

Statement by the West Somerset Railway Partnership Development Group with regard to the Coombes Report

The Partnership Development Group (PDG) is the strategic leadership forum established by members of the West Somerset Railway family of organisations to discuss matters that relate to the development and sustainability of the West Somerset Railway as a whole. PDG has been in existence since October 2014 and, in addition to the Railway bodies involved, includes representation from Somerset County Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council.

Following the publication of the Coombes Report on the West Somerset Railway Association in December 2015, PDG members asked that Robin Coombes be invited to its February meeting to address PDG in relation to the following questions:

- What are the wider lessons from the Review for the West Somerset Railway as a whole?
- What should the Partnership Development Group do now in response to the Review?
- What are the issues that the PDG will face or can assist with in respect of the future of the West Somerset Railway Association?

The discussion at PDG was focused at a strategic level. Following consideration of Robin Coombes presentation and the issues raised, Partnership Development Group members agreed unanimously that it would be helpful to the reputation and sustainability of the West Somerset Railway as a whole as well as to the Association itself if PDG were to make the following statement. This statement was agreed unanimously by all the organisations/representatives including the West Somerset Railway Association Trustees representative, Ian Aldridge.

“Partnership Development Group has agreed the following resolution,

1. Partnership Development Group supports implementation of the Coombes Report recommendations in full and as soon as possible,
2. Partnership Development Group supports the continuation of the important role of the West Somerset Railway Association as a significant support organisation to the West Somerset Railway,
3. Partnership Development Group will do all that it can both collectively and individually to help the West Somerset Railway Association to implement the Coombes Report in terms of the wider issues for the railway family on the understanding that the recommendations are implemented in full including arrangements for good governance.”

Note for readers. Partnership Development Group is made up of the following organisations/representatives:

- Diesel and Electric Preservation Group
- Somerset County Council

- Somerset and Dorset Trust
- Taunton Deane Borough Council
- West Somerset Council
- West Somerset Railway staff representative
- West Somerset Railway Friends Groups representative
- West Somerset Steam Trust
- West Somerset Railway PLC
- West Somerset Railway Association

For any further information, please contact Steve Williams, Chairman Partnership Development Group on Williams@oakevillage.wanadoo.co.uk or 01823-462898.

Distribution

PDG representatives and their organisations

West Somerset Railway websites and other social media

All staff West Somerset Railway

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