

Held at:

7.30 pm, Walkden Legion Club

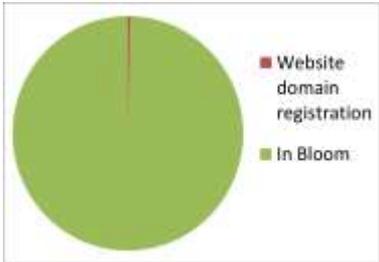
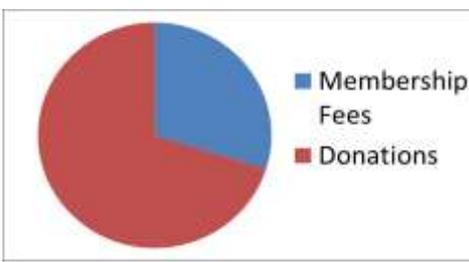
Attendees:

Andy Barlow (AB, Chair)
Angela Critchley (AC)
Kathy Knowles (KK)
Cllr Iain Lindley (IL, Minutes)
Sheila Davidson (SD)
Alexander Davidson (AD)
Peter Hope (PH)
Keith Ingram (KI)
PC Lee Marshall (LM, British Transport Police)
Nina Keshishian (NK, Friends of Patricroft Station)
Andrew Leong (AL)
Amy Mercer-Bailey (AMB)
Michael Potts (MP)
Graham Spencer (GS)
Cllr Richard Critchley (RC)
Jennifer Reynolds (JR)
Dennis Reynolds (DR)
Peter Aust (PA)
Harry Merrick (HM)
David Lindley (DL)
Frank Bridge (FB)

Apologies:

Neil Stapleton
Preva Crossley
Liam Riley
Mike Corless
Alan Fantom
Barbara Carney
Elizabeth Charnley

Item	Subject
1	<p>Chair's Welcome & Introductions</p> <p>Apologies received from the people listed above.</p>
2	<p>Guest Speaker: Matthew Worman, Northern Rail Client & Stakeholder Manager</p> <p>Matthew Worman did not attend the meeting. Subsequent to the meeting, it was discovered that Matthew had sought to send apologies via the secretary at very short notice</p>
3	<p>Review of the Year</p> <p>The meeting paid tribute to FOWS member Michael Carney who had sadly passed</p>

Item	Subject												
	<p>away recently.</p> <p>Angela Critchley read out a report of the year's activities which had been prepared by the secretary, Neil Stapleton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June: In Bloom ... installed first two "trough" style planters at the end of the platform • August: FOWS led creation of Steering Group's response to the DfT's Northern franchise consultation. Key points in our submission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ maximise efficiency savings and improve capacity on the route from Hindley to Salford Crescent via Atherton and Walkden by inclusion in the north-west electrification programme as soon as possible; ▪ increasing the hours of operation of the highly successful Sunday service to facilitate morning journeys into Manchester for shop workers, and evening journeys home for travellers returning home from weekends away or days out. ▪ increasing revenue and helping keep Ticket Offices open by increasing the range of services available; ▪ cleaner, faster trains to drive further passenger growth in the north. • August: In Bloom – third trough style planter plus a new small cube • September: Off-peak fare rules changed causing confusion for staff and passengers alike. Condemned by PassengerFocus, TravelWatch, and groups like FoWS as off-putting (the rules were very complicated), counterintuitive (the increases affected counter-peak flows) and possibly leading to reduced revenue as passengers migrate to cheaper bus alternatives. Cheap GM Evening fares were also scrapped. • November: Passenger Count. Almost identical passenger numbers using the station as last year: 707 instead of 711. Around 50 extra passengers used the trains towards Manchester, counter balanced by 40 less in the Wigan direction – evidence perhaps of road users giving up on the congested East Lancs and A6 to try the train ? • December: Extra carriages and services provided by Northern in run up to Xmas ...great work ! 5 extra trains into Manchester on Saturday mornings, and 9 coming back in the afternoon and evening. Sunday trains upgraded to 4 carriages (but even then some were "full and standing") • January: Annual Fares Increase, modest in comparison with some recent years. The main commuter fare from Walkden – the Peak Return –up 10p to £6.40 (1.6%). The 1 month season ticket goes up £2.30 to £96.80. • March Northern Franchise Invitation to Tender , and Electrification Task Force Recommendations both published with highly encouraging implications for Walkden. • All year: What <i>didn't</i> happen was roof repairs, now some 18 months since the original storm damage and some of the woodwork has clearly rotted badly since then 												
4	<p>Treasurer's Report, Angela Critchley</p> <p>Funds at the bank were £1873.34, with expenditure for the year at £1723.23 and income at £114.00.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div data-bbox="363 1727 742 2027"> <p style="text-align: center;">Expenditure</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Expenditure Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Color</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Website domain registration</td> <td>Red</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In Bloom</td> <td>Green</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <div data-bbox="884 1727 1353 2027"> <p style="text-align: center;">Income</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Income Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Color</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Membership Fees</td> <td>Blue</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Donations</td> <td>Red</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> </div>	Category	Color	Website domain registration	Red	In Bloom	Green	Category	Color	Membership Fees	Blue	Donations	Red
Category	Color												
Website domain registration	Red												
In Bloom	Green												
Category	Color												
Membership Fees	Blue												
Donations	Red												

Item	Subject
	Angela Critchley thanked David Lindley for hosting the website without charge and thanked Jennifer Reynolds who had audited the accounts.
5	<p>Election of Officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andy Barlow (proposed Iain Lindley, seconded Jennifer Reynolds) was the only nomination for the post of Chair, and was duly elected by a show of hands • Neil Stapleton (proposed Dennis Reynolds, seconded Iain Lindley) was the only nomination for the post of Secretary, and was duly elected by a show of hands. • Angela Critchley (proposed David Lindley, seconded Frank Bridge) was the only nomination for the post of Treasurer, and was duly elected by a show of hands.
6	<p>Appointment of auditor</p> <p>The meeting approved the appointment of Jennifer Reynolds as the auditor of accounts for the forthcoming year.</p>
7	<p>Gardening Update and Plans for 2015/16, Angela Critchley</p> <p>Following a suggestion at a previous meeting, it has been agreed to purchase a memorial plant in memory of Michael Carney. Barbara Carney has chosen a suitable plant and donations can be made via Angela Critchley, FOWS Treasurer.</p> <p>The plans for 2015 involve finishing off the planter scheme in full. There is £1400 of grant funding remaining and an application for a further £400 has been submitted to the Community Committee for approval.</p>
8	<p>North-West Manchester Friends' Steering Group, Andy Barlow</p> <p>Andy Barlow gave a brief history of the steering group (officially known as the North-West Manchester Station Friends Alliance) and gave an update on the recent meeting with Amanda White, Head of Rail at Transport for Greater Manchester.</p> <p>The steering group have now met with Abellio, one of the three bidders for the new Northern franchise, and are hoping to meeting with the other two bidders (GoVia and Arriva) in the near future.</p>
9	<p>Northern Franchise Invitation To Tender</p> <p>Andy Barlow gave an update on the invitation to tender document published by the Government for the new northern franchise. This document outlines what the new franchisee would be expected to deliver in terms of services. The document outlines big improvements from Walkden station from December 2017, with services doubled off-peak and at weekends and the Sunday service extended to 10pm.</p> <p>If the process goes to plan then the winning bidder will be announced in October, with the new franchise starting in April 2016. The initial service would be the same as present until the changes in December 2017.</p> <p>A discussion followed and a number of points were raised, including on level access, the length of trains under the new franchise, and upgrades to stations.</p>
10	<p>Electrification Task Group</p> <p>Andy Barlow gave an update on the electrification task group report which had been published recently. Friends of Walkden Station had been in contact via Rail North and had lobbied hard via the submission of the Steering Group.</p> <p>The Walkden line has been included in "tier one" for electrification, and ranked 3rd out of 32 lines appraised with a score of 79/100. It has been recommended for a</p>

Item	Subject
	full business case study.
11	<p>Farnworth Tunnel</p> <p>Andy Barlow gave an update on the timetable changes caused by the closure of the Farnworth Tunnel for five months from mid-May due to the electrification works. There will be a very limited service between Bolton and Salford Crescent during this time. A number of trains would be diverted via Walkden but these are not currently scheduled to stop. FOWS have lobbied for some of these extra services to stop at Walkden, particularly the Sunday evening services and the trains to Manchester Airport.</p> <p>A discussion followed and a number of points were raised, including concerns about the impact on reliability of the new Todmorden curve services.</p>
12	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC Lee Marshall introduced himself. Frank Bridge asked about the incident on Sunday night where a conductor was assaulted. • Andy Barlow discussed a number of issues which he would be raising with Northern Rail, including litter, the lack of a deep clean, weed-killing, and the damage to the station roof which continues to leak. He is looking to arrange a meeting with the Northern Rail Managing Director, Alex Hynes, at some point after Easter. • Kathy Knowles raised concerns about bicycles parking in the FOWS flower beds.

There being no further business, the chair thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.