

Preston & District Model Railway Society

Committee Meeting Monday, 15th October 2021 at 7:30pm

Present:

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| John Wilson | Chairman |
| Andy Joel | Secretary |
| John Farnden | Treasurer |
| Carl Bowden | Dave Pallant |
| Chris Wilkes | Tom Springett |

Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting:

- JF noted that six members have now paid up since the AGM, including one paying arrears for two years. This brings the membership to 46, which is very healthy. It was acknowledged that this may drop in November when some standing orders expire.
- New lighting was further discussed. It was noted that we could get new tubes for the existing fittings, but easier to replace fitting. This is on-going.
- A key audit was further discussed. Roger has passed his keys to Chris, but Dave has no keys – though the set on loan to Karl should go to Dave rather than Bill.
- Carpet under the N gauge layout was left to the EGM.
- It was noted that JW still cannot sign cheques. **Action:** JF to add JW as a signatory.

General

- The committee thanked both Bill and Roger for their work on the committee over the last few years.
- The committee welcomed Chris and Dave.
- One new member was voted in.
- The committee thanked the “Friday Boys” for setting up the room for the AGM.
- It was noted that we need to look at finding a new exhibition manager in a couple of years. This could be a committee, but there needs to be a single person in overall charge – though that could change each year. Ideally, we would keep Les as a layout scout.
- A decision was made to nominate a vice-chairman as the need arises, rather than have a specific person given the role.
- Dave volunteered to define the role of social media manager. **Action: Dave.**
- Dave and Chris agreed to look at what can be done on Facebook. **Action: AKJ to give permissions on Facebook.**
- Dave, Chris and Andy agreed to look at overhauling the website which is looking decidedly dated. JW said he would contact Neville, as it is “his baby”, to keep him informed. **Action: JW to contact Neville**
- Tom has got revised prices for club clothing and will put up a notice. We could handle the money through the exhibition account, as that has a debit card and they can now take credit cards. **Action: AKJ to mention in e-mail.**
- The Christmas Party will be on 13th December. **Action: AKJ to mention in e-mail. Action: JW to ask Bill for quiz.**
- The modelling competition will be 14th Feb. **Action: AKJ to mention in e-mail. Action: JW to organise a judge.**

- The winners of the modelling competition and the exhibition awards to be announced at the exhibition before start of play on the Sunday.
- An EGM will be called for the 7th February to ratify the new rules. This date was chosen as Euxton Junc will be down anyway having been at an exhibition the previous day. **Action: JW to finalise draft rules. Action AKJ to publish the draft rules.**

Exhibition

- Les has decided there will be no longer be a “boozy do” at our exhibition. This is following the practice of other exhibitions nowadays, and will save several hundred pounds.
- The exhibition committee has purchased two card readers at £90 each so we can accept credit cards at the entrance and second-hand stall. There is a transaction charge of 1.69%. A recommendation to buy a third was made.
- It was noted that the SIM card in the reader needs to be used every few months – perhaps we could take subs on credit card?

Rules and Insurance

Following the discussion of the rules at the AGM and earlier, there is on-going concern about member liabilities in the event of the club being sued. JF had talked to Magnet, our insurers, and circulated some comments prior to the meeting.

Mike said we have the same cover as all of the other Model Railway Club and Societies they cover, and they are the known experts for Model Railway Insurance in the UK, covering hundreds of clubs, individuals and all the large Model Railway Shows and Exhibitions. He said he had never heard of any club having a particular problem not covered by the insurance policy due to a third party claim.

He said that if we wanted to cover for any other specialist Public Liability we would need need to contact an insurance company or broker who specialised in this type of cover, although he believes that the cover we have would be more than sufficient for a Model Railway Club of Society.

His advice was that provided we have a regular Health and Safety Check, making sure that there are no loose wires, plugs, sharp implements etc. are present. That all tools are "locked or put away after use". Any boxes etc. are not in any public thoroughfares, stairs etc. where anyone could trip over. Instructions on how to use the Stair Lift should be displayed. We should also have a first aid kit on site, a First Aid trained person, or persons, and most importantly an accident book. Any visitors to the club must sign in with full details, and be advised that they are visiting the club at their own risk (this should be part of the "signing in" process). If anyone visits the club "by accident", they should be "escorted off the premises" by a Club Member. Anything that happens before they are seen by anyone is not the Club's responsibility, as they are in effect "trespassing".

Should any accident occur to a Club Member then the Member would have to prove that the Club was negligent. If a visitor should have an accident, then provided the Club had taken all safety precautions and the visitor had signed in to say that they entered at their own risk, then again no claim for compensation would succeed.

Finally, he said that we should not worry. Magnet are the Model Railway Club Insurance experts, and the cover we have is geared toward everything which could happen to a Club like ours.

- A claimant trying to sue the club would have to show we were negligent. To counter that, we would have to show we had done all reasonable. To show that, Tom volunteered to prepare a risk assessment. **Action: Tom.**
- Tom suggested the risk assessment could be part of a permanent record that also includes the club rules, the lease, the instructions for the stairlift. **Action Tom. Action: AKJ to print out insurance document.**
- Do we have a first aid kit? Yes, but it is old, and it would be worth replacing. Do we have a member with knowledge of first aid? Yes, Les. Do we have an accident book? Yes, but accidents should be noted at committee meetings to discuss o to avoid in the future. *[Secretary's note: the accident book should be brought to each meeting, and checked as part of the agenda]*
- All visitors should sign a book or sheet that makes it clear they do so at their own risk, and that they realise they are not to touch anything.
- A sign should be put up warning of possible narrow passages and trip hazards.
- It was noted that the above does not absolve the club of all responsibility.
- Anyone entering the premises uninvited is trespassing, so should not be able to sue us if they get hurt, However, a notice at the door saying "*Preston & District MRS only*" would be a good idea.
- Electrical goods (layouts, printer, etc.) should be PAT tested annually. It was noted that some exhibition demand this. Members whose layout represent the club could get their equipment PAT tested at the same time. **Action: JW to ask Mike's son or Chris's uncle.**
- One way to avoid personal liability would be to become a limited-liability company, and some clubs, including the 009 society, have done this. This has overheads, as the accounts would have to be audited professionally, costing £200-300 per year. We would have to be registered at Companies House. It would also mean members can sue the club, which they cannot do at present.
- Visitors, prospective members and helpers at the exhibition should be made "day members".
- Given the above, it was decided that the rules section about failure and dissolution of the club do not need changing.

Meeting finished at 9:00 pm.

Next committee meeting date: 29/Nov21 at 8 pm