

The Friends of Colyton Library

Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting of The Friends of Colyton Library on Monday, 21st September 2015 at the Methodist Chapel Hall, Colyton at 4 pm

1. **Welcome and Introductions.** JD welcomed the Friends, introduced the committee and outlined the pattern of the meeting.
2. **Apologies for Absence:** K & D Baxendale, C & B Boyt, K & J Darby, N & D Ingham, C Lewis, Pam MacClenegan, Mark Mann, Pauline Newman, Christine Gregson-Watson.
Present: JD, DD, PD, JF, RH, RM, JM, JU, SW + 19 other Friends

3. **Update on progress of negotiations with Devon Library Service and progress towards independence from Devon County Council :**

JD – We are 1 of 12 pilot libraries to generate more interest in community involvement. Our future is being secured by assuming responsibility for the building, Parish Council having agreed in principle to do this. DLS will continue to provide library services. The net result will be an unchanged service. There is increased community use of the building – Memory Cafe (although now relocated, it remains affiliated to FoCL); Knit and Natter – JF – now includes other small craft; Shakespeare Group – David Clarke – linked to current streaming; 2 book groups. WiFi has now been fitted. On line votes for the possible Skipton Building Society grant for an outside bench are now required, JF to e-mail details.

RH – There is a need to minimise spending. By converting to a charity, up to 80% relief on business rates is achieved. Solar panels on the roof will reduce electricity bills (though government cuts will severely reduce income from excess power). Currently the building is being transferred from DCC to Parish Council, a slow process; a lease from the PC will be taken out, the building then being under Colyton control. Detailed negotiations are pending. It is planned to transfer some costs e.g. cleaning, maintenance from DCC to local providers, reducing costs and regaining local control.

4. **To agree a new constitution for Friends of Colyton Library to enable an application to become a charity. (already circulated):**

The purpose of the new constitution relates to leasing the building. The language is constrained by what is allowable by the Charities Commission. Powers have been widened as outlined, and minimum age of membership reduced to 16.

JD explained that RH has worked on achieving charitable status for the Heritage Society.

David Evans asked if the building was to be gifted by the PC? JD replied that a peppercorn rent was expected. RH explained that if the library folds and the site is sold, some money will be returned to DCC as an overage condition.

Frankie Hopkins queried that in the event of dissolution because of overspending, who would be liable? RH responded that if debts were to be paid off, there would be no recourse to FoCL, as a charity can go bankrupt.

There being no further questions, JD proposed the new constitution be accepted, which was unanimously agreed by a show of 28 hands.

JD thanked RH for his endeavours.

David Evans pointed out that becoming a charity opens doors to grants etc.

5. Next Events:

JF – Nicky Campbell will give a presentation “To Buy a Whole Parish” re her book on the Rousdon Estate on Tuesday Oct 13th at 2.30 in St John's Hall. There will be no charge but donations welcome.

Driving Safer for Longer – late November or January, e-mail details pending.

2016 One day Literary Festival on Saturday 16th July.

Both the Reece Strawbridge and Peace Memorial Halls are booked, with 3 main speakers – Simon Hall (BBC), Ann Swithinbank (gardener) and Linda Mattock (costume designer).

6. Any Other Business :none

The meeting concluded with refreshments and musical entertainment from the Lai brothers.