

The Yardstick

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Railway mile, chain and yard to be scrapped

Just when we thought we had turned a corner with the re-introduction of imperial units in the school National Curriculum, the metric rottweilers have been unleashed in the form of Network Rail.

As reported by *Railnews* (inside front cover) Network Rail intends to remove the mile, chain and yard from the railway system over the next twenty years. There is no legal requirement for this.

Allotment rods and poles also under attack

As we are going to press, we learn of a move against the rod and pole, used for measuring allotments. According to the *Daily Mail* on 22 March, "In the past few weeks, thousands of gardeners have received rent renewal notices informing them of the switch. A typical site of ten poles will now be registered as 253 square metres". BWMA's Press Officer Warwick Cairns was quoted: "It's officiousness for its own sake. There is no reason for it".

Donations

Thank you members who made donations to BWMA in the second half of last year. We are delighted to report that our financial position is secure for the foreseeable future.

Steven Thoburn - ten years

It is ten years since Steven Thoburn died of a heart attack on 14 March 2004, at the age of 39. Four weeks before, on 12 February, the European Court of Human Rights rejected his application for appeal against the infamous ruling of Lord Justice Laws. In June 2007, the original prosecuting authorities, Sunderland City Council, passed a motion on Steven Thoburn. We reproduce the minutes of this meeting on the back page.

John Gardner, Director

BWMA is a non-profit body that exists to promote parity in law between British and metric units. It enjoys support from across Britain's political spectrum, from all manner of businesses and the general public. BWMA is financed by subscriptions and donations.

Membership is £12 per year. Cheques or postal orders payable to "BWMA", 98 Eastney Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 3TE

Article from *Railnews*: “End of the line for the mile, the chain and the yard”, 1 October 2013

PLANS being prepared by Network Rail will see the eventual end of the Imperial mile, chain and yard on the National Rail network, as a metric switchover takes effect during the next couple of decades.

The move will be triggered by the progressive installation of the European Rail Traffic Management System on selected routes between now and the 2030s. The decision has been taken by the industry's Technical Standards Leadership Group, *Railnews* has been told.

Although it will be necessary to permit the spread of metric-only ERTMS, the change will bring speeds and also locations, as presently indicated by mileposts, into line with the measurements already used on the rest of the railway.

Metres, kilos and litres have been standard for some time in such areas as civil engineering and rolling stock construction and maintenance, while the current Rule Book uses metric measurements as the primary units for distances, although speeds are still shown in mph.

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch also uses metric units by default, and translates the remaining Imperial terms where necessary.

The Rail Safety and Standards Board will now be assessing the implications of a further revision of the Rule Book and other documents to complete the changeover. At this early stage there are no firm costs or detailed timetable.

The traditional mileposts are expected to be replaced over time by new location markers at intervals of 500m or 1km. However, lineside speed restriction signs will become unnecessary in ERTMS areas, where information is given to the driver by screens in the cab instead.

Network Rail does have a derogation under the interoperability rules to show mph on cab screens as well, but a spokesman told *Railnews* that this option is 'unlikely to be exercised'.

Some fully metric railways are already operated in parts of Britain. Apart from HS1, some London Underground lines and the ERTMS test area west of Shrewsbury, the country's two segregated light railways in London and Newcastle have always been metric, while the speeds of modern trams are also measured in km/h.

BWMA letter to Chief Executive, Network Rail, 5 October 2013

Our Association campaigns for the retention of British imperial weights and measures, and is thus disappointed to read the attached article from *Railnews*, which reports that Network Rail intends to

remove miles, chains and yards from the railway system.

Please can you provide the following information:

- 1) What is the European Rail Traffic Management System?
- 2) What is the problem to which ERTMS is the proposed solution?
- 3) What are the likely costs of ERTMS?
- 4) Finally, please provide a summary of where and how imperial units are presently used on the railways (e.g. distance signs, cab speedometers, computer systems, regulatory standards, etc.) and how these uses are expected to be affected by ERTMS.

Thank you for your assistance.

Reply from Network Rail, 1 November 2013

Thank you for your letter dated 5 October 2013 addressed to David Higgins, chief executive. A copy of your letter has been forwarded to me for response on his behalf. Please accept my apologies for the delay in my reply. I will answer your questions in the order that you raised them:

- 1) Instead of using line side signals, a computer in the driver's cab controls the speed and movement of the train, whilst taking account of other trains on the railway.
- 2) As signalling becomes life expired, installing ERTMS across the country will save an estimated 40% over conventional systems. ERTMS will allow more trains on the track, improve train performance and reduce energy consumption.
- 3) It is approximately 40% cheaper to use ERTMS over existing, traditional line side signals.
- 4) ERTMS are used on the High Speed 1 route and Cambrian Lines. I have included a photograph of a train travelling on the Cambrian Line whereby the speed limit reads 15 over 30 because 15 is the limit for non-passenger trains and 30 is for everything else. This is called a differential speed restriction.

I hope this information proves helpful. Please do not hesitate to write to me at the address overleaf should you wish to know more about ERTMS.

Richard Glanville, Executive Correspondence Officer, Contact and Communities

*BWMA comment: Mr Glanville fails to answer question 3, and we are not sure what to make of his response to question 4. We wrote again on 11 November 2013 but, despite the reassurance in his final paragraph, we received no reply. We have since written to the Technical Standards Leadership Group, referred to in the second paragraph of the *Railnews* article.*

BWMA letter to Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP, Secretary of State for Transport, 5 October 2013

Our Association campaigns for the retention of British imperial weights and measures. According to the attached article from *Railnews*, Network Rail intends to remove miles, chains and yards from the railway system, as part of the implementation of the "European Rail Traffic Management System".

Please can you provide the following information:

- To what extent, if any, is the British government involved in ERTMS?
- Imperial units are protected on British roads by legislation; is there similar or equivalent legislation requiring miles, chains and yards on railways, whether on signs or elsewhere within the railway infrastructure?
- Following on from the previous question, is ERTMS being brought about by UK/EU legislation? Have any such legislative changes yet been made?

Thank you for your assistance.

Reply from Department for Transport, 19 November 2013

Thank you for your letter. The European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) is a signalling system mandated under the Interoperability Directives for Rail (Commission Directive 2013/9/EU of 11 March 2013 amending Directive 2008/57/EC of the European Parliament and Council on the interoperability of the rail system within the Community). It has been transposed into UK legislation as the Rail (Interoperability) Regulations 2012.

Network Rail leads the industry planning for the national deployment of ERTMS. The Department for Transport supports ERTMS as it brings significant cost savings and will deliver capacity and operational benefits to the railways in the future.

Migrating to a standard signalling system also reduces the long term costs of signalling in the UK, removing the need for proprietary and unique signalling systems to be maintained. ERTMS will use and display information in metric. However the specifications for ERTMS currently also allow the UK to display information in imperial measures in order to minimise risk and impact to UK rail operations.

I trust this answers your questions.

Further BWMA letter to Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP, 23 December 2013

Please could you confirm that there is no legal requirement within the Rail (Interoperability) Regula-

tions 2012 for railways to convert to the metric system for speed and distance measurement.

Yours sincerely, etc.

Reply from Department for Transport, 6 January 2014

Thank you for your further letter of 23 December 2013 to Patrick McLoughlin MP, Secretary of State for Transport regarding units for distance measurement in rail regulations. I have been asked to reply.

There is no legal requirement within the Rail (Interoperability) Regulations 2011 for the railways to convert to the metric system.

Chris Carey

Further BWMA letter to Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP, 10 February 2014

Can you confirm whether:

- speed limits for trains are laid down by Parliamentary legislation (as with road speed limits)

And whether:

- the placing of distance markers alongside railway tracks at specific intervals (e.g. "mileposts") is mandated by Parliamentary legislation

Reply from Department for Transport, 20 February 2014

Thank you for your letter of 10 February 2014 to Patrick McLoughlin MP, Secretary of State for Transport regarding railway imperial units, speed limits, and legislation. I have been asked to reply. To answer your first point we can confirm that there are no formal speed limits laid down for trains in Parliamentary legislation. As background, the speed requirement of the railway network is set by the network provider and are usually based on the track geometry, signalling characteristics and the operational requirements.

Regarding the second point of your enquiry on legislation relating to distance markers along the railway, then this was an initial legal requirement under the Railway Clauses Consolidation Act of 1845. Section 94 of this Act includes a section on "Milestones" (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/8-9/20/section/94>).

This Act requires the inclusion of the clauses therein in subsequent Railway Acts, however, some clauses may be specifically excluded. More recently, many newly authorised railways have not had this distance marker provision as a requirement. New railways coming under the European Interoperability legislation have different provisions as described in the Technical Specification for Interoperability (TSI) for Infrastructure.

Chris Carey

BWMA letter to European Commission, Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry, Brussels, 23 December 2013

Our Association has a question relating to Directive 2008/57/EU, designed to harmonise rail systems across the EU: does the Directive require the harmonisation of units of measurements for speed and distance purposes? Does the Directive require that British units presently used on UK railways (the mile, chain and yard) be replaced with units of the metric system, for speed and distance?

Reply from European Commission, 23 January 2014

Directive 2008/57/EU does not include any specific provision concerning the units of measurement.

Legislation deriving from this Directive (e.g. the Technical Specifications for Interoperability) expresses quantitative requirements according to the 'International System of Units' (SI) as set out in Chapter 1 of the Annex I to Council Directive 80/181/EEC of 20 December 1979.

However, in accordance with Article l(b) of the same Directive, the use of "mile", "yard", "foot" and "inch" is permitted for road traffic signs, distance and speed measurement in those Member States where it was authorised on 21 April 1973.

Please note that the use of "chain" as unit of measurement is not allowed by Directive 80/181/EEC.

Sian PROUT, Head of Unit

The above correspondence with EU and UK authorities confirms that there is no requirement under Directive 2008/57/EU or the Rail (Interoperability) Regulations 2011 for the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) to adopt metric units. The EC letter's declaration that the chain is "not allowed" does not apply here, since the chain in this context is a "descriptive measurement", outside the scope of metrication Directive 80/181 as applied by the UK government.

Evidently, metric conversion is Network Rail's own initiative. On researching the internet, we identified the following comment in a discussion forum (railforums.co.uk) dated 2 October 2013: "A Network Rail employee posted in a thread from a few years ago that many new mileposts are installed in his area taking the measurement of "a mile" as 1600m, so the traditional mileposts are installed every 400m. As most people know a mile is just over 1609m".

The Post Office: BWMA letter to Paula Vennells, Chief Executive, 20 December 2013

Our Association is a non-profit body which campaigns for the retention of British imperial weights and measures. As such, I noticed that the attached communication from the Post Office ("We've made our small parcels bigger, just in time for Christmas") describes parcel sizes solely in metric, with no inch equivalent.

You are surely aware that millions of people in Britain, perhaps tens of millions, use inches routinely, and many in preference to metric. We suspect that such people regard millimetres more as a 'technical' specification for use by the Post Office, rather than a means of conveying dimensions to customers. For example, we suggest that describing a letter as 9½ by 6½ inches conveys its dimensions more effectively than 240mm by 165mm, for many or most people. While we realise that the Post Office is unlikely to return to inches anytime soon, we believe there is benefit in inches being displayed as equivalents alongside metric in Post Office leaflets and on its website.

We would welcome an explanation of the Post Office's current use of measurements, and your comments on our above suggestion.

Our letter was forwarded to the Royal Mail:

Reply from the Royal Mail Group, 9 January 2014

Thank you for your letter of 20 December 2013 about our unit of measurement. Moya Greene, Royal Mail Chief Executive Officer, has asked me to reply on her behalf.

The decision to only use metric measurements was a corporate decision that was agreed and implemented in the 1970s, it has remained our primary unit of measurement ever since.

Our Marketing Team have verified that the two Royal Mail product and service guides available via Post Office branches, called Our Prices and Our Services, only contain the metric use of measurement; this is in line with the decision made in the 1970s. Our Senior Marketing Manager responsible for the two guides for the last 13 years has advised me that during this time, we have had no issues regarding our decision to not use an imperial unit of measurement.

We don't have any current plans to introduce an imperial unit of measurement in our literature. We do however always welcome customer feedback and I have passed your comments to our marketing team. Thank you for taking the time to raise your concerns and giving me the opportunity to respond.

David Gee, Chairman & Chief Executive Office

The BBC doth protest too much

The following is a BBC email to Rex Poulton, 22 November 2013, regarding his complaints about the BBC's use of metric measurements.

Dear Mr Poulton

We write in response to your submission via the BBC Complaints website yesterday afternoon on the matter of metric measurements. As explained in our earlier email, reference CAS-2390769-D79Y2W, the BBC has already made its position on this matter clear and we have nothing to add.

Our earlier email also clearly explained that if you continued to submit similar further complaints on this matter to the BBC, we may write to explain that we will not continue to reply to you in line with the BBC's published complaints procedure.

Noting that this is now at least the fifth complaint you have made to the BBC on this same topic in two years, with this being the second complaint this month alone, it is important that we ensure the BBC's complaints service is run efficiently to provide access for all TV Licence fee payers and to concentrate our resources proportionately on complaints which may suggest breaches of BBC standards.

We note that you continue to make complaints about the use of metric measurements on the BBC but we have clearly and frequently explained our position on this matter to you in response to these complaints and do not consider the issue represents a breach of any of the published BBC Editorial Guidelines. We appreciate that you continue to have a strong personal view on this matter but our limited resources must be used fairly so that we can also reply to many other complainants. The amount of time we would spend on further correspondence with you on the matter would be disproportionate, and as we are fully aware of your point of view we request you not to contact us further on it.

The BBC Trust complaints procedure explains that, at all stages, an editorial complaint may not be investigated if it fails to raise an issue of breach of the editorial guidelines or is "...*misconceived, hypothetical, repetitious or otherwise vexatious*". We consider the frequency and nature of your complaints meet these criteria in that they are both repetitious and misconceived and therefore represent a disproportionate use of the BBC complaints service and of the licence fee.

We have limited staff resources and cannot continue to respond to you on this matter - the expenditure required results in resources being diverted from the proper function of the BBC, which is to provide programmes. We will therefore apply the BBC's expedited complaints procedure at Stage 1 to any further complaints you make on this matter for a period of two years, that is until 21 November 2015.

Full details of the procedure can be found at Annex B of the Complaints Framework protocol at

www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/governance/complaints_framework.

The reasons here relate to paragraph 2 of the expedited procedure. These are, briefly, when a complainant has a history of repeatedly making repetitious or otherwise vexatious complaints, or fails to raise an issue of breach of any relevant guidelines or policies.

We will not reply to you or investigate your complaints further during this period in line with the exceptions and provisions specified in paragraph 3 of the procedure. If you wish, you may write to the BBC Trust directly within 20 working days of this email to request an appeal against this decision if you feel it is incorrect. Any such appeal should not exceed 1,000 words and should clearly set out the points that you want the Trust to reconsider, with your reasons as to why you believe our decision is inconsistent with the BBC Complaints Framework.

Please note that the Trust is not obliged to consider every appeal brought to it, but only those that raise "a matter of substance". The Trust is the final arbiter if any question arises as to whether an appeal is for the Trust to determine or not. The BBC Trust's email address is trust.editorial@bbc.co.uk or you can write to their Complaints Adviser at the BBC Trust Unit, 180 Great Portland Street, London, W1W 5QZ.

Gemma McAleer, BBC Complaints

Gram/milligram mix-up

Simon Kirby draws to our attention a correction in the BBC's Radio Times of 19-26 October 2013: "In answer to a question about aspirin dosages in last week's RT, we incorrectly reported Michael Mosley describing a 300g tablet. This should have been a 300 milligram tablet".

Not only did the BBC confuse grams with milligrams, but it was apparent to neither the writer nor proof-reader that there was something very wrong with a "300g tablet". Would they have missed a 300-ounce tablet, or even a one-ounce tablet?

Metric Downsizing: Gaymers Cider

Readers may recall from *Yardstick 48* that Irish bottled cider producer Gaymers was reviewing its packaging. BWMA suggested to Gaymers that it add a "one pint" label to its 568ml bottles. However, Gaymers cider has since been seen on sale in 500ml bottles, priced £1.50; this is the same price as competitor Magners which still sells in 568ml bottles.

Evidently, Gaymers is seeking to undercut bottled pint producers, raising the question as to how long Magners, Bulmers and Cidre will continue to be sold in 568ml quantities.

Betterware returns

José O'Ware received the following from Betterware, retailer of household products: Many thanks for your recent letter. Firstly, may I thank you for your positive comments towards Betterware. With regard to your disappointment with the exclusion of imperial measurements alongside the metric ones listed, we are currently reviewing this policy with the intention of returning to having both listed from early next year ... Wayne Donohoe, Head of Merchandise.

English Heritage

Mrs S Baulch received this letter from English Heritage: In response to your letter, I think you are right. We normally use metric units for short and imperial units for long distances, which means we use both centimetres and miles. When there is a case to be made (for example to set dimensions in their historical context), we use imperial measures and provide the metric equivalent in brackets. I suggest the next time we need to replace the panel as part of our maintenance programme we will also make the changes to the text. I do hope you still enjoy visiting our sites and appreciate the work we do to preserve and present them to the public. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further questions. Dirk Bennett, Interpretation Manager

Covering all bases

Chris Robinson writes: Being involved with many overseas professionals, I was interested to speak to a European maths teacher who was delighted that we use yards and miles on the roads. She had to teach bases, like base 12, and binary for information technology. Now, she can tell her students that it is not just theory - but that, in the UK, people regularly use such measures.

Italian can-do

Roger Croston has sent in a can for a "sparkling orange beverage", produced by an Italian company. The can is marked in fluid ounces as well as milliliters, and Roger notes: "The imperial measure takes precedence over the metric, which is in brackets". The can is marked (on both the front and rear) as "11.15 fl oz (330ml)".

Redemption

Quentin Williamson writes: On my way home from work, yesterday, I tutted when I saw a sign offering 'local cherries 200 metres ahead in lay-by'. However, when I got there, they redeemed themselves by offering '2lb cherries for £6'. (Note: we have removed any reference to location, in case trading standards authorities use the information to launch a raid).

Metric's Waterloo

Stuart Delvin received the following from Westminster City Council: Thank you for your recent letter highlighting the error on height restriction signs for the approach to the Kingsway Tunnel on Waterloo Bridge. I believe the signs you were referring to are temporary signs erected as part of the current bridge works. The two enamel signs are being amended to show the height restriction in imperial only in compliance with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002. The electronic message sign has already been amended. Martin Low, City Commissioner of Transportation.

Liz Rowlands writes: Thought you might like the following poem 'Epistle to Mr Arthur Squib' by Ben Jonson (1572-1640) – not the athlete who was banned in the Olympics some years ago, and not to be confused with Dr Samuel Johnson. It's a begging letter/poem asking his friend to lend him £5. The play on words would be lost without the imperial pound.

I am to dine, friend, where I must be weighed
For a just wager, and that wager paid
If I do lose it: and, without a tale
A merchant's wife is regent of the scale,
Who, when she heard the match, concluded straight,
An ill commodity! 'T must make good weight.
So that upon the point, my corporal fear
Is, she will play Dame Justice, too severe;
And hold me to it close; to stand upright
Within the balance; and not want a mite;
But rather with advantage to be found
Full twenty stone; of which I lack two pound:
That's six in silver; now within the socket
Stinketh my credit, if into the pocket
It do not come: one piece I have in store,
Lend me, dear Arthur, for a week five more,
And you shall make me good, in weight and fashion,
And then to be returned; or protestation
To go out after - till when take this letter
For your security. I can no better.

Canada

Colin Smith responded on behalf of the New Forest East Conservative Party to the following letter from a Canadian, published in the Daily Echo, 7 January 2014:

GREETINGS from Southern Alberta, may I wish you all a prosperous New Year. Curiosity has me reading the Southampton paper online. My grandmother was born in your fair city in the early 1900s. I may have some distant relatives in the area. I was a little surprised to see so much info in imperial measurements. Vehicles for sale with odometer readings in miles, personal ads with heights listing in feet and inches, you cannot even find that in Canada, all measurements are in metric. Again all the best in the new year.

GORD COWAN, Ranchman Court, Alberta, Canada.

Colin's reply was published on 6 February:

SINCE Canadian correspondent Gord Cowan expresses surprise at Britain's continued use of a much-appreciated imperial measurements system, perhaps I can say a word about the situation in his own country? In *The Yardstick*, journal of the British Weights and Measures Association, a Canadian writer points out that his country used to use imperial measures until Pierre Trudeau was elected Prime Minister in the late 60s. Mr Trudeau had no great love for the United States and wished to make Canada more European than North American. Metric measurements came in handy for that. Canada's biggest trade partner, closest neighbour and best global friend, the United States, was never going to go metric. But this did not stop Mr Trudeau abolishing this country's historical imperial measurements as part of his own little anti-American social experiment. As *The Yardstick's* correspondent reports, most people in Canada still measure in feet and pounds, even if their driver's licences scream centimetres and kilograms in accordance with the Trudeau manifesto. He ends by observing: "It didn't have to be this way. Canadians should never have moved away from miles per hour, except for one guy with a completely unchecked ego named Trudeau".

COLIN SMITH, Totton Branch, New Forest East Conservatives.

UK Independence Party

In January 2014, UKIP was reported in the news to be reviewing its election manifesto. We wrote to UKIP regarding its longstanding commitment to restoring British weights and measures, and had the following reply from Chairman Steve Crowther, on 3 February: "While UKIP is, like every party, reviewing all its policies in preparation for a hum-dinger of a manifesto in 2015, there is absolutely no chance that we will abandon our commitment to Imperial units".

In the House of Lords; Education Proficiency Levels, 3 December 2013

Lord Howe of Aberavon (Conservative):

My Lords, is the performance of our children not to be admired because of their achievement in mathematics?

That subject is far more difficult than it should ever have been allowed to become, granted the fact that Magna Carta specifically requires the establishment of single, uniform system of mathematics and measurements, such as has been achieved in many other former British colonies, such as Australia and New Zealand, and even including the United States and Ireland. In almost all other territories, what should have been achieved has not been achieved in the simplicity of our measurement systems in this country.

There is all the more reason to do so, given our abolition of the Metrication Board, which we introduced to give us one system during my time as Minister for Trade and Consumer Affairs. Alas, I confess that, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I abolished the Metrication Board, disregarding its achievement, and so created the difficulties which I felt I had to spell out with candour in posing my question.

Geoffrey Howe's notion that the simplicity of metric mathematics can enhance children's educational performance is neatly squashed by the following.

From the Archives: from BWMA's annual report, July 1908:

"PRESIDENT OF THE INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION OF HEADMASTERS ON THE 'WASTE OF TIME' FALLACY"

It will interest our readers to learn that Mr. Gilson (below) is Headmaster of the Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham, Chairman of the Birmingham Higher Education Sub-Committee, and President (1908) of the Incorporated Association of Headmasters. In acknowledging receipt of some literature sent to him, Mr. Gilson writes thus: —

Dear Sir,—I beg to thank you for the papers sent me, and to say that I am in general sympathy with the principles of your Association. The metric system is very useful for laboratory purposes, and for such purposes is already universal. The reasons which have hitherto prevented its becoming so for commercial and everyday use still exist, and do not diminish in force. The supposed "waste of time" by British children in learning the British tables is enormously exaggerated. In the 15 secondary schools in this district, at any rate, in which I have a responsibility, they waste but little, and would waste less but for the propensity of some examiners (not ourselves) to set questions in units of no practical importance. Moreover, there is another side to the whole (educational) question. English children are better arithmeticians, and in particular better at mental arithmetic, than Continental children, because they have been taught to think in twelves and twenties as well as in tens; and to evoke mental *power* is the true purpose of all mental training.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) R. CARY GILSON.

King Edward's School, Birmingham.

Minutes of Sunderland City Council Wednesday, 27 June 2007, 6.0pm

Councillor Wakefield, seconded by Councillor Dixon, moved that: "In welcoming the new ruling of the European Commission to allow the continued use indefinitely of imperial measures alongside metric measures for the sale of fish, meat, fruit and vegetables and the statement of intent to allow the sole use of imperial or metric measures by traders who wish to do so, this Council wishes to place on record the sincere regret at the prosecution of Steve Thoburn. Furthermore, this Council encourages citizens of the City of Sunderland to petition for a Posthumous Royal Pardon for Steven Thoburn on behalf of his wife Leigh and children Rhys, Georgia and Jay and pardons for the other three* convicted martyrs, John Dove, Julian Harman and Colin Hunt."

Councillor Symonds, seconded by Councillor P. Watson, moved an amendment to the motion that in the first sentence of the motion the word "welcoming" be deleted and replaced by the word "noting" and that the words "and statement of intent to allow the sole use of imperial or metric measures by traders who wish to do so" be deleted.

That the word "prosecution" be deleted and replaced by the words "sad and premature death".

In the second sentence of the motion, the word "Furthermore" be deleted and replaced with "Accordingly" and the words "encourages citizens of the City of Sunderland" be deleted and replaced with "has no objections".

The words "on behalf of his wife Leigh and children Rhys, Georgia and Jay and pardons for the other 3 convicted partners John Dove, Julian Harman and Colin Hunt" be deleted and replaced with "to enable a line to be drawn under past events and all those affected to be able to move on with their lives".

At this juncture the Mayor ordered a five minute adjournment of the meeting with a view to providing the proposers of the motion an opportunity to consider the matter.

The meeting reconvened and the amendment was put to the meeting and was carried. The new substantive motion having then been put to the meeting, it was:-

"RESOLVED that in noting the new proposals for the European Commission to allow the continued use indefinitely of imperial measures alongside metric measures for the sale of fish, meat, fruit and vegetables, this Council wishes to place on record its sincere regret at the sad and premature death of Steven Thoburn. Accordingly, this Council has no objections to the petition for a posthumous Royal Pardon for Steven Thoburn to enable a line to be drawn under past events and all those affected to be able to move on with their lives".

* BWMA note: there was also, of course, Peter Collins, who was the subject of a civil action.

BWMA gratefully records the Patronage of the late The Hon. Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody, MP, Lord Shore, Vice-Admiral Sir Louis Le Bailly, KBE, CB, Lord Monson and Sir Patrick Moore, CBE

And the Honorary Membership of the late John Aspinall, Nirad C Chaudhuri CBE, Jennifer Paterson, CBE, Leo McKern AO, Norris McWhirter CBE, Fred Dibnah MBE, Sir Julian Hodge, KStG, KStJ, Bernard Levin, CBE, Dr Charles H Sisson, CH, DLitt, Fritz Spiegl, F S Trueman, OBE, Sir Rowland Whitehead, Bt, George MacDonald Fraser, OBE, Beryl Cook, OBE, John Michell, David Shepherd, MBE, Keith Waterhouse, CBE, Dick Francis, CBE, Prof. Antony Flew, Trevor Bailey, CBE, Prof. Richard Holmes, CBE, Michael Barry, OBE, Max Bygraves, OBE, Christopher Martin-Jenkins, MBE

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