

RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS

[PUBLIC]

A Special Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was held in the Town Hall, Ramsey, on Monday, ~~2nd~~ ^{11th} August, 2021, at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Messrs' A. J. Oldham, G. S. Court, R. D. Cowell, Revd. Canon N. D. Greenwood, S. R. Kelly, J. McGuinness, L. I. Singer, F. B. R. Williams and W. G. Young.

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive, Deputy Town Clerk and Head Librarian were in attendance.

(2021/22:104) Consultation – Public Libraries

The Chairman welcomed Members and Officers, including Mrs. Hazel Ault, Head Librarian.

Mrs. Ault provided some basic library statistics and information about the various services provided. Members undertook a tour of the library to view the facilities.

Members noted the Town Clerks Report and earlier internal review document.

Mr. Singer asked whether the reduction in acquisition budget previously undertaken had impacted upon the library, Mrs. Ault advised that the impact had not been as great as had been expected, the prior policy had been to acquire books on request, which often would only go out on loan once, the Head Librarian will now consider new acquisitions based on popular demand and interest and the budget is able to be managed that way.

Canon Greenwood expressed concern regarding the amount of non-fiction books within the library. Mrs. Ault explained that those titles were not popular, generally people will use internet search facilities for these. Canon Greenwood felt the library should be a place for education not entertainment. Members noted that the library provides access to books and other items that aren't available to loan elsewhere, for example audio books, large print books, DVDs etc.

Mr. Cowell sought views on having a library pool, i.e., loan from other libraries. The Head Librarian felt that greater collaboration might be possible however any arrangement would need to address issues such as ownership of stock, budgets, etc., generally the Head Librarian felt free movement of loans between libraries would be difficult to administer.

Mr. Singer proposed that the meeting move to consider the questions within the consultation and that in response to the first question, "Should public libraries take a more coordinated approach and work together to introduce an all-Island lending membership to allow loaning and returning of books to different locations?" the response should be no.

(2021/22:104) Consultation – Public Libraries Continued:

Mr. McGuinness felt that the consultation in its format was leading and the questions didn't suit a response from a local authority which operates a library service.

Mr. McGuinness proposed that a response to the consultation be made to the effect that

“The consultation was too simplistic and would appear to have an underlying ulterior motive, that of introducing rate reform by the back door and passing more costs onto rate payers.

The proposal for a Library Board would merely add another layer of bureaucracy which is unnecessary, that aside there are some positives but not in the context of this consultation. The Board absolutely feels that libraries are important, and that more cooperation between libraries could be beneficial. The Board does not however agree with either a centralised Library Board or the charging of libraries to a community rate as this is rate reform by the back door.

The Mobile Library Service should not be paid for by local authorities.”

The proposal was seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed unanimously.

Members questioned the income derived from printing and copying services in the library and agreed that a report on costs and income should be provided.

The Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 7.50 p.m., giving a time for computation of attendance allowance of one hour.


Chairman.