



WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

The Railway Station Bishops Lydeard

Taunton Somerset TA4 3BX

Registered Charity No.1041901 A Company limited by guarantee

News release

Page one (of one)

West Somerset Railway Association

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For immediate release

West Somerset Railway Association General Meeting, Sunday 10th May 2015

A General Meeting of the West Somerset Railway Association was held in the village hall at Bishops Lydeard on Sunday 10th May 2015.

There were five resolutions proposed, two of which were successful, three of which were defeated.

The two motions that were successful were a vote of no confidence in the board and the instigation of an independent review into the aims and objectives of the Association.

The three resolutions that failed were those seeking to remove three Trustees, David Williams, Peter Chidzey and Michael Nicholls, and all will continue to serve as Trustees.

All of the votes were close, one resting on the Chairman's casting vote. During the meeting, David Williams stated that he did not wish to continue as Chairman, and would be stepping down to allow a new Chairman to be elected before the end of the month.

The Trustees would like to extend their sincere thanks to the Association staff and volunteers who helped with the checking in of members and with counting the votes, along with those who volunteered to be independent counters and verifiers of the voting numbers; their help is very much appreciated. The Trustees would like to thank all those members who supported them, and will continue their efforts at reconciliation with those who wish for a review of the Association's aims.

Association Chairman David Williams commented after the meeting, "Whilst the Trustees are naturally pleased that motions to remove them were unsuccessful, we acknowledge there is still an unhealthy disconnect between a section of the membership and the Board of Trustees and that much work needs to be done in terms of communication. The challenge going forward will be to find a solution that enables the majority of members who wish to contribute positively to both the Association and the wider Railway to do so constructively and in a more harmonious atmosphere in the future.

"Moves have already started to find a suitable independent candidate with relevant experience who will undertake a thorough review of the charity's aims and objectives. Once we have a suitable candidate, we will be able to begin consultation on the terms of reference for the review. It is important that we get it right and find a review format that is transparent and, above all, of value to the charity going forward. That person (or persons) will not be drawn from the current Trustees or those who oppose them, though it is envisaged that both of these parties will be able to give their input into the review. We will make a further announcement on this as soon as we can."

"Most members are not remotely interested in internal and personality politics, they are interested in railways and our Railway in particular - its locomotives, rolling stock, stations, infrastructure and people. I think we need to return to focussing on what should be central to everyone's aims, ensuring the continued success, development and improvement of the West Somerset Railway."

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Wordcount: 500