

**DRAFT MINUTES OF MARPA AGM HELD ON 23<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER 2021 at 2.15 pm at FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, ST JOHN'S STREET, BURY ST EDMUNDS**

Present: 15 including 5 committee members

1. *Welcome, introductions & apologies*

The chairman welcomed members and guests

Apologies: Julia Mann, Wendy Marchant, Brian Moss, Jen Overett, Peter Rutt, Peter Wakefield, Ben Walsh, Sylvia Watson, Roger & Stella Wolfe

2. *Presentation by Marian Craig, Public Affairs Manager, Network Rail Anglia Route*

Marian's presentation focussed on outlining current and planned major infrastructure improvements in the region. The six schemes covered are as follows:

- Ely Area Capacity Enhancement (EACE)
- Cambridge South station
- Cambridge area re-signalling
- Haughley Junction upgrading
- Wisbech - March re-instatement
- Soham station

Points arising from questions and answers on this section of the presentation included:

- Concerns over lack of ambition in the Ely project – potentially very large capital project delivering relatively modest gains in terms of additional trains
- Re-signalling project (involving closure of boxes at Bury, Chippenham Junction & Dullingham) would enable ECTS (current state of the art European digital signalling technology) to be installed, but the scheme underway does not incorporate it – so hoped for improvements in journey times etc may still be some way off, and the main immediate benefit of the upgrade will be in terms of efficiency rather than line capacity
- Two issues were raised with reference to Elmswell:
  - (1) the positioning of the signal at the end of the Ipswich platform, which means passengers can only join/alight from the first three cars on 4 car trains, creating difficulties specifically for those with cycles when the designated cycle space is located in the "locked" car
  - (2) concern over people crossing the line on foot when the crossing is down
- A DfT announcement on the Haughley scheme is imminent
- Wisbech scheme as currently envisaged does not automatically mean heavy rail will be adopted – this led to some lively discussion
- It was confirmed that all services on the Ipswich – Peterborough route would call at Soham once station was opened in December 2021
- Frustration was expressed at the lack of a later final service on Mid Anglia route from Cambridge – Marpa to continue its engagement on this with Greater Anglia

3. *Report of 2019 AGM (23/04/19)*

Approved (Proposed M. Feeney, seconded R. Taylor)

4. *Matters arising*

There was a lengthy and animated discussion about the lack of progress evident so far in progress towards establishing a Mid Anglia Community Rail Partnership. It was agreed that Marpa needed to act with other groups to secure better engagement on the benefits of such a partnership from the relevant local authorities in Suffolk and East Cambridgeshire as well as from Greater Anglia as train operator. The meeting was reminded of the many incidental benefits of a CRP in terms of promoting services and boosting a range of activities in communities served by the railway – the evidence is available from the existing partnerships flourishing elsewhere in the east.

5. *Chairman's Report 2020/21*

The report was tabled at the meeting. There were no questions.

6. *Treasurer's Report*

The report was tabled at the meeting and presented by the chair in the absence of the treasurer. Finances were sound and members were already using the new bank payment system to renew subscriptions. The report was approved. Proposed by R. Edwards and seconded by P. Feeney.

7. *Election of chair*

J. Drake was re-elected unopposed. Proposed and seconded by D. Webb and D. Hall respectively. All in favour.

8. *Election of officers & committee 2021/22*

Current committee re-elected unopposed. Proposed and seconded by R. Stripe and J. Matthissen respectively. Brad Wright, a new member, volunteered to join the committee.

9. *Any other business*

None. Meeting closed at 4.35pm