

# General Manager (GM) Roles and Responsibilities



## Background

The Dean Forest Railway is a 4.5-mile-long heritage line running from Lydney to Parkend that runs a mixture of steam and diesel heritage trains, with a long-term intention to extend 6 miles north towards Cinderford. The DFR hosts over 40,000 visitors per year and plays a key part in the local tourist economy of the historic Forest of Dean.

Originally established in 1970, the railway has grown over the years from a small operation based at Parkend to an authentic heritage operational line, made up of vintage infrastructure but also incorporates, sympathetically, modern technology. The Company currently has a small number of paid staff in Commercial, Administration and Catering roles, while a volunteer workforce of c. 350 supports these areas as well as Operations, Infrastructure, Lineside, Locomotive and Carriage & Wagon departments.

The DFR currently runs a programme of events including our successful Santa Specials which have consistently sold out over recent years. Since the Covid pandemic, the DFR has focussed on increasing and improving the facilities available to further the commercial opportunities it offers.

## Job Description

A full time General Manager is sought to lead and manage all aspects of the day-to-day operation of the Dean Forest Railway, ensuring it is commercially successful and safe to operate. This job requires a natural leader who has commercial acumen and a can-do attitude, who can take responsibility for getting tasks done and can build and inspire a team of paid and volunteer staff to deliver the railway's challenging objectives.

The successful applicant will be based at the railway's offices at Norchard, and will hold a current driving licence and have their own transport as it is important that they are visible across all 5 of the station sites. A flexible approach to working hours will be required, including weekend and bank holiday working, school holidays, evenings and the period up to the Christmas celebrations.

### Key tasks:

- Appraise operations and ensure that they comply with health and safety requirements, together with other statutory obligations
- Ensure a fully integrated operational and marketing timetable which optimises resources and produces a profitable visitor experience
- Ensure that staff are conversant with the Company's Policies and Procedures as relevant to their individual roles
- Encourage team working across all departments in order to ensure that staff are treated with respect and contribute to the overall Company objectives
- Ensure compliance with requirements and recommendations of relevant Statutory bodies

### Responsibilities:

- Ensure that the Company complies with the Health & Safety at Work Act, Environmental Protection Act and other relevant statutory obligations
- Maintain, develop and ensure that the Railway conforms to our Safety Management System
- Assist in the management of day to day operation of the Railway and liaise closely with Operations Department and engineering departments (Loco, C&W, Infrastructure and S&T)
- Work with the Commercial Manager to determine the marketing strategy

- Ensure that all documentation is accurately processed and accessible, including maintenance documentation and financial records
- Evaluate all operations and events to ensure that they will provide a positive cash return prior to committing resources
- Work with Finance to ensure the punctual payment of bills including wages and receipt of invoices, along with accurate input of supporting paperwork
- Ensure that all departments work within financial delegations and budgets
- Maintain a positive relationship with key stakeholders, including (but not restricted to) Dean Forest Railway Society, Network Rail, regulatory authorities, local councils, other organisations resident on the Railway, and nearby residents
- Ensure effective two-way communication with staff, through the Railway's Committee structure, Management Team and Departmental Heads
- Assist in the management of key development projects

## **Personal qualities**

### **Essential**

- Strong leadership attributes
- Team player, with an ability to engage and motivate others
- Ability to build effective working relationships at all levels, both within the railway and externally
- Ability to prioritise and to delegate
- Strong and effective interpersonal skills
- Effective communicator at all levels
- Keen eye for detail and accuracy

### **Desirable**

- Capacity to be a prominent leader of the Railway as it looks to expand
- Ability to remain calm and focused under pressure
- Articulate and enjoys working with people
- Highly motivated
- Influencing and negotiating skills
- Ability to work on own initiative to meet deadlines

**Reports to:** DFRCL Board via the Chairman

### **Manages:**

- Commercial Manager
- Finance Assistant
- Administration Assistant
- Facilities Cleaner

**Hours of work:** 37½ hours per week, including some weekend and evening attendance as required.