



Fleetwood Town Council

Onward to a Better Future

THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF FLEETWOOD TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
19TH JANUARY 2016
AT THE NORTH EUSTON HOTEL, (BALLROOM) FLEETWOOD 7p.m.

Present: Cllrs.T.Rogers (Chairman), E. Anderton, T. Taylor. M. Stirzaker, N. Stuchfield,
R. Hewitt, B. Stephenson, E.Stephenson, B.Glasgow,S. Roberts, C. McLaughlan, N. Fearon

Also present: 200 + members of the public were present.

The meeting was opened by the Chairman who welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1875 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Barrowclough.

1876 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

None

1877 DECLARATIONS OF OTHER INTERESTS

None

Cllr Rogers addressed the meeting and invoked Standing Order 29 regarding disorderly conduct in respect of Cllr. R. Hewitt. He then read out the reasons for calling the meeting which was the increase in the precept request for 2016/17 in order to be best placed to potentially make a request to Lancashire County Council to take over the running of Fleetwood Museum.

1878 ADJOURNMENT TO ALLOW PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The public asked various questions regarding the precept and how much it would cost the residents of Fleetwood. Many of the public made declared the support for the Councils ambition regarding the museum. There was a general feeling of support from the public for the Councils aspirations as stated. A few members of the public objected to the planned increase and asked how the figure was reached to calculate the proposed increase.

Cllr Rogers (The Chairman) advised the precept of Fleetwood Town Council currently cost the taxpayer based on Council Tax Band D 34p per household per week. He also advised if the precept was increased by 60% £66,000 this would be increased to 54p per household per week. He also noted that the increase would be ring fenced specifically for the purpose of the museum.

He advised an Expressions of Interest would be made and then a business plan would be drafted when the Council obtained all the specific information but he could not promise that the procurement of Fleetwood Museum would succeed at this stage.

Cllr. Stuchfield confirmed this stance and noted she would not be prepared to increase the precept by a 100%

as the suggestion of closing the museum is highly emotive.

Cllr. Anderton asked the public for a show of hands to confirm who was in favour of an increase in the precept to save the museum. A majority of the public raised their hands. She thanked the Clerk for her cautionary note but advised the public it was necessary to raise the precept tonight within the timescales laid down in order to meaningfully negotiate the future of Fleetwood Museum.

Councillors

T. Rogers (Chairman)
R. Hewitt
M. Stirzaker

E. Anderton
C. McLaughlan
N Stuchfield

M. Barrowclough
S.C. Roberts
T. Taylor

N. Fearon
B. Stephenson

B. Glasgow
E. Stephenson



Cllr B. Stephenson raised concerns that the council did not have sufficient information on the running costs of the museum and was concerned the Council may have to increase the precept next year.
 Cllr Rogers advised that the Council would look at other funding streams but could not rule out a further increase in the precept next year.

Cllr Stuchfield read out Cllr. Barrowcloughs statement

Dear fellow members, it is with regret that I cannot be present at tonight’s meeting, which in the relatively short history of Fleetwood Town Council is arguably the most important meeting to date.

In being absent I cannot cast a vote on tonight’s agenda matter; however I wish to make the following public statement without prejudice.

“As we are all aware, the severe financial cuts enforced by today’s Government upon Lancashire County Council have had a severe impact on the services that LCC provide and services that we all take for granted. It is only recently that reality has struck, as these cuts are beginning to affect the majority of the public who, until recently, have remained out of the line of fire.

Unfortunately, the people of the most deprived areas of Fleetwood have been some of the hardest hit by these austerity cuts based on a national level and now the people of Fleetwood as a collective face the stark situation that they could lose yet another major asset – its beloved Museum as a result of funding withdrawal.

This fellow Members, in my opinion is a situation that we cannot and must not let happen. We have all been elected to represent the people of Fleetwood and to protect the Town and its assets which includes its heritage and culture. The Museum is of huge importance not only as a record of our Towns inception, growth and development by our ancestors but also as a forum to inspire and educate future generations. Not to mention the potential risk of losing all the hard work and efforts its dedicated army of volunteers have achieved over the years.

We appear to have no appeal into the decision made by LCC to cease funding our Museum therefore the responsibility to financially underpin the Museum and save it from closure falls to this Council.
 19/01/2016.

I cannot emphasise enough how important it is to keep this resource for townfolk and visitors alike and it is well within this Council’s financial means to do so.

As you have read in your Agenda package we have a number of options which are quite clear. With regards to these options I can advise that I have personally canvassed tens of townfolk who feel as strongly as I do and have advised that a rise in our already minimal Precept would be a very small price to pay.

Members, I urge you to do the right thing for this Town and its people to guarantee one of its most important assets’ future”.

Yours,

Cllr. Mike Barrowclough.

The meeting was then reconvened

1879 PRECEPT REQUESTS 2016 - 2017

It was resolved 11 in favour and 1 against Cllr. Hewitt to request and increase in the precept of £66,000 for 2016/17 which brings the total precept request for 2016/17 to £176,000.00.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

Signed

Dated