

BARRUP (BROMSGROVE & REDDITCH RAIL USER PARTNERSHIP)

Minutes of a Meeting held at the Committee Room, Bromsgrove District Council,
Parkside, Bromsgrove on Tuesday 11 March 2025 at 15.05

Present

Members: Robert Cholmondeley (Chairman & Secretary), Margaret Evans, Paul Evans, Adrian Kriss, Nick Taylor, Graham Vickery.

Guests: Chris Miall, Stephanie Miall

1. Apologies

- Apologies were received from Peter Hughes and Clem Huzzey.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2024 were approved.

3. Feedback on Meeting with local MPs 20 December 2024

- There is concern that the permanence of the reduction of the Cross City Line service to 4 trains per hour will not be restored to 6 until the Midlands Rail Hub delivers in the early 2030s. Chris Bloore MP (Redditch) has taken up the issue directly with the Minister for Rail, Peter Hendy. BARRUP has written to the ORR, DfT and Midlands Connect asking for the justification that the benefits of opening the 3 Camp Hill Line stations will outweigh the economic and social detriment to the Cross City line areas. The evidence, in the case of BARRUP, is reduced footfall at 3 of its 4 stations. It is languishing below 80% of pre-covid levels (against a national average of over 90%).
- Bradley Thomas MP (Bromsgrove) has meetings with Network Rail and West Midlands Trains at which he will be raising some of the issues on which BARRUP is campaigning plus the car park flooding at Alvechurch.

4. West Midlands Trains (WMT) Update

- Geoff Grant of WMT is due to provide possible meeting dates for a follow up on the issues discussed in August 2024. It will include their timetabling guru, Warren Stephens. It is hoped that performance improvements from the new rolling stock will ease some of the timetabling constraints.
- On weekday evenings, there is no northbound service from Worcester calling at Bromsgrove between 20.58 and 22.24, notwithstanding a service passing through Bromsgrove, but not stopping, at around 21.55. This will be raised at the next meeting with WMT.

- If it's an acceptable proposition for WMT, BARRUP will explore funding opportunities for the printing of poster timetables for its stations. One possibility might be from the county councillor's community budget.
- The short formation of Class 196 trains on the Hereford route was noted. It has been caused by the unavailability of spare parts for routine maintenance. It was agreed that short formation was a better option than cancelling services.

5. Cross Country (XC) Update

- A substantive response has not been received to our request in November 2024 for XC to consider calling at Bromsgrove for access to Worcestershire Parkway, Cheltenham and beyond. There have been personnel changes at XC and a full response is still being chased up.
- It was noted that whatever the outcome of the political changes to Unitary Authority status in Worcestershire, the issues for the north of the county differ markedly from those of the south and the city of Worcester. These factors need to be part of XC's considerations.

6. Station Round Up

- **Bromsgrove** – there's been a change of people with responsibilities for the station. The improvements raised in December 2023 will be followed up again.
- **Redditch** – there's no news on the plans for a new station building.
- **Alvechurch** – Chris and Stephanie Miall (members of the Friends of Alvechurch Station) provided an update on (i) the media reports that Network Rail is investigating how to cure the car park flooding; (ii) the unreliability of the lifts and the frequent inaccuracies on the website about whether they're working. Although Chris and Stephanie will not become members, while BARRIUP lacks an Alvechurch station representative, they will give an email update for future meetings.
- **Barnt Green** – (i) A meeting has been held with Geoff Grant of WMT at the station about the poor screen information and lack of PA on some platforms. Re-siting the ticket machine from Platform 3 to Platform 1 was also suggested. (ii) The contractors have started site preparation work for the installation of lifts, due for completion by August 2025. The budgeted cost is £7.5m.

7. Updated BARRUP Aims

- Revised aims were agreed which now include lobbying for the immediate restoration of 6 trains per hour on the Cross City Line.

8. Great British Railways – consultation

- It was agreed that a response would not be submitted because the matters subject to consultation are at a level not directly relevant to BARRUP.

9. Any Other Business

- There was no other business.

10. Date of Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be arranged for early June 2025.

RC 13.3.25