

Minutes of Rail for Herefordshire meeting held:
Thursday April 10th 2007 Devereux Room, Green Dragon 7.30pm

Talk by Stephen Banaghan, Managing Director London Midland

Present, about 45 people including Cabinet Member for Transport, Chair of the Council and PPC for Conservative Party. Chaired by Janet Shott

We were very pleased to welcome Steve who introduced himself, talked about the London Midland group and the improvement planned and took a number of questions from the audience.

London Midland is owned by GoVia which is 70% owned by Go Ahead, a bus and train group and 30% by Keolis which is in itself owned by AXA a private equity group and the French train group SNCF.

LM runs 13,000 services a day and covers much of central England, Hereford is at the extreme SW of its area (but Steve lives in Worcester). There is a large improvement programme for the company. Their aim is to run efficient trains, have pleasant staff, a safe service and achieve modal shift from car to rail. They have £300m over the life time of the franchise begun 11 Nov 2008. Of this they are spending £243m on trains – new trains are ordered and 19% increase in number of seats, £11.5m on stations and £6m of car parks.

By 2010 there will be Smart Cards on the service, the trial area might be the Hereford line.

They are forming Quality Rail Partnerships with Local Authorities, matching funding and participating in Local Transport Plans.

They have taken back maintenance services into the company. Electrification of Bham to Bromsgrove service is planned and will improve services west as it will take much of the traffic off the Hereford train.

Hereford to Birmingham passenger growth has been significant, 56% rise since 2003, compared with a 16% increase on the London service over the same time. There are now 70,000 Hereford Bham journeys compared to 68,000 Hereford London service. Steve emphasised that with the single track, the community will have to make a decision on whether to have more London or more Bham trains. His aim is to run an hourly service, but is currently restricted. He would like to take the management of the Shelwick Junction to Norton out of Swindon control and put it to Bham, and has already made this request.

They have new information points planned for Colwall and Ledbury. They are improving connexions at Worcester for the Gloucester service.

Questions:

Can we have later services: A: I cant promise, but would like to

Why are not all 172s three car. A: sometimes it is more efficient to have 2 or 2 + 2

How much would the £20m spent on the Rotherwas Road achieve on the railway. A:
probably not twin tracking but passing loops yes

There was strong support for the suggestion that all interested parties should look into
the possibility of forming a Quality Rail Partnership in Herefordshire.

Next Meetings; May 8, Jun 12, July 10, Devereux Room, Green Dragon

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