

## **SPALDING & PETERBOROUGH TRANSPORT FORUM**

Meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> January 2006 in the South Holland Council Offices  
Priory Road, Spalding.  
[www.spaldingtransportforum.co.uk](http://www.spaldingtransportforum.co.uk)

**Present:** George Scott – Chairman;  
Kathy Lewis – Secretary;  
Nilla Short – Treasurer  
Eunice Pollard; Rob Short; Louise McGuiness; Liz Williams, Committee  
Tony Cross – Lincolnshire County Council;  
Jim Lawler – GNER  
Paul Fullwood – RPC;  
Erica Blamire Network Rail;  
John Hayes MP;  
Members of Deeping St Nicholas Parish Council  
30 members of the Public

**Apologies:** Nigel Carlisle – Central Trains;  
Kevin Powell Operations manager GNER  
Simon Pashley GNER  
Bruce Wakeling Spalding Town Manager

Chairman introduced the Forum and went on to tell people what was on the agenda...

### **Matters Arising From Last Meeting**

Website is running well. There have been over 1500 hits. Chairman advised people to have a look.

8.05 train problems have now been resolved. The train now connects with trains to Stansted and London and arrives on platform 3B at approx 8.25a m.

Spalding station – some works to be done on the bridge at the station. We are very concerned as the station is the focal point when people arrive. We need it this issue addressed.

Bruce Wakeling's talk went very well and people now know a little bit more about him and what he does.  
We now have a Constitution which we needed to apply for grants and have been awarded two – one from the Community Champions and one from delegated fund.

Car Park fewer cars now use it since charges came in.

Minutes agreed

### **LITTLEWORTH HALT**

When station was first built there were very few houses around it and the local council together with Parish Council decided to let more houses be built. However there is now the problem of transport in that area as the bus service is only two hourly and the only way to get around for residents at present is by car.

New houses approx 330 recently built which means there are now over 700 houses altogether in Deeping St Nicholas.

It is a 40 mile round trip to Peterborough and if you average 35p per mile on a week costs £85.00 plus insurance and maintenance costs. On top of this there are also the parking charges in Peterborough. So an average weekly commute could cost over £120.00.

A survey was carried out asking people if they would like the station back and the majority of the residents said "yes." They would if possible abandon their second car and use train. The station buildings remain in private use and only a signal box left at the station is operational. A feasibility study needs to be done and also decided to have petition started. John Hayes MP would then present it to Parliament.

### **LITTLEWORTH HALT PRESENTATION**

Chairman gave Power Point presentation of the way the halt is now and what is needed to put in new platforms at the station with waiting shelter and access to both platforms.

1. People have asked why you want it.
2. There is a demand for it.
3. The Survey
4. The problems

### **Why do we need a Halt at Littleworth?**

There are two roads:- A1073 and A16

Both get congested and there are roadworks on the A16 currently.

A1073 is a bad accident route.

Station is ideally placed and already on the route to Peterborough and London.

Little remains of the station platforms only the station building and signal box.

To bring it up to standard it would cost £300,000.00 to £500,000

Children use the playground but there is a new playground being built elsewhere away from the main road and therefore could be an alternative place that may be used as a car park.

### **Survey results**

Door to door and questionnaire surveys completed. Survey concluded that over 350+ would use it.

This would use the commercial interests of TOC (Train Operating Company) they could get in more revenue.

Residents would have good access to Spalding, Lincoln, Peterborough and London

### **The problems**

Estimated cost is £200,000-£300,000 pounds to put in station platforms.

No parking facilities at present

Crossing to either platform would mean us using road as access or the construction of gates at side like other places.

The cost of a footbridge would be expensive.

Tickets would be purchased on train but that is ok as people already buy them on the train.

Cancelled or delayed trains how would you know? Signal box could let passengers know which is better than Spalding as there is no one there after 2, 30 pm.

### **Reasons for it**

To give residents in the area a mode of transport that they will use regularly.

To cut traffic congestion and the number of cars on A16

This will hopefully cut the number of accidents down by easing the traffic flow on A1073 and to help ease parking at Peterborough.

The requirement is for two platforms with access to the platforms including facilities for the disabled. At Spalding after 2.30 there is no help for anyone disabled. There could be an undercover shelter similar to a bus shelter. There would also be a need for cycle and car parking.

Access to platforms could be made via lockable gates to one side of barriers.

Negotiate with nearby land owners for parking charges.

Contact interested parties for support.

We need to attract businesses in but because of bad transport services they won't come.

Maybe a local bus service could link in with the train times. The Shaw's bus from Market Deeping could link in with the train.

We're not looking this year or next year but 20 years down the line.

### **Next Moves**

Do another survey but on a wider scale.

Prepare business case.

Discuss with other parties ....options.

Seek out sources of funding.

The SRA folded and the RPC took over and they have a budget. We need to source funding – perhaps Lottery, LCC

Enlist Lincoln University to design station as a project. We have asked for funding for this and it is a possibility.

That is the end of the presentation. Did you understand it? It was kept short.

Over to the floor for questions.

### **QUESTIONS**

**Louise McGuinness:** asked Paul Fullwood what happened to the pot of money SRA had for funding?

RPC doesn't fund projects but does fund groups' business plans.

There is a guide book for opening stations.

Rail re-opening book and for potential funders' copies available for copying.

Lots of hoops to get through but could still fail.

Network Rail needs convincing that there is a good business plan.

**GS** Additional reasons for needing railway.

1. Because of the Da Vinci Code film and other tourists creating interest in the area.
2. The 2012 Olympics. We are on one of the main lines.
3. Tourists all over the world and within the UK could use the railway.
4. Olympics are National, so why are they only improving London transport facilities? Burghley House for Horse trials. All those tourists will go somewhere but are we ready for them.

The outlying areas have a lot of people staying in them. There is need for better transport

We need to find out from the railway to let us know if it's possible to put in platforms.

**Erica Blamire** (Network Rail)

I don't know if we can put platforms in, that is a design feature and a design plan would have to look at implications for signalling, setting up platforms and service. That question needs to be asked of the Department for Transport. If we get to the end would Network Rail fund the project? Network rail is only there for renewing the railway & are not funded to enhance the railway.

**Tony Cross** – The costs could be a lot more than £300,000 estimated. Another carriage would probably mean additional costs for TOC. We are talking about high figures. A footbridge would cost at least 50k. DfT lets the franchise. TOC would have to be on board. When plans were in hand to re-open Sibsey station, Central weren't prepared to stop at Sibsey even though this was all funded.

We are just submitting our Transport plan for the next 5 years. Six million pounds from Central Government has to cover the needs all over the county. Detailed discussions were held with SRA who said local services not priority. Community rail is the ideal. Decisions unlikely to be made. Exercise was done to look at re-opening stations in the County and Donington and Pinchbeck came out top as biggest villages.

We never thought the project would be easy. Residents are really being forced to use road. We know of projects that have gone over a million pounds and we know that some go over that. John Hayes has spoken to Alistair Darling and we want someone to come from DFT to give us some insight into reopening a station.

**Member of Public.** We've only just moved from London. Our business case needs to be good. The Infrastructure needs to be put in place. Could the station be used for various needs, as a shop etc? There are no dentists, doctors and nothing for youngsters in the immediate area. We use four cars as we go to four different places.

**GS** We started this Forum three years ago when we did not have a good service but we now have improved it with the cooperation of the various bodies.

**Liz Williams** - If you don't think Deeping St Nicholas is important what is? A lot of people have to use cars so it would be beneficial to the community as pollution would be down. There is so much carnage on the A1073.

**Tony Cross** – We have to look at the whole County and we have to see what is needed overall. Our transport strategy is to use the buses and improve that. We were advised that that trains weren't a priority. No funding for local trains.

**GS** We have got a slightly bigger problem than Spalding. The business case we are putting means that we can tell them they might need another carriage because of the increased passenger flow but will they put one on? Central Trains will only have the franchise for another 18months.

**John Hayes.** I've followed this case as I've had letters from constituents. My discussions with DFT rural railways are important. From a Lincolnshire point of view we should look at improving the whole rural rail. We need both LCC and SHDC to make a case that our councillors can take forward. We need backing from them.  
There is a capacity for a community railway or a small company with starting a new line and station. There is a pot of money but whether there is case for using it is not known.

Firstly make a case to District Council... We need to add this to the local plan. JH raised the position for Donington & Deeping St Nicholas. Ask the County Council to look again at it and do survey. JH will take the case to the Government but if people don't do anything we will lose it.

When you live in an area more money is brought in by Firms coming into the area but we need infrastructure to put in place.

The critical thing at Deeping St Nicholas is trains actually go through there, not like Moulton where there is no possibility. Trains run on the line and we have

the components for a case. If someone came to me and said I want to open a station here there would be no chance.

No one knew that Deeping St Nicholas was going to grow as much as it has.

The business case will be put forward to the new Franchisee.  
Impression that County Council not really in favour but we need to convince them we need the station.

There is a huge pressure on the funding and best value money. There may be stronger cases for other areas. SHDC are the ones who actually arrange things and the LCC implement it. There are opportunities for funding but the LCC may not have sufficient enough funds to go round.

The onus is on us to put pressure on local council.

We have an approximate quote from Central Trains so you would get cars off the road and you would be saving money on maintenance and lives.

**Steve Williams:** We have policies that aim to help to open up the rural areas and the South of Lincolnshire has always been forgotten. Certainly the transport infrastructure of the Labour government we had hoped would be good for us. Maintenance of the roads through the fens is expensive. The Railways are under a National Policy. A1073 was major project to get through and would have ideally been dual all the way to Humber Bridge.

Road at Deeping St Nicholas was repaired and cost quite a lot of money. Three miles of pavement were replaced just by the crossing and very few people have used it so it could have been put off for a while. We as individuals have no right to decide what our money is used on.

Parliament has been sitting on a bill for four years which means that all utilities could have been put in together when they needed replacing.

A group of people got together and said they wanted to make improvements to the road through Deeping St Nicholas and were told no improvements would be made. But because they made a good case and JH made a contribution the improvements were made.

Evidence shows if we are confident and make our case forcefully and articulate well we would have a good chance.

**JH: JH** Constituents have written to me and I have written to Alistair Darling but had no reply as yet. I will continue to contact Alistair Darling.

We must get the LCC and SHD council behind us.

Let's work together and keep pressuring about the line.

Spalding to Peterborough is a TENS line (Trans European Network) Is it 'Once a Tens always a Tens line?' When the community rail strategy came out we were

very keen on having lines Community lines. We would like to see the joint line as a community line but if it's a tens' line it can't be a community line.

**SW** The joint line was seen as an avoiding line. It was planned that the Spalding line would be upgraded and made into a freight line, but this was shelved.

**Nilla Short** Thanked John Hayes and said that from past experience and tonight's promise we know we will have his support; then went on to say that such a majority of people from Littleworth have come to the meeting tonight because they would really like this project to go ahead. But they need support and therefore what help would **SW**, **PF** and **EB** provide to make the project successful".

**Paul Fullwood** - There is an established procedure which lays out how you set out the business case. Organise the case well so that the people who are looking at it can come to a positive decision.

**JH.** Would it be possible to make contact with other groups that have had a station opened?

**Paul Fullwood** make the information useful to people

**EB.** Network Rail is happy to work with groups with advice but cannot provide funding and they will check that current processes exist to approve designs subject to sponsorship being in place.

**TC** The main way is through the Rail industry.

**GS** The railway is a complicated unit. There are so many people to sort out different areas in Network Rail and others. It has taken two years for us to try and sort out Spalding station for the bridge. We have to fight for our case. We are linking this forum with Bedford and Richard Pill will be coming to the meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> April.

We are a forum but we need to have more people to join us. We have committees to form to tackle these issues.

If you want Littleworth to grow you must support us.

The latest on the A1073 is that it will cost 77 million. The difficulty is it is competing with other roads in the East Midlands for funds and we want a share of the money. We expect a decision on this soon. Sadly there isn't enough money to go round.

The existing road is a very inappropriate road and we are all aware of it. Our main aim is to make sure we have good road links. Just to maintain what we have already.

To grow without the infrastructure is restricted because of the situation. This is made clear by both the LCC and the SHDC. Everyone has their own schemes but unfortunately rural areas get a poor deal and that is what we must fight against.

**Deeping St Nicholas; Councillor:** If we can get it to go ahead and if every one signs a petition it would be an illustration of the feeling of the Community. The committee will take it on board and we need to see how we can do this is less traffic but this may increase people coming to Littleworth to join the train...

The Chairman welcomed Liz Williams who has joined our committee.

We know that GNER are in the background but they want to encourage people to take their trains.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to come to this meeting. The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.55pm

Next meeting will be the AGM on April 20<sup>th</sup> 2006