

(First) Steering Group Meeting – Sat 21st January 2023 - Shildon Railway Institute (SRI)

Attendees: Dave Reynolds (Chair), Kelly Ambrosini, Jane Hackworth- Young, Tracy Chappell, Robert Merryweather, Hazel Johnson, Colin White, Emma Pennington, Christine Thompson, Sue Clarke, Michelle Armstrong (minutes)

Apologies: Andy Haines

Welcome and introduction from DR

Main points:-

Evolution not revolution – a Community Benefit Society is not a lot different to the current set up of SRI.

Beer is flowing but the big problems haven't gone away – our takings are fair, we may have survived the threat of closure in 2019 and covid during 2020/21, but SRI is a big old building with big energy bills in a state of disrepair.

Funding is within reach - but we aren't currently in a position for investment because we're not registered or regulated, therefore not recognised as a viable business.

MA - Durham Community Action (DCA) met with the current management committee in Oct 22 and advised us that a CBS would be the best fit for SRI - as opposed to a CIO (charity) – due to the fact that most of our revenue comes from alcohol sales. They passed us on to The Plunkett Foundation (TPF) who advise specifically on CBSs. The SRI would become members of the foundation and they would fill in the paperwork and handle the registration process. Cost is est £500.

DR - introduction to what a CBS is – an organisation that does not have any individual beneficiaries but operates for the benefit of the local community. In order to become a CBS we need to adopt a version of the Plunkett Foundation's model rules and have a raft of policies in place that currently don't exist e.g. an asset lock - what happens to what we own if we dissolve. As a CBS our assets would have to go to a nominated non profit business (like for like).

What would it mean to become a CBS?

We would have members and shareholders – those details are up for discussion - inc the current life membership option. Subscribing members pay an annual fee (benefits to be considered) but only shareholders have a vote at the AGM. Shares are sold for a nominal fee. Every shareholder has one vote regardless of how many shares they buy.

We have a rules structure - the current rules are very close to what we have.

The committee are elected by the members

Getting there

We form a steering committee

We start with templates of all the documents that we need to create to define our CBS

We discuss, decide, review and update

We consult with the members and current committee

We present the proposal back to the members who will vote on it

We work with our partners (TPF and DCA) to create the CBS

We hand over to the newly reformed committee

Getting started

Steering committee roles – DR was nominated Chair, CT Vice Chair, MA Secretary.

When will we meet - 10.30am Saturdays.

How do we share – via email. We will also print off a folder for the bar and have a link to the documents on the SRI website.

What are the priorities - SC - working out which documents we need. DR - model rules.

Everyone indicated that they are happy to be part of the steering group going forward, except RM who was unsure.

MA asked if all were happy to share email addresses with the rest of the group (yes). RM declined to leave an address.

JHY - how long will it take?

MA - hopefully inside of 3 months.

Next meeting – Saturday 4th Feb 10.30am, Hackworth Lounge, SRI

(JH-Y will be half an hour late)