted with Harrington Humps and Northern will be monitoring their use closely with a view to assessing suitability at other busy stations.</i></p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>PH asked PW when the Bolton station lifts will be working</i> <i>PW advised repairs to the lifts have been completed and the lifts are now back in service. There are still intermittent problems but these are always attended to by engineers.</i> • <i>HM asked if GMPTE want people to use Farnworth station</i> <i>SM said a community ambassador scheme has been launched to raise awareness of the station. PA asked that questions be confined to Walkden issues.</i> • <i>KI asked if there are any plans to offer car parking at the station</i> <i>IL said old goods yard has planning permission for a housing development but there are no plans to commence building yet, and the area might be used as a temporary car park if the owner could be persuaded.</i> <i>PA said car parking should be added to FOWS 2011 objectives.</i>
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>IM advised that on 1st April the PTE and ITA will be reformed as the Transport For Greater Manchester Executive and Committee with some increased powers and the objective to become more like Transport for London in their scope and powers.</i> • <i>IM added he very much hopes that Sunday services are added to the franchise contract and advises FOWS continue talking to TFGM on this subject.</i>

Summary of Actions

Who	Action
NS	Ask Network Rail for update on raising platform level.
NS	Contact Worsley College to explore potential for art projects at the station.

Pictures (courtesy of Eden Photography)



Retiring Ticket Office clerk Marion Bainbridge is presented with a bouquet as a token of FOWS' members' appreciation for her help over the years.



A general view of the 2011 AGM