

Coffee Shop

Sideshoots - associated subjects => Parked threads, work and test area => Topic started by: grahame on March 19, 2019, 09:36:42 am

Title: **Great Western Coffee Shop Forum - Constitution as adopted 17.3.2019**
Post by: **grahame** on **March 19, 2019, 09:36:42 am**

17th March 2019 - our (interim) constitution - vote by members just concluded with 96% support.

Posted here as a reference document- to be updated when a final constitution is passed later in the year.

see <http://www.firstgreatwestern.info/21196> for vote, results in detail and further future plans.

See <http://www.firstgreatwestern.info/1761> for full forum documentation including this constitution, member's agreement, code of conduct, etc.

Constitution

* Constitutions have been around a long time, and tend to be written around groups / organisations which physically meet at their core. We don't, so some parallels have been drawn (to help traditional-minded readers) and abstraction and changes to modernise are necessary.

* There is a tendency for some of the constitutions we have read to get very detailed, and that is something we're looking to avoid.

Identity

The name of the Group is the **Great Western Coffee Shop Forum**

The operating name of the internet forum shall be Great Western Coffee Shop as of the date of adoption of this constitution. This may be changed by a vote of a simple majority of the moderators, described in paragraphs following, in (for example) the light of changes in the operation or name of the Great Western Railway.

Objectives

The purposes of the Group are:

- * providing a voice for the community
- * promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
- * bringing communities together, supporting diversity & inclusion
- * supporting social and economic development

To work towards these aims, the Group will operate an internet forum for discussion of matters relating to the Great Western Railway primarily, railways and public transport generally and connected topics.

The forum works on a partnership ethos and aims to fulfil its aims through the pillars of community rail as laid down by organisations such as the Department for Transport and ACoRP.

The Forum plans to be a permanent contributor to its aims, updating as appropriate through other avenues of technology. It may also arrange and join events that may be of interest to current and potential members and publish information about relevant events arranged by third parties.

Membership

Organisations typically have members, committee and officers, and often a mailing list of interested parties that goes beyond members, and welcome guests to their meetings. For the Coffee Shop:

Guests are welcome to read any public pages, all of which contain links to allow them to email the administrators, and to the registration page if they want to move on to the next stage.

Members are people who've agreed to the forum agreement and who's registration has been accepted by an admin - checked with the moderator team if in doubt.

Voting Members are members who have posted at least 10 times or are otherwise in frequent posters. To be a voting member you are required to have logged in at least once in the last 12 months, and still have the ability to log in (so if you're banned, you're not a voting member)

This threshold of 10 posts ensures that we have active and confirmed genuine people taking part in any votes outlined in the constitution. The forum has some members who, whilst logged on and reading (sometimes with many days of presence to their credit) haven't even introduced themselves and without physical meetings, phone calls, email exchanges, we really don't know them; the "10 posts" rule closes what could be a loophole in our ongoing purpose and security.

You may wonder about "or otherwise in frequent posters". On one occasion I can think over in the 10 years since Frequent Posters was set up, we have promoted someone we knew very well into a moderator role just shy of the 10 posts - and an excellent decision it was too. We also have a technical admin who we can ask for help in an emergency; never had the emergency, but that person should have a vote.

Moderators are members who have been invited to, and agreed, to take on a watching brief when they're on the forum - to greet and assist. And on the rare occasions where something's seriously needing attention in a more negative way to help deal with that.

Administrators are the handful of members who are deeply involved with daily operations of the forum. The **Webmaster** is a technical administrator with admin authority and the ability to take backups, upgrade software, reconfigure server parameters, etc as appropriate for the continued running of the forum.

For the purpose of these rules, all administrators are also moderators and all moderators are also voting members.

A comparison to a regular group may be useful but does not form part of the constitution

<u>Forum</u>	<u>Physical Group</u>
Guest	Guest
Member	On Mailing list

Voting Member Paid Up Member
Moderator Committee Member
Administrator Officer

The moderators shall be responsible for the overall operation of the Group, including but not limited to:

- * raising funds, including receiving grants and donations
- * procurement of technology services to facilitate operation of the internet forum
- * preparation maintenance and application of the forum agreement and a code of conduct for members
- * admission of members to the group, maintenance of a membership list, and reviewing membership
- * protection of members' data in accordance with legislation.

Membership is open to any individual who agrees to the forum agreement and demonstrates adherence to it and the code of conduct through their activities. The forum was set up by passengers, for passengers, but welcomes members from the rail industry and local and central government too. Employees of the rail industry or local and central government which relate to the topics discussed on the Coffee Shop will not normally be considered for appointment as moderators or administrators.

New moderators and administrators are appointed by the current administrators based on a discussion and a vote there if the outcome of these discussions is not clear, requiring a two thirds majority of those voting in a poll that's open for at least 7 days to be carried. The process of appointing a new moderator or administrator can be instigated at any time by any existing administrator or moderator. The agreement of the proposed new moderator or administrator must be obtained before their appointment and before any vote is taken or before any change of status is applied.

Membership may be withdrawn from any person who does not adhere to the forum agreement and code of conduct. The decision shall be confirmed by a simple majority of the moderators. The member shall have the right to submit a statement to the Committee before a final or permanent decision is made, and shall be informed of the reason for any such decision. The nature of the forum is such that a withdrawal of membership as described here will normally be as a last resort.

Moderator or admin rights may be withdrawn from a moderator or admin following the same guidelines as withdrawal of membership.

Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting shall be held to which all voting members will be invited at least 21 days before the meeting takes place. The meeting will take place between 31st March and 31st October and will be held at a location within the geographic area covered by the forum and accessible by public transport. The meeting will be free of charge to members, but it will be up to individual members wishing to attend to meet their own costs of getting to the meeting unless prior agreement from the moderators.

Notice of meetings will be sent to the registered email address of voting members. Members will not be considered to be a voting member if it comes to the attention of the moderator team that an email sent from the forum to the member's registered address has not reached that member, and the moderator team will not

be responsible for taking further steps to try to deliver the email. A public post will also be made on the forum to alert all readers to the meeting. Those two steps will be deemed sufficient notice of meeting.

The purpose of the AGM will be to receive reports from the webmaster, the treasurer, and others and to consider any changes to the constitution which have been proposed. Such proposals must be notified to the admin team at least 14 days prior to the meeting, and indicate the support of at least 5 voting members.

The meeting will also confirm the appointment of the moderator and admin team 'en block', with a two thirds majority of those present and at least 30 votes required to block the confirmation. In the event of the re-appointment failing, an extraordinary general meeting will be called within three months; procedures will be agreed on the forum under such circumstances, or if procedures cannot be agreed the webmaster(s) has/have the final say on outcome.

The AGM will be minuted and the minutes circulated via the forum, with a vote to approve them as being an accurate record within 4 weeks of the meeting.

As well as formal business, the AGM will be an opportunity for furthering the aims of the forum via networking sessions and speakers.

Financial and operational

To date (financial year 2018/19) the Coffee Shop has been funded by the webmaster / founder with all activities undertaken the members (at all levels) on an unpaid voluntary basis. From the acceptance of this constitution, the forum will move to a financial and operational model which is designed to be sustainable and scaleable in the future.

Income streams may include (but not be limited to) corporate members, advertising revenue, marketing and sales of promotional and other products, donations and grants applied for. Income streams will only be accepted where they are in line with the objectives set out in this constitution. Membership at the levels set out in the constitution is and will remain free of charge and this can only change by resolution at an Annual General or extraordinary general meeting.

Expenditure may include (but not be limited to) web hosting and domains, software licenses and specialist programming and support services, marketing and advertising, insurance and covering voting member's reasonable expenses incurred for activities undertaken on behalf of the forum. It shall also the cost of the AGM and any EGMs.

The forum shall insure its members and volunteers against risks incurred in their duties undertaken for the forum. Volunteers will be required to consider safety and risk in their activate for the forum

A Treasurer shall be appointed from amongst the moderator and admin team who shall look after the finances and operations and work on authorisations voted on or otherwise agreed "Behind the Counter". The treasurer shall be appointed for a period of one year. The treasurer is also authorised to operate a bank account on behalf of the forum with transactions confirmed by another moderator. The treasurer may hold other roles within the admin and moderator team and will be appointed by that team and from within it.

A set of unaudited accounts and a budget / forecast for the following year and years shall be produced by the treasurer. It will be the responsibility of the whole

moderator and admin team to ensure that the forum's financial position is secure.

Winding up

Should the Coffee Shop forum vote at an AGM or EGM to disband (by a majority of two thirds of those present and at least 30 votes), the remaining team will undertake as orderly wind down as practical. The remaining team will distribute any residuary funds amongst community organisations with the geographic area which have similar aims to the forum as they see fit.

Should the number of voting members be less than 45, a simple majority of those attending the AGM or EGM will suffice for a decision.

AK/GE - 2019-03-10, updates 2019-03-12

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