

Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Great Ayton Parish Council Held on Tuesday 15 November 2011 at 7.00 pm

Present

CLLrs: R Kirk (Chairman), Mrs F Greenwell, Mrs J Brown, G Readman, J Fletcher, R Hudson, and S Jackson.
Ms J S Cumbor (Parish Clerk). Others Present: Cllr Mrs Moorhouse, 3 Members of the Press and 76 Members of the Public.

1. **Apologies** – None.
2. **Declaration of Interest in items on the Agenda** - Cllr Jackson declared a prejudicial interest in the Library; Cllr Mrs Greenwell and Cllr Readman a personal interest.
3. **Minutes**
The minutes of the meeting for Tuesday 08 November 2011 were approved and signed.
4. **Community Facility/Library – Business Plan and Financing**
Cllr Kirk advised that the Public will be invited to speak, but asked that people try keep this short and not to repeat statements or questions. The Parish Councillors will then speak and debate, followed by a resolution and decision.
 - 4.1 **Statements from SGALG regarding the Draft Business Plan**
 - 4.1.1 Cllr Jackson - NYCC will close the Library in March 2012 unless a sustainable business plan was agreed
A Draft Business Plan had been submitted, this has been endorsed by NYCC Officers. Cllr Jackson left the room.
 - 4.1.2 Tamzin Little - the Plan showed a requirement of £87,000 in annual income. The Plan looked to the Parish Council to supply income of £42,000 via an increase in the Parish Precept; NYCC would contribute the equivalent of £39,000 in services.
 - 4.1.3 Ken Taylor- increased opening hours will benefit users and help attract commercial ventures into the building. Attracting other ventures into the building and expanding the facilities will increase the use of the building and hence its sustainability.
 - 4.1.4 Irene MacDonald - results of a Survey taken by SGALG showed that 85% voted for a £20 increase to the Precept and 3% voted for no increase, statistically this level of response has a 95% probability that the result will be an accurate record of the total Village opinion to +/- 5%.
 - 4.1.5 Jennifer Roberts - called upon the Parish Councillors to meet the wishes of the vast majority of Villagers who would like to see the Library and building remain open and demonstrate this support through the increase in Precept.
 - 4.2. **Other Representations and Questions**
 - 4.2.1 Other representations and questions were taken from the Public including passionate pleas to the Parish Council to help keep the facility open; it is more than just a Library, without the facility the community and economy risk dying. A representative of young people said that she hoped the Groups would consult with everyone and include her age group (18) and the young who had been left out of previous consultations. One Member of the Public said he was against any increase in the Precept to fund the facility.
 - 4.2.2. County Cllr Mrs Moorhouse thanked the Groups for their commitment, expert skills and time in campaigning and the people of Great Ayton for their support.
 - 4.2.3 Concluding the Public Session Ian Pearce for SGALG stated that the issue was fairly simple the Draft Business Plan called for a guaranteed income via the Precept of £20; this is supported by the Survey.
 - 4.3 **Councillor Statements**
 - 4.3.1 Cllrs Mrs Greenwell said she wanted the Library to remain open but feels that the survey result is not overwhelming.
 - 4.3.2 Cllr Fletcher - Great Ayton Central can and should be supported by the Parish Council; it is the level of funding requested which is causing angst and as such hopes we can agree the increase in Precept and governance arrangements which would allow the enterprise to flourish. In closing Cllr Fletcher thanked the SGALG for creating the only viable alternative to closure. A lot of hard work has gone in to creating the Plan.

- 4.3.3 Cllr Hudson - had reservations regarding the Plan and how the facility could keep up in relation to the trend towards IT options and services. He felt the Parish Council's hand was being forced by NYCC.
- 4.3.4 Cllr Readman – facilities are moving away from Great Ayton to Stokesley, the danger is the economy will go with it. It is important to keep the Library open it is fundamental to the Village; expressed some reservations with the Plan.
- 4.3.5 Cllr Kirk - this meeting is not one anyone of us would have wished for. NYCC's failure to acknowledge the importance of a Library to this community and their decision to not provide such a service dictates the future of the Library. The provision of a library service in Great Ayton is an important, valuable and vital part of the community. The alternative to the voluntary scheme would be the closure of the Library in Great Ayton with the nearest provision being at Stokesley. It is clear that if voluntary scheme is to succeed financial support from the community will be required; the only way to support this is by an increase to the Parish Precept. The Plan does require some amendments.
- 4.3.6 Following a unanimous vote, proposed by Cllr Kirk and seconded by Cllr Fletcher, it was **RESOLVED** to: Include in the Parish Precept, for the life of this Council, the sum of £30,000, commencing 2012/13, towards the provision of a Community Library in Great Ayton subject to it being satisfied with the legal arrangements for the formation of such a Library facility, agreement by NYCC to such a scheme and the requirement of one Parish Councillor and one other person be appointed by the Parish Council to be a full voting members of the constituted body for the Community Library.
- 4.3.7 In conclusion Cllr Kirk said that it is NYCC that is responsible for this situation and should in the future this project not succeed, the responsibility is theirs. Should it succeed it will be thanks to the community of Great Ayton.

The next regular Parish Council Meeting will be Tuesday 6 December 2011 to be held at 7pm in the Children's Room at the Friends Meeting House.