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**Thornhill & District**



Chairman: Gordon Neilson  
Vice-Chairman & Secretary:  
David Kerr  
Treasurer: David Dick  
Bus Manager: Ronnie Gibson  
Bookings : Jenny Bourne  
Booking Line: 07842 163775

**Community Transport**

**Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday, 24/01/2017, at 7.15pm at the Gladstone Hall, Penpont**

**Present:** Gordon Neilson (on his birthday!), Geordie Muirhead, Robin Robertson, Rab Cook, Jock Scott, David Dick, Rolf Buwert, Jenny Bourne, Ronnie Gibson, David Kerr, Joan Neilson, Alison McMillan.

**Apologies:** Mary Newbould.

**1. Welcome.**

- GN, chairing, welcomed everyone, and submitted our thanks to JN for providing catering.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

- www.**
- Noted above.

**3. Minutes of Previous (Quarterly) Meeting**

- Correct record: Proposed: DD; Seconded: RR.

**4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

- Turns out the new All Star fuel card *only* works with a PIN; signature not possible.

**5. Financial Report, incl review of charges**

- (See Annexe): in outline, DD reported our income for the year to date is approximately £7.5k; expenditure approx. £6.5k. We are down about £900 on last year for hires; correspondingly we have spent approximately £1k less on fuel and maintenance.
- We have received about £1k in government refunds of fares, thanks to the Ticketer machine. Government pays approximately 57% of the actual fares charged. The fares we currently charge were set in March, 2016, by reference to those charged by D&GC for its services along the same routes. DD proposed that we should now raise these fares (D&GC apparently does so annually in April) to match current levels. Quite easy to do: Ticketer has a provision for across the board percentage increase without having to redo every spreadsheet. We have to submit the new structure to Transport Scotland for approval, but , if



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we are mirroring D&GC, there is likely to be no difficulty about this. Also: would have no impact on our passengers, as they all have Entitlement Cards. *Agreed* to increase fares in line with D&GC rates; also that the existing hire charges for bookings are adequate, meantime.

- Some discussion as to the reasons for the drop in hires: residents in care facilities are, in the main, older and less fit; also schools increasingly have cluster minibuses and less disposable income for trips. We will need, as has been mentioned before, to develop other income streams; both from the point of view of maintaining income; also to satisfy potential funders.
- S.19/22: GN and DK advised that the log sheets for July-September had gone missing, somewhere between the bus, DK's house, the post and GN's house; they could not be certain where. An extensive search had been made in all likely places, but to no avail. We accordingly cannot provide sufficiently accurate figures to Transport Scotland to justify our claim for that period. We can always hope that the sheets will turn up somewhere, but, unless and until they do, we will just have to absorb this.

## 6. Licence Check

- This is doing the job satisfactorily.

## 7. Ticketer

- Having overcome the problem (by removing it from the mounting when not in use) whereby the Ticketer machine occasionally flattened the bus battery, the machine is proving very satisfactory and automatically uploading our fares data to Transport Scotland, who, in turn, are making payments to us.

www.

## 8. MiDAS

- RB had completed the MiDAS training in three (very intensive) days and had even learned some new things; particularly to do with passenger safety. He and DK will discuss the current state of our MiDAS certification and he will arrange any refreshers/training needed.

## 9. D1

- The Scottish Transport Minister had been suggesting that the Government would provide free D1 training to (a limited number of) organisations such as ourselves, with a view to getting over the problem (which hasn't arisen for us, yet) of drivers (currently, approximately those younger than 39) having no automatic D1 entitlement. RB would be our obvious candidate for this, but it would depend upon his willingness and availability. DK to *investigate* further.

## 10. Bus Report; incl replacement plans.

- RG reported that the bus is in reasonable shape, though it is rusting (particularly the leading back door); also that, following the arrival of cattle, who are being kept in a large shed to rear of Langmyre, the condition of the road and yard has deteriorated significantly and it is very difficult to keep both the exterior and the interior of the bus clean. He suggested we should consider where else it might be kept. The previous one used to be kept at Morton Mill, and this one was



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only moved to Langmyre because it was so unreliable in its early days. AMcM pointed out that the Morton Mill road is, itself, now in very poor condition and JB that Morton Mill was an isolated and potentially alarming place if collecting/returning the bus in the dark. There had been some suggestion, some years ago, that a garage might be provided in the grounds of the Community Centre. We were agreed, however, that we would not want to keep any bus there, unless there were a completely secure building to keep it in. GN, DK, DD to *consider* further.

- Meantime, we have been in touch with *three potential bus builders*, including Excel and O&H in East Yorkshire and K&I in Dalkeith. The two Yorkshire ones had been visited by GN last year, in company with ATI. Excel had, when asked, provided us with a quote within 24 hours; the other two had failed to produce anything, despite reminders. O&H had, after further prompting, today produced drawings (not costed), but had also stated that there were a number of difficulties in producing a vehicle of this sort...etc etc. GN, DD & DK were accordingly of the view that, for whatever reason, O&H and K&I either did not want the job, or were unable to undertake it. DK, in particular, was reluctant to do business with a company that had to be continually chivvied. ATI, it seems, had eventually gone with a builder somewhere in Northern Ireland. Since we already have the quote from Excel, we might ascertain, from ATI, the identity of the Northern Ireland builder and see if we can obtain a quote from them.
- On the basis that a new bus will cost approximately £75k and that we have £50k of that in hand, DD has submitted applications, on our behalf, to ANCBC and to Clyde; and GN to Morrisons and the Robertson Trust: each for £12.5k, making total applications of £50k, in the hope that two of these will be achieved. DD advised that he had declared his interest, as applicant, to the boards of both ANCBC and Clyde, since he is also a member of both and they had indicated that, although he would not be part of the decision-making process for T&DCT's application, it did not preclude his applying on our behalf. Funding bodies had also been made aware that we were applying for more than we actually needed and were happy that we would return, or not take up, any excess. Also that, once we reclaim the VAT, we will have some £12k 'left over', but that it was now accepted by funding bodies that organisations such as ours *should* be looking towards building up a fund for the *next* capital item. We should know more about how our applications are progressing by next meeting.

www.

## 11. Development?

- GN pointed out that LEADER, a potential funder, specifically would have needed to be shown that we were engaged in **new activity** to justify funding; and, at present, we are not doing anything we were not doing ten and more years ago. DK has, for some time, been mentioning possible co-operation with the Health Centre, Hospital visiting routes etc; but has not had the time to research the possibilities. He had approached one or two individuals to see whether they might be interested in doing this, but these individuals already had a substantial voluntary sector workload and could not take on anything more. Somehow, however, we need to address what new activities we might become involved in. RB suggested placing articles in the Wee Paper etc., offering trips to the



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Crawick Multiverse; maybe theatre trips to Glasgow etc. Perhaps someone might also monitor local media, D&G Life and the like, and see what excursions (besides the ones JB already does) we might offer. GN, DD, DK, RB to *consider* further.

**12. AOCB**

- None.

13. **DONMs** 2016/17: 14/03/2017 now not possible; might try for 21/03 [and, subsequently, other dates than that; more later]; 13/06/2017 (to include AGM).

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[www.visitthornhill.co.uk/community-transport](http://www.visitthornhill.co.uk/community-transport)



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