# Manchester and East Midlands Rail Action Partnership (MEMRAP) 27<sup>th</sup> March, 6.30pm, at the Cheshire Cheese, Buxton Meeting No.3

**Attendees:** Robin Greenwood, Stephen Chaytow, Mike Hancocks, John Harpur, Steve Caddy, Janet Miller, Jean Todd, Jim Lowe

**Apologies:** Suzanne Pearson, Dick Silson, Dave Shaw, Ian Clark, Tina Heathcote, John Gabbs, D. Ferguson, Robin Lumb, Tony Barclay, Derek Bodey

## 1. Minutes and Actions Arising from Meeting No.2 - 21 February 2019

- SC apologised for getting the chair's name wrong
- The meeting went over the problem of tunnel gauges that MH had agreed to research all confirmed it would be useful to know more and SC would also follow a new lead here
- SC brought the issue of incorporation back to the group for further consideration. Based on JM and general Buxton positive experience of Community Interest Companies (CIC), it was resolved that:
  - MEMRAP should be incorporated as a CIC (SC to action). Benefits include:
    - Social enterprise status accessed quicker than charitable, via the Charities Commissioner. However, income fully taxable by HMRC, expenses not offset, even with charitable aims.
    - Asset lock, so residual monies go to another not for profit on winding up
    - A social enterprise has easier access to funding than as Ltd by guarantee.
    - Extra reporting requirement regarded as modest compared to benefits
    - JM to make available examples of constitutions previously used for SC.
  - After this, a bank account can be opened for MEMRAP (Action SC)
- From an earlier meeting, it had been resolved to find an accountant to run the modest MEMRAP accounting requirement. This remains outstanding.
- Friends of the Derwent Valley Line (FDVL) have now streamlined the process for filing MEMRAP meetings minutes on their website at: <u>www.fdvl.org.uk</u>. MEMRAP would like to again place on record their gratitude for this continuing support.
- Web presence: RG has applied to Derbyshire CC for £500 for MEMRAP's site and SC is exploring a page to be set up via Railfuture (RF) resource.

### 2. Progress concerning ongoing MEMRAP Stakeholder Meetings

- Transport for the North (TfN), 22 March: Since Meeting 2, MEMRAP energy had been focused on preparing for this key meeting. SC and RG would like to place on record their thanks for everyone involved with MEMRAP in preparing this work, including technical input from the virtual team (Steve Jones, Ian Clark, Dave Shaw) and also the branch and national RF network (<a href="http://www.railfuture.org.uk">www.railfuture.org.uk</a>).
  - Wide and positive feedback has been received on MEMRAP's TfN presentation.
    Possibly the only gap was on outline costings, but SC believes it was too early.
  - Thanks are due to Peter Wakefield (RF East Anglia) for joining RG and SC at the meeting with his extensive knowledge of campaigns and UK's rail freight industry.
  - TfN referred to the "Achilles Heel" of the Hope Valley rail route, but reminded MEMRAP that the Matlock – Buxton line remains closed and is therefore not an integral part of their published strategy, at this time.

- TfN advised that briefing of MPs and media generally should be a priority. MPS apparently like to convene "Task Forces" - Action is generally to MEMRAP members to seek out MPs along the line of the route to make contact:
  - SC Meeting Nigel Mills (Amber Valley) on 5<sup>th</sup> April
  - Meeting attendees offered to seek access to Ruth George and others.
    SC/RG offered to make themselves available for these meetings
- These actions to be ahead of work on any public meetings
- The established Monsal Trail is recognised by TfN as a potential problem:
  - Shared use of tunnels seemed to be a favoured TfN option, but
    - MEMRAP favours re-routing the trail entirely, though engineering work will be needed. RG to lead, with input from JM and the Buxton group. This proposal for a MEMRAP only "day out" along the River Wye to be scheduled as both fact-finding and social occasion. All readers welcome!
- TfN asked MEMRAP to prepare an Outline Strategic Business Plan before meeting again in 6 months time. However, this is an onerous document for a small, unfunded body to attempt. SC is exploring equally effective options with Nick Gallop, who was involved in the earlier 1999 Railtrack feasibility study.
- TfN have tasked MEMRAP to return in 6 months' time to report progress:
  - SC to undertake preparatory work with RG, to be followed by a project plan proposal once direction is clear
- Ian Yeowart (ex Alliance Rail): SC met with IY in York on 25 March. His work on new Open Access routes is based on existing infrastructure, not rail re-instatement. However, he found MEMRAP's work to be of high standard and likely to provide good support for their case. His open access work offered the following relevant guidance for MEMRAP:
  - In a private opening, costings should be obtained from specialist 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractors, not Network Rail (NR). This will dramatically reduce costs.
  - SC and IY contrasted starkly the metric of £2-3m for a one platform station also up to £10m for open access 2 platforms with lifts with a 2-day construction time for IY and their open access approach for the most basic popup station facility.
  - NR must commission the eventual solution, but mothing else
  - IY said that such an approach would yield "substantial" savings over any NR quote
  - IY agreed that this would lower the "cost / benefit" hurdle and test to bring it more easily within reach
- Other Stakeholders:
  - **Tarmac:** They are busy lobbying MPs and other at the moment. They have requested to speak to SC again in about 2 weeks time
  - **Peak Rail:** RG has spoken to Paul Tomlinson (PR) and a meeting is to be scheduled, date TBA.
  - Not discussed in the meeting, but other meetings in this period:
    - **Peak National Park Authority:** It was agreed to stay in touch from the meeting of 26 February. The Park approved of the MEMRAP focus on the problem of the Monsal Trail and agreed to liaise with RG about potential collaboration in future.
    - Rail Forum Midland and Porterbrook: This meeting went well and MEMRAP secured the offer of future support in some form, possibly access to difficult contacts such as MPs

### 3. TfN Strategic Plan

- The meeting decided there was no need to discuss the document further than to note that the line rated only a passing reference deeply buried towards the end
- However, its overall aims of ensuring sustainable transport as a means of developing the economy of the North were also at the heart of the MEMRAP presentation and its idea for investing in better transport links between the North West and the East Midlands.
- <u>https://www.transport-network.co.uk/TfN-unveils-70bn-strategy-The-vision-and-validate-plan/15619</u> the link to the pdf of the full Strategy can be found roughly at the bottom of the 2<sup>nd</sup> screen down this page.

### 4. Derby University Study – Environment and Emissions Desk Study

- This supportive 19-page report is being circulated with the minutes and the main findings were included in the TfN presentation a valuable independent endorsement.
- It shows quite clearly the benefits available from large freight and passenger transfers to using this route. The reduction in car usage could have a significant impact on the quality of the local environment.
- MEMRAP would like to thank Derby University for the efficient and speedy delivery of the survey, also for the increase in the initial resource estimate required.

### 5. Documents

• Key documents will be circulated with minutes (Derby University and TfN presentation), but the meeting resolved to file them for access at either Dropbox or on a Google drive. RG and JM to agree the way forward.

### 6. Public Events – Meetings and Walks

- It was agreed that meetings and walks for the general public would be deferred as MEMRAP is not yet sufficiently prepared
- JM and RG to agree and advise the date for the MEMRAP river walk to seek out other route options for the Monsal Trail

### 7. AOB – Publicity

- It was agreed that MEMRAP needs a press release soon, to help shape local opinion. Mostly the community remains unaware of the group at present and the risk of getting the wrong message embedded is high
- It was noted that Sustrans had switched its position concerning protection of the trail and might need to be managed carefully.
- One of the virtual RF group (Dave Shaw) also commented these sensitivities extend to the draft timetables being developed. MEMRAP has seen how easy it has been to upset key stakeholders in the past.
- JM offered to draft an initial form of words for review, after SC scans and sends round the article in the current edition of Railfuture's magazine about the campaign.
- 8. Date of Next Meeting Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 6.30pm Cheshire Cheese, Buxton