**ALFRETON TOWN COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 5th MARCH 2019 AT ROOM 1 ALFRETON HOUSE.**

**Present:**

Mayor: Councillor M Kerry

Deputy Town Mayor: Councillor Marlene Bennett MBE

Councillors: P Hunt, J A Walker, S Walker (in the Chair)

**To receive apologies for absence**.

RESOLVED

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors: G Dolman (work commitments) C O’Brien (on holiday) C Robinson (work commitment)

**Also present**

Jayne Moyses General Manager (North) East Midlands Trains

Rob Mercer Area Station Manager, East Midlands Trains

Lisa Haythorne and Matthew Brown from Derbyshire Law Centre

David Holmes, Town Clerk

# 01/19 Public Participation

None

**02/19 To receive any declarations of interest from Elected Members**

There was none

**03/19 To consider any items which should be taken in exclusion of the press and public.**

There were none

**04/19 To welcome representatives from East Midlands Trains to discuss on going issues with Alfreton Train Station**

Colleagues from East Midlands Trains explained the structure of their franchise, which is part of the Stagecoach Company. East Midlands Trains are tenants to the Station which is owned by Network Rail. East Midlands Trains are, as far as the Station is concerned, responsible for ticket sales. There is close contact between both organisations with the General Manager attending high level meetings between the two organisations. The meeting was also informed that East Midlands Train’s franchise ended at the end of February 2019 and there is a 6 month extension to 18 August 2019. Bids have been submitted by three organisations for the franchise; East Midlands Trains have submitted a bid. The successful bidder will be informed by the Department for Transport at the end of April 2019, the successful franchisee will operate under the new franchise up to 2027.

The meeting was informed of recent refurbishment works general site tidying, CCTV improvements, ticket machine improvements and refurbishment to the toilets.

**Ongoing issue relating to the Disabled access and Pushchair and luggage passenger access.**

The meeting was informed that a scheme had been submitted to the Department for Transport in 2015 and following a review, funds ear- marked through the ‘access for all’ scheme, had been reallocated away from the Alfreton Station bridge project. The meeting understood that the bridge presented an impossible barrier to non-ambulant passengers who were faced with an additional journey to either Chesterfield or Nottingham to allow them to cross over to an opposite platform by a lift. It was also acknowledged that similar problems would face passengers with pushchairs and additional luggage.

The meeting was informed that a bid for remedial works to the bridge had been submitted in the current round of funding, the date for the announcement of funding would be made in April 2019

East Midlands Trains AGREED to confirm their intention for the £150,000 funding for accessible projects arising from the franchise extension.

The meeting heard from colleagues at the Derbyshire Law Centre that legal action is imminent to remedy the rights of a young disabled passenger whose rights to equality cannot be met by the existing bridge arrangement.

Members heard that an advance booking can be made to take passengers with disabilities to either Chesterfield or from Nottingham but that had to be booked in advance. East Midlands Trains AGREED to revisit the existing signage to make the availability of that service clearer.

Members also raised the poor state of repair of the bridge and East Midlands Trains AGREED to carry out a site visit by their property team.

The meeting discussed extra fares for London travel via Chesterfield which imposed an extra cost burden for passengers who are unable to use the bridge access to allow access via Nottingham – a cheaper route

**Car Parking Issues**

The meeting was informed that the main car park was often full, causing rail travellers to park on adjacent roads often to the annoyance of local residents. The meeting was told of the local belief that because of a covenant with the then landowner Alfreton Urban District Council, parking should be free of charge. The meeting was also informed that some motorists who use the car park are not intended rail travellers and that a commercial agreement exists with a third party to park up to 10 cars. The meeting was also informed that there are no clear spaces allocated for disabled passengers in the main car park and that the area for disabled use of the short stay area is unclear. East Midlands Trains AGREED to investigate the arrangements for disabled parking both in terms of availability and markings and also conduct a full car park review which would consider expansion ‘outwards and upwards’ and free ticket collection provision

**Ticket office openings**

The meeting was informed that following on from some staffing difficulties the recent records show that the target for opening times has been met on all occasions

**No announcements in the evening**

Whilst it was understood that, in order to reduce noise pollution no announcements were to be made between 2200 and 0600 it was AGREED that checks would be made to assess any failures in the process.

**Lack of partnership with Northern Rail**

The meeting was informed that it was the intention of East Midlands Trains to cooperate with the other franchisee to maintain the service to all rail customers

**Poor location of ticket machine (not visible in the sun)**

It was acknowledged that the ticket machine is not ideally placed but the cost of relocation would be prohibitive. It was AGREED that East Midlands Trains would investigate a short-term solution involving a canopy and the option of a ‘filter’ being applied to the ticket machine

**Update on a new Station Building**

No information was available to the meeting

**Longer Opening Hours with less overlap of shifts**

The meeting heard that this is unlikely in the short term.

**Footpath on the ‘opposite side of the track’**

The meeting heard that remedial work had been undertaken but tidying-up work had yet to take place. It was AGREED that the Town Clerk would take the matter up with Derbyshire County Council’s Footpaths Officer

**RECOMMENDED**

1. That the Town Council reinforces its concerns with all local MPs and requires them to press the Department for Transport to approve the bid to adapt the bridge as a matter of urgency
2. That the Town Council would make a press release
3. That a further meeting takes place after the franchise award and outcome of funding for the bridge access works

**05/19 To consider the production of an edition of the Town Councils Newsletter to be delivered in March 2019 and to consider delivery arrangements and costs**.

*Members heard that the contractors who had delivered previous editions of the Newsletter had relocated to another part of the country and where consequently no longer available. A new contractor is available to deliver the March edition which would have to be delivered before the publicity deadline of 25 March. It is important that any contractor delivering publications on behalf of the Town Council is aware of the geography of the town and town council boundaries, has appropriate insurance and tax arrangements and has delivery arrangements which would comply with the Town Council’s codes of conduct.. The contactor has delivered information for the Borough Council and local businesses. The contractor would perform the deliveries personally.The cost of that service would be £250 to deliver 3600 copies which is less than organisations who were used on a cost comparison.*

**RECOMMENDED**

That the Officers are instructed to arrange for printing and distribution of an edition of the Town Council’s Newsletter prior to the pre-election period which starts on 25 March 2019 until Thursday 2 May 2019, as outlined above.

**06/19 To receive the ‘Safer Amber Valley News Spring 2019 edition**

The above publication, an Alfreton and District edition, which had been published by Amber Valley Borough Council, Derbyshire Constabulary and Amber Valley Community Safety Partnership was received. It was AGREED to ask the publishers to provide population numbers against the crime statistics to allow a better comparison.