

## **BARRUP (BROMSGROVE & REDDITCH RAIL USER PARTNERSHIP)**

Minutes of a Meeting held at the Committee Room, Parkside, Bromsgrove  
on Tuesday 10 September 2024 at 18.45

### **Present**

Robert Cholmondeley (Chairman & Secretary), Paul Evans, Sean Shannon, Nick Taylor, Graham Vickery, Tony Woodward. Adrian Kriss (Worcestershire County Councillor, Beacon) also attended as a guest.

#### **1. Apologies**

- Apologies were received from Neil Franklin and Peter Hughes.

#### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2024 were approved.

#### **3. Restoration of Cross City 6 Trains per Hour (tph)**

- At our meeting with West Midlands Trains, we were advised that the previous 6tph is unlikely to be reinstated south of Birmingham New Street until the proposed Midlands Connect initiative delivers, probably in the early 2030s. This is to allow the Camp Hill line service to be accommodated at Kings Norton, now scheduled for late 2025. The situation is, though, under constant review. It may be possible to restore 6tph north of Birmingham New Street in the next year or two.

#### **4. Feedback from meeting with WMT (West Midlands Trains)**

- **Connectivity to the South West** - an ideal solution for BARRUP would be for the Camp Hill line services to be extended by: (a) one per hour to Gloucester calling at Barnt Green, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire Parkway and Cheltenham; and (b) one per hour to Worcester Shrub Hill calling at Barnt Green, Bromsgrove and Droitwich. Current pathing constraints make this unviable, additional rolling stock would be needed and the geographic boundaries of the franchises would be breached.
- **Birmingham – Hereford services to call at Barnt Green** – Kings Norton northbound is the pinch point. Although it is early days, it does not look as though the new Class 196s are generating sufficient improvements in timings to overcome the pathing problems at Kings Norton.
- **Connection northbound to Barnt Green (& Redditch) at Bromsgrove** – from the early performance data, it looks as though the new Class 730s on the Cross City Line are delivering timing improvements. WMT are looking at the feasibility of stopping both

Cross City Bromsgrove services at Barnt Green (it's currently only one of the two services per hour). This would reduce the 46 minute wait northbound from the Hereford/Worcester service at Bromsgrove to around 15 minutes. The journey time from Worcester to Redditch would reduce from 90 minutes to 60 minutes. BARRUP will contact WMT in 6 months time for an update on these issues.

- **07.52 Worcester Foregate Street to Birmingham New Street to call at Bromsgrove** – this service is already overcrowded at Droitwich. An additional service is planned at the December 2024 timetable change departing Worcester Foregate Street at 07.24, arriving at Bromsgrove around 07.43. Although BARRUP's ideal is the service which would arrive around 08.12 for employees and people using the business and educational establishments of the town, it is a welcome improvement. The loading and changes in travelling habits will be able to be reviewed again after this initiative beds in.
- **Later train than 22.21 from Birmingham New Street to Bromsgrove on Saturday nights** – the agreement between WMT and Network Rail on track access has recently been agreed for the forthcoming year. However, there is a case to be made to Network Rail which WMT are willing to take forward in conjunction with BARRUP for the Cross City trains to be extended from Longbridge to Bromsgrove until 23.23. BARRUP is drafting an initial proposal.
- **Reinstate Poster and Pocket Timetables** – BARRUP mentioned (a) Hereford where WMT doesn't have poster timetables yet GWR and TfW do; (b) Greater Anglia (similar ownership as WMT) has poster timetables and some pocket timetables and (c) Cross Country has reintroduced pocket timetables. Geoff Grant (recently appointed as Stakeholder Manger WMT) is to investigate and revert to BARRUP.
- **Installation of Departure Screen and PA at Barnt Green Platform 1** – Geoff Grant will make a site visit and revert to BARRUP.

## 5. XC (Cross Country) Update

- Kyle Daisley (Worcestershire County Councillor, Bromsgrove South) has been scheduled to meet XC twice but they cancelled on both occasions.
- BARRUP will write to Adrain Kriss (from a Barnt Green perspective because it's within his ward) so he can take up the case for XC trains to call at Bromsgrove.
- It was noted that earlier versions of the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy had proposed that a stopping service would be introduced in 2023 calling at Bromsgrove, Worcestershire Parkway and Cheltenham. This is not now proposed until the 2030s.

## 6. Approach to GWR (Great Western Railway) on connections at Worcester Connectivity

- BARRUP contacted GWR who advised that changes and consistency of the arrival of their trains at Worcester Foregate Street from Bristol could not be improved because of the pathing of other services. The position remains that it is not possible to connect from the Bristol trains to Bromsgrove without an hour's wait at Worcester. Other rail user groups have met with a similar response.

## **7. Station Round Up**

- **Bromsgrove** – new ticket office staff are being trained and Bromsgrove will lose the expertise of the current staff who are transferring to other stations. The ticket office hours are to be extended to 7.20 p.m. Nick Taylor continues to follow up on the points about the state of the station raised at the meeting with Andrew Leo of WMRE last December.
- **Redditch** – there's no further news on the proposed station upgrade. From the evidence available to BARRUP, it was noted that the standard of service has been good.
- **Alvechurch** – no update
- **Barnt Green** – Network Rail have advised that work will start on station lifts in January 2025 and be completed by August 2025. Contractors are being appointed. A further walk in session is to be arranged for late November.

## **8. Any Other Business**

- It was noted that weekday afternoon services from Hereford have been subject to frequent cancellation.
- Although members thought that the northern leg of HS2 should be reinstated, a suggestion was not adopted that BARRUP should write to politicians and the Department of Transport supporting it.
- Tony Woodward presented an analysis of the cost per mile of travelling between Bromsgrove and Birmingham New Street. The off peak fare from Bromsgrove is £8.20 which is 10% more than an equally proportionate fare of £7.50 based on distance travelled from all intermediate stations.

## **9. Date of Next Meeting**

- The next meeting will be arranged for late November or early December. It will be an afternoon meeting.