

MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST LIMITED

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Middleton Railway Trust Limited held on Saturday 1st March 1975 at Cockburn High School, Leeds11, commencing at 14.30.

Present: Mr. J.A. Lodge (in the Chair) and 25 other members.

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Lord Garnock, Dr. Lawrence, Messrs. J.K. Lee, R. Bareham, J. Carr, P. Evans, Mr. and Mrs. Apperley, and the Hebden family.
2. Officers' Reports for the unincorporated Middleton Railway Trust for the year ending 31st December 1974. Reports of the Chairman, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Civil Engineer, Traffic Manager, Publicity Officer, and of the M.R.A. were available at the Meeting. Mr. R.G. Edwards informed the Meeting that the audit of the accounts was not yet completed, and he also wished to point out that the word "Limited" should be deleted from the title of the printed Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st December 1974.
 - i) Minutes Mr. Ashurst asked if the Minutes of the 1974 Annual General Meeting of the Middleton Railway Trust, also available at the Meeting, should be formally approved, but Mr. J.D. Edwards advised that they could only be noted as they were for the unincorporated Trust.
 - ii) Membership Mr. J. Bushell asked why two different numbers of members were given for the M.R.A., 37 in Mr. Ashurst's Report and 41 in the M.R.A. Report. Mr. Ashurst explained that the discrepancy was probably due to his own information being more up to date with regard to renewals etc., and Miss Young added that the actual figure sent by the M.R.A. Secretary had been 36 and she had changed it to 41 which was the figure as at 31st December 1974 according to her records. Mr. Ashurst wished it to be noted that a rise in membership subscriptions had been considered in view of price increases in general and the postal rates increase in particular, but it had been decided to leave the subscription at £1.50p for 1975.
 - iii) Mechanical Engineer Mr. Lodge reminded the Meeting that his reports had appeared in The Old Run. There were no questions.
 - iv) Civil Engineer Mr. Cowling said that the track materials from Market Overton had arrived the previous Saturday.
3. Receipt of Accounts and Report of Council for Middleton Railway Trust Limited for the year ended 31st December 1974.

The Report of Council had been distributed to members. Copies were available at the Meeting of - unaudited Income and Expenditure Account of the unincorporated Middleton Railway Trust for the period ending 31st December 1974.

- unaudited Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1974, representing the final balance of the unincorporated Middleton Railway Trust and the initial balance of Middleton Railway Trust Limited.

As Middleton Railway Trust Limited had not commenced trading until 1st January 1975, it had no income and expenditure for the year ending 31st December 1974.

Mr. R.G. Edwards added that most of the Appeal Account moneys would be transferred to pay for the new track materials for the depot. He also pointed out that whilst the Trust appeared to be in a good state financially at the moment, heavy commitments in 1975 might lead to a mere "breaking even" of accounts for the current year. Mr. R.G. Edwards also explained that the value of the locomotives and permanent way had been reassessed in accordance with auditors' requirements of a limited company.

Mr. M. Leah had noted with some surprise that the Old Run expenses had apparently decreased, and Mr. Edwards thought this perhaps was due to slight reallocation of some amounts to other accounts. Miss Young added that since taking over circulation of The Old Run she had been able to hand-deliver copies to many members at the line, which would have made Old Run postage costs less than in previous years.

Mr. Bushell asked if the increase in goods traffic income was due to an increase in traffic or in price, and was informed that the actual amount of traffic had increased.

Mr. R.G. Edwards reminded the Meeting that the accounts were unaudited.

Mr. Ashurst proposed, Mr. Nettleton seconded and it was agreed:

"That the Balance Sheet of the Middleton Railway Trust to 31st December 1974, be adopted subject to audit."

It was further proposed by Mr. Leah, seconded and agreed:

"That the Report of Council be adopted."

4. Election of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and members of Council.

Messrs. J.K. Lee (Chairman), J.D. Edwards (Secretary), R.G. Edwards (Treasurer) and the following members of Council were willing to stand for re-election: Messrs. T.W.J. Apperley, B.W. Ashurst, Dr. A.L. Barnett, Messrs. N.A. Brampton, A.J. Cowling, D.J. Hebden, C. Hirst, J.A. Lodge, P. Nettleton, C. Rogers, and Miss S. Young.

Miss Young nominated Mr. W.E. Holliday who had served on the Trust's Committee for some years. Mr. Nettleton nominated Mr. B. Rushworth and thought he was willing to accept nomination though he was not at the Meeting. Messrs. Liley and Plummer declined to be nominated. There were no further nominations and the following were duly elected: Mr. J.K. Lee (Chairman), Mr. J.D. Edwards (Secretary), Mr. R.G. Edwards (Treasurer), Mr. T.W.J. Apperley, Mr. B.W. Ashurst, Dr. A.L. Barnett, Mr. N.A. Brampton, Mr. A.J. Cowling, Mr. D.J. Hebden, Mr. C. Hirst, Mr. W.E. Holliday, Mr. J.A. Lodge, Mr. P. Nettleton, Mr. C. Rogers, Mr. B. Rushworth, and Miss S. Young.

5. Appointment of Auditors Mr. R.G. Edwards asked the Meeting to note that the audit had not been completed due to late arrival of some information and the books subsequently being handed in late for audit, and it was not the fault of the auditors. It was proposed by Mr. J.D. Edwards, seconded by Mr. Brampton and agreed:

"That Messrs. Volans, Leach and Schofield be appointed auditors to the Company for 1975, at a remuneration to be fixed by the Council."

6. Any other business

a) It was proposed by Mr. J.D. Edwards, seconded by Mr. Brampton and agreed that a vote of thanks be sent to Mr. Hellewell for his work in the setting up of the limited company. Mr. Hellewell had given his time free and had only asked for payment of expenses.

b) Government control and regulation of railways: it had been suggested to the Railway Inspectorate that there was a need for control of safety standards, other than the control by Light Railway Order. The A.R.P.S. and the A.M.R. had asked the Department of the Environment for some procedure for supervision of all privately-owned railways, but the Department had considered that there was little prospect of parliamentary time being given to such a suggestion in the near future. However, the Department apparently intended to use their powers under the Health and Safety at Work Act to supervise the operation of private and light railways. It was proposed by Mr. Cowling, seconded by Mr. Bushell, and agreed:

"That the Meeting authorises Mr. J.D. Edwards to contact the Railway Inspectorate to enquire about the implications of the Act and whether supervision under the Act would obviate the Company's applying for a Light Railway Order."

c) The Stockton and Darlington Anniversary: Mr. Ashurst asked what participation the Company was to have in the celebrations. Mr. Lodge said that at least one locomotive was to be sent to Shildon, and he asked Mr. Cockerill if he would like to detail some of the proposed events. Mr. Cockerill said that the main exhibition was to be held at Shildon during the last full week in August with about 45 locos on display. About 35 locomotives would take part in a cavalcade over a distance of about 5 miles on the Sunday. Only preservation societies' sales stands would be allowed in the exhibition area. Mr. Lodge told the Meeting that as it would be difficult to staff the Trust's own sales stand Mr. Cockerill had very kindly offered to sell Middleton Railway items from the Steam Power Trust's sales stand.

d) Membership cards: Mrs. N. Couper asked if the Membership Secretary could try to be more prompt in issuing cards after renewals had been made, explaining that her own family's card had been very late arriving and had not been available when they wished to ride on the Visitors' train. Mr. Ashurst promised to take note.

e) Depot: Mr. Leah asked if any progress had been made towards a depot building, and Mr. Lodge explained that due to the uncertainty of Clayton's plans for Dartmouth Yard, rising costs, and the need to acquire lease of the land required, the purchase of two turnouts and a quantity of sleepers from Flying Scotsman Enterprises had been the only move made during 1974 towards the depot development.

f) Mr. Bushell appealed for black and white photographs of the line to send to publishers and other enquirers, and Mr. Leah asked for photos for use in The Old Run.

g) Mr. Ashurst asked if there was any report about The Old Run, and Mr. Leah said there had been a drop in numbers of articles and photos contributed.

There being no further business to discuss, the Meeting closed at 15.30.