

MARYPORT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Town Assembly held on Thursday 14 April 2016 in the Council Chambers, Town Hall, Maryport at 7.00pm.

Present

Councillor S Ashworth	Councillor S Barcock
Councillor G Hampson	Councillor Mrs A Kendall
Councillor P Kendall	Councillor Mrs C McCarron Holmes
Councillor W Pegram	Councillor Mrs L Radcliffe (Chairman)
Councillor Ms S Stamper	Councillor T Todd
Councillor L Williamson	Councillor Mrs J Wood
Councillor M Wood	

In Attendance

Mr P Bramley (Clerk)
Mrs V Patterson (Press)

1/16 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms C Tindall & I Tyson.

2/16 Minutes of Annual Town Assembly held on 9 April 2015

Resolved that the Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on 9 April 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record.

3/16 Annual Report of the Town Council

The Mayor, Mrs L Radcliffe, reported that she counted herself as privileged to have served the town as Mayor over the previous year. She had been welcomed by many & various organisations & had numerous conversations with different people, all of whom were kind & courteous. Councillor Radcliffe especially mentioned veterans who had made her welcome at various functions & from whom she had learned so much, including their great gift of humanitarian humility whilst they fought for the country's future with valour & courage. Likewise, she referred to Maryport school children, led with enthusiasm by their teachers, School Governors, Schools' Co-ordinator Nicola Wooley & the Council's own inimitable Clerk Lisa Douglas, who made her smile with their enthusiasm to be future leaders & made her weep through poignant poetry at their Remembrance Service at St Mary's Church on 11 November. Councillor Radcliffe said she had enjoyed every moment of contact with people of all ages & thanked everyone who had shown support for her. She commented that personally the manners of the town's Army Cadets, Sea Cadets & all other organised groups of young people were something to be very proud of.

Councillor Radcliffe believed the town was now moving into an upbeat era & that it was in no small way due to what Town Councillors did & what the Town Clerks tackled enthusiastically & took on in an effort to get the populace to become involved in the future of Maryport. Everyone she had spoken to had said the Maryport Christmas Lights Switch-on was the best around for including young people & each year the lights just kept on improving. The annual festivals & gala days attracted many visitors & the townspeople enjoyed what the Council provided for them.

Councillor Radcliffe commented that it had been another historically reminiscent year & she for one was looking forward to another positive & enthusiastic year of team-working with colleagues both at the Council & in partnership with Maryport churches. Lastly, but by no means least, she said she wanted to echo all the enthusiastic accolades given in the past to the Town Clerks, & add her own for their patient kindness & enthusiasm to make Maryport a good place to be, both as townspeople & visitors. She stated that the Council was very fortunate to have them both.

4/16 Annual Report on the Council's Finances

Councillor Ms C Tindall, Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, reported that 2015/16 had been a successful one for Maryport Town Council. The whole of the precept collected was for the benefit of the town & its people.

It had been a challenging year financially, with both borough & county council cutting back on roles they had traditionally carried out as a result of the severity of cut backs in central government financial support for local government. The financial pressure had impacted hugely on local councils & the increasing financial pressure looked set to continue over the coming years. The Town Council had a crucial role locally in helping to address the impact of service cuts, not only maintaining but seeking to improve services in the town & surrounding areas.

Audits of the Council's operations had not only passed but had received exemplary reports, both in financial management & governance procedures.

The Council had been recognised for the support it provided for organisations throughout the area via grant payments & events the Council organised in the community, through both its involvement with Maryport & area schools, & through events organised involving direct contributions from councillors.

For all the events & successful results she thanked the Council's Clerks, whose hard work made all of it possible. The Council was lucky that both Clerks were willing to go the extra mile to help provide an excellent service for our town.

The Council was currently working in partnership with Cumbria County Council Countryside Rangers to make improvements to the environment in the Maryport area, contributing funding towards work in Flimby Great Wood & the coastal park to repair storm affected features & carry out vital repairs to help alleviate the potential for flood damage. This was a part of the Council's pledge to improve the environment.

Over the coming year, the Council would continue to support events & charities which served its community. It would endeavour to keep improving our town & its environs, & seek to use local businesses wherever possible & seek out value for money.

5/16 Observations of Allerdale Borough Councillors for each of the Town's Wards

Report from Councillors Mrs A Kendall & W Pegram, Allerdale Borough Councillors for Netherhall Ward

Councillor Mrs A Kendall reported on behalf of herself & Councillor W Pegram, & was pleased to report progress on the previous year in the ward, although it was disappointing to have to report a lack of progress with the Carleton. Councillor Kendall reported that the fish factory seemed to be doing well & that the development of the transport hub at Maryport Railway Station was set to start soon, for which the Town Council should be pleased as it was its idea originally. Councillor Kendall was pleased to report that at long last a new supermarket was being developed in Maryport, (& that it was not just 'pie in the sky' !).

Councillor Kendall advised that she had again been elected as Chairman of Allerdale Licensing Committee. She thanked the people of Netherhall Ward for their support & for putting their trust in her & Councillor Pegram in electing them as representatives on Allerdale Borough Council.

Report from Councillor P Kendall, Allerdale Borough Councillor for Flimby Ward

Councillor P Kendall reported that over the previous twelve months he had continued to work with Town Council & Cumbria County Council representatives on Flimby Ward issues, many associated with social housing provision & also the distribution of funding from the Flimby Wind Farm Fund, noting that the Wind Farm operators had commended the respective committee for its fairness & due diligence in the distribution of the fund. He gave thanks to Councillors Carol Tindall & Steven Ashworth, as well as Mrs Mary Bainbridge for their contribution to the latter.

Councillor Kendall reported that Flimby Carnival 2015 had been an amazing success & thanked the Town Council for its financial contribution. He was looking forward to another successful carnival in 2016 & was pursuing external funding to support it.

December had brought devastating flooding to the village; many residents had had to redecorate their homes & many were still waiting to have flood damage repaired. It was pleasing to note how the villagers had pulled together & supported each other. Councillor Kendall expressed grateful thanks to: Cumbria Community Foundation; the Muslim Community from the Preston area & central Lancashire for its food donation; Maryport Lions, Rotary & Round Table organisations; Allerdale Borough Council officers Ian Frost, Paul Wood, Denise Rollo, Mike Rollo & Kevin Kerrigan; Cumbria County Councillor Keith Little; The Co-operative; Tesco; Sue Hayman MP; Julie Harris; Messrs Little, Senior & Junior; Mr Lowden; Margaret Sutton; Shirley Weir; Paul Agnew; Cris Ashcroft; R Farish; T Lowden; Judith Harkness; Margaret Weir; Town Councillors Carol Tindall & Steve Ashworth; & the many members of the public, who assisted in dealing with the flooding & its aftermath.

Councillor Kendall reported that over the previous twelve months he had chaired Corporate Scrutiny Committee, dealing with scrutiny of the budget, ground maintenance, health provision & poverty issues, to name but a few. He also acted as a critical friend of the authority. He continued to represent Allerdale on Solway Area of Natural Beauty, dealing with issues relating to the coastal area, including developing the Solway as a destination for visitors & residents of Allerdale.

Councillor Kendall reported that as a member of the Alliance for Regional Aid, he continued to go to national meetings, lobbying government & other organisations on better deals for the region on steel issues, devolution, lottery funding, transport infrastructure, NHS provision & other issues that affected former heavy industrial areas.

Report from Councillors Mrs J Wood & M Wood, Allerdale Borough Councillors for Ellenborough Ward

Councillors Mrs J Wood & M Wood reported that they were optimistic about flooding issues in Ellenborough being resolved. Water leaking at Chagford villas on the A594 seemed to have been alleviated, following exploratory works by Connect Roads & repair works by British Gas, after which the road had been restored to its original state & the leak seemed to have been cured. During December, a 'river of water' on Woodlands Drive was reported to them, but thankfully none had entered houses. With that in mind, they had asked Allerdale to clean the gullies on the A594 between Netherton & Dearham.

The ward had recently been fortunate to have two new shops open, one being VG Stores on Main Street, Ellenborough, the other being the One Stop in the old Bounty Inn in Netherton. The people of Netherton were eagerly awaiting the opening of the Lidl store, something it was hoped would improve the fortunes of the town.

Derwent & Solway Housing Association was currently running a project on the Hillside estate encouraging residents to become involved in projects on the estate, including walks to the harbour, coffee mornings & other community based projects.

Councillors Wood reported their membership of Allerdale Corporate Scrutiny, Community Scrutiny & Licensing Committees.

Report from Councillor Mrs C McCarron Holmes, Allerdale Borough Councillor for Ewanrigg Ward

Councillor Mrs McCarron Holmes reported that she was the portfolio holder for Health & Housing on Allerdale Executive, & was also Armed Forces Champion. She had established a Health Forum with branches in Workington & north Allerdale. Hospitals remained a big issue & a clearly defined role for all community hospitals was vital, as Maryport Cottage Hospital was revered in the community. In order to assist with relief for bed blocking, Councillor McCarron Holmes considered it necessary to establish Extra Care housing, but anyone leaving hospital to return to their home would not take kindly to being offered Extra Care in another town. A good model was one which was closest to a person's relatives & areas where they had resided for most of their lives.

Councillor McCarron Holmes reported that as a director of Derwent & Solway Housing Association, a move to take the organisation back to its mother group was being fought by the local directors. She considered it vital that it remained a local organisation in order that it had that link.

Councillor McCarron Holmes reported that the Boundary Commission was upon the area again & that people in the town would have to fight to retain all its ward representatives.

Report from Councillor L Williamson, Allerdale Borough Councillor for Ewanrigg Ward

Councillor Williamson reported that he had been a councillor for almost one year. The main issues he had had to deal with in that time concerned issues with the retention of Maryport Cottage Hospital & flooding. He advised that he was a member of the Allerdale Development Panel & also Corporate Scrutiny Committee. He was working with other area organisations to improve the area & was Chairman of Maryport Community Gala Committee.

6/16 Observations of Cumbria County Councillors for each of the Town's Wards

Report from Councillor Mrs C McCarron Holmes, Cumbria County Council for Maryport North

Councillor McCarron Holmes reported that one of the main issues in the past year was the dreadful flooding late in 2015 which devastated many parts of Cumbria & indeed West Cumbria. In the past, the Council had qualified for Bellwin scheme funding but the threshold had been changed by the current government to £11,000.

Maryport's second pump at the fire station had been retained; the town had been lucky. The future of the Fire Service in the county was unclear & the Home Office Minister had said it needed severe trimming !

The Enterprise Bill in the autumn 2016 will see changes in the way public sector workers are paid & cap payments on severance - redundancy & other exit payments. The Trade Union Bill will change the rules for subscriptions by employees & could impact upon public relations as a consequence.

Children's' Services in the county were still in special measures, but a board had been set up to try to rectify the anomalies.

On a bright note, the transport hub at Mealpot Road was a great way forward for parking & getting in & out of Maryport. A consultant study of town centre parking & complaints by wheelchair users & mothers with prams will be undertaken.

Government plans to force academy status upon all schools in the country will have some effect on schooling in the county.

A new operator, Arriva, had taken on the rail line franchise & Councillor McCarron Holmes stated that she looked forward to working with them for the benefit of commuters from the town.

A bid had been put to central government for devolution for the county. The request was turned down & the offer, in Councillor McCarron Holme's view, derisory. There were many questions to pose if the area were to accept the offer, including an elected mayor, which she saw as another layer of governance & little more than an incumbent with direct access to government offices, but little extra funding.

Report from Councillor K Little, Cumbria County Councillor for Maryport South

Councillor Little reported that once again he had had a busy year on behalf of the Maryport South ward, as well as the whole of the county, with the Portfolio of Highways and Transport, Flooding and Fleet.

Councillor Little had dealt with a varied number of concerns raised with myself by constituents across a wide range of subjects; housing and repair issues continued to be a concern to tenants in both the social landlord and private sectors.

Following the devastating flooding the county experienced in December 2015, Flimby and Grasslot were among the first areas to suffer severe flooding to properties. Along with many other members, he spent a very busy few days offering practical help and assistance to a number of residents of both communities. Since then, he had worked with all statutory providers and insurance companies to get work carried out to enable many people to get back into their homes; of course, many people were still working to get back to normality. Councillor Little was also working at a regional level with the Environmental Agency and others to ensure the area received the support it needed & had attended a number of meetings locally with members of the public, landlords and alongside members and the MP Sue Hayman, addressing the concerns of the general public. Over the coming twelve months, a number of public consultations will be held with affected communities to develop flood action plans which will be led by the County Council.

As local government continues to face further austerity measures, its ability to continue to provide those important front line services to the people of Cumbria will be more difficult. The Council was determined to work with all other local and district authorities to provide the best services possible.

Councillor Little reported that he looked forward to being able to establish a good and beneficial working relationship with Arriva, the newly appointed provider of rail services along the Cumbria coastal line, and inviting them to visit both Maryport and Flimby stations to see where improvements were needed & could be made, alongside improved time tabling and Sunday services between Barrow and Carlisle.

7/16 Statements & Reports from representatives on Voluntary Organisations

Report from Councillors Mrs J Wood & M Wood on the John Collins Charity

Councillors Mrs J Wood & M Wood reported that they were both involved in the trust, which had been set up many years previously to help widows & orphans in the parishes of Dearham & Ellenborough, & had since evolved to benefit older people in the area.

Report from Councillor W Pegram, representative on Maryport Harbour Authority

Councillor Pegram reported that the Directors would like to thank the Town Council for its continued support. The authority aimed to continue to improve conditions & safety around the harbour. He advised that, sadly, Richard Keys had resigned as Harbour Master, but the work had been taken on in-house & it seemed to be working well. Councillor Pegram expressed his thanks to Richard for his hard work & vision in his role & wished him all the best for the future.

Councillor Pegram reported that dredging had finished & the Harbour Board was happy with the outcome. He reported that a large saving had been made through a change in method to that of removing the mud on outgoing tides.

Report from Councillor Ms C Tindall on the Fawcett Johnson Charity

No report received.

Report from Councillor Mrs L Radcliffe on the Senhouse Museum Trust

Councillor Radcliffe reported that, up until August 2015, a very exciting excavation of the recently discovered Roman site near the museum had put Maryport firmly 'on the map', due to the many & varied items uncovered, which had helped world famous archaeologists learn more about the Roman occupation of Maryport & their lifestyle. Due to the recent purchase of Camp Farm by the North of England Heritage Trust, Councillor Radcliffe thought that the future of Maryport's World Heritage Museum could only be brighter.

Councillor Radcliffe reported that the staff of the Roman Museum had welcomed the usual school parties in recent months, & over the Easter period had led guided tours for families & groups at weekends, which had been well attended & enjoyed by people from many areas. She advised that the Visitors' Book reflected the levels of pleasure afforded by the informative & hard-working volunteers & staff.

Report from Councillor Ms S Stamper on the Citizens' Advice Bureau

No report received.

Report from Councillor P Kendall on Love Maryport

No report received.

8/16 Resolutions for which Notice has been given

None received.

9/16 Questions from Parishioners

None received.

10/16 Members' 2015/16 Meeting Attendance Record
Maryport Town Council members' attendance figures were noted.

The meeting finished at 7.30pm.

Signed

Chairman

Date