**DON VALLEY RAILWAY**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**10 January 2015**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE DON VALLEY RAILWAY 7.30 PM MONDAY 19th JANUARY 2015 – UPSTAIRS AT THE HARLEQUIN PUB**

At their Annual General Meeting to be held on Monday 19th January, Don Valley Railway’s Annual Report will set out progress made over the past year towards the project of bringing passenger trains back onto the former Woodhead Railway line between Sheffield and Stocksbridge.

At the same time a brief to consultants will be discussed. This is to form part of a prospectus which aims to act as a fundraising tool and with money raised, the hope that specialists can be brought in to do the necessary preparatory work.

During the year the project has been supported by Parry People Movers, Pre-Metro Operations and Stocksbridge Town Council. Work has been undertaken to establish how passenger trains can operate alongside the freight services currently using the line.

In addition, partnerships have been established to work towards the development of key station sites. It is hoped that St Mathias (C of E) Church, currently under threat because of low congregations, can be redeveloped and that a site for a Stocksbridge Station, where it backs onto the line off Manchester Road can be integrated into Don Valley Railway future plans.

A developer aiming to set up a rail heritage museum in a disused building close to the old Victoria Station is keen to work with Don Valley Railway and their plans to develop the station site.

The focus of next year will be on fundraising to get the money in place for the study.

Notes

1, Don Valley Railway aims to introduce passenger services between Stocksbridge/Deepcar and central Sheffield using the currently freight-only railway line between and serving TATA Steelworks in Stocksbridge from Woodburn Junction in Sheffield.

2, Ove Arup and Partners Ltd (Arup) in 2010 produced an engineering feasibility study on behalf of Don Valley Railway to evaluate the potential for operating a reliable diesel powered commuter rail service along the route between Sheffield and Stocksbridge which it is hoped will contribute to creating a business case for the re-opening of passenger services on the rail link.

The proposed study to take place in 2014 will ascertain if a service is viable and consider what type of rail vehicle is used (i.e. tram or train, electric, diesel or renewable power); the stopping pattern of the service (i.e. where intermediate stops are located and the frequency of service); and how the service on the Don Valley Line may extend onto the wider rail network or Supertram network.

3, Arup recommended that the most cost effective train service option is a simple shuttle between a station close to the site of the former Sheffield Victoria to Deepcar. This could operate on a 2 trains per hour basis with no intermediate stops, utilising a single diesel multiple unit train. According to Arup this option would require subsidy. Don Valley Railway have since investigated alternative rail methods that may the need for subsidy via Ultra Light Rapid Transit vehicles that use low carbon methods without the need for overhead electrification.

4, Photos of the train that visited the Don Valley Line on 28th September are available via the following email (courtesy Gerry Bates)

5, Further information about Don Valley Railway can be found at <http://www.donvalleyrailway.org>

6, Further Enquiries can be addressed to Chris Hyomes at chris.hyomes@railfuture.org.uk