

MARYPORT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Town Assembly held on Thursday 9 April 2015 in the Council Chambers, Town Hall, Maryport at 7.00pm.

Present

Councillor S Ashworth	Councillor B Campbell
Councillor B Carter	Councillor Ms G Elliot
Councillor Mrs A Kendall	Councillor P Kendall
Councillor D King	Councillor Mrs C McCarron Holmes
Councillor W Pegram	Councillor Ms C Tindall
Councillor L Williamson	Councillor Mrs J Wood

In Attendance

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

1/15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs L Radcliffe & M Wood.

2/15 Minutes of Annual Town Assembly held on 24 April 2014

Resolved that the Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on 24 April 2014 be approved and signed as a correct record.

3/15 Annual Report of the Town Council

The Mayor, Ms C Tindall, announced that it had been an honour & a privilege to have served Maryport again as Mayor. She said there had been many highlights, & gave particular mention to the Maryport Christmas Lights Switch-on, the Summer Family Fun Day, Flimby Carnival & the many other festivals held. Ms Tindall noted that the floral displays in the town had been well received & that the Sea Cadets, Army Cadets & Maryport ARLFC had all made significant achievements in their respective areas.

Ms Tindall was hopeful that the proposed tidal lagoon development would proceed to the benefit of Maryport & noted that some £15,000 had been provided so far to Flimby organisations through the wind turbine community funding scheme. She thanked Councillors S Ashworth & P Kendall for their assistance in operating the scheme & to Councillor P Kendall for his work in Flimby over the previous eight years. She also thanked the Clerks P Bramley & Mrs L Douglas for their assistance in organising & helping with various events & those councillors who had been prepared to turn up, in all weather conditions, to assist with those events.

The Mayor looked forward to events to be held later in 2015, in particular the Freedom of The Town award to the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, commemorating the outbreak of World War 1.

4/15 Annual Report on the Council's Finances

Councillor P Kendall, Chairman of Finance & General Purposes Committee, reported that in setting its budget for 2014/15, the Council had sought to continue to provide effective support for its community. The difficulties being experienced by many Maryport people under the current government's austerity policies had continued & multiplied, & the Town Council continued to hold the view that it could make the best use of its resources through supporting community events which brought people together & helped them to set aside for a time their other difficulties.

The Council recognised the impact which government cuts were having on services provided by other councils & public bodies, & had protested to the government against its policies for dealing with poverty, sought to redress problems caused by reductions in bus services & supported the local community in its campaign against proposed changes to the way in which meals are provided at Maryport Cottage Hospital. With regard to health services, the Council had been concerned with changes proposed by the Northumbria Health Care NHS Trust which would impact hugely on the hospital services provided in the area & had voiced those concerns to the relevant authorities.

The Council had set a budget of £173,000 for 2014/15, which for the majority of people in Maryport entailed an increase in Council Tax of £10 per year. Whilst this had represented an increase of under £1 per month, it would have been much less but for the withdrawal of Council Tax Reduction Scheme Grant by Allerdale Borough Council. The £10,000 reduction in a grant which the government said it expected Allerdale to pass on to Maryport Town Council meant that the Council had to increase its Council Tax by £5 just to retain the same level of services previously provided.

The Town Council was the only council now supporting the Maryport Harbour & Marina authority, & also gave financial backing to a number of organisations in the area which supported the historical, cultural & welfare services provided in the town. Grants had been awarded to the Maryport Blues Festival, Maryport Carnival & Flimby Carnival, as well as to the Maryport Maritime Museum, Maryport Inshore Rescue & Citizens' Advice Bureau services in Maryport & Flimby. In total, the Council had budgeted to award almost £50,000 of its budget on supporting those groups.

The Council had continued to work with Schools' councils in 2014/15, through the Maryport Schools' Partnership in particular, this being a most effective way of involving many people in children's & family events. A budget of £5,000 had enabled the Council to support an Easter Egg Hunt, a Summer Family Fun Day & the Christmas Festival. Refreshments had been provided for school sports days & Christmas decorations for each primary age pupil in Maryport & Flimby. The Council had set aside £6,000 to support a Freedom of the Town award day for the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, marking the one hundredth anniversary of World War 1 & schools would link this to work they were doing on World War 1, as well as attending the parade on 20 May.

The Council had effectively managed all the routine and non-routine tasks of maintenance and upkeep on services where contractors had been appointed, ensuring that the Council not only received a good quality service for a competitive price, but also that local contractors were employed where possible. Allotment sites, Flower displays & Bus Shelters were now all provided to a very high standard & continued to improve. A redundant bus shelter had recently been moved to a site where it was needed, opposite the Bounty Inn, & another one would be relocated shortly. New allotment plots had been built on spare land at Flimby & Sandy Lonning sites, & the pond area cleared at Sandy Lonning, which supported a range of wildlife. Improvements were being made to give a longer & more seasonally based display of flowers in the area. The Council had budgeted to spend over £50,000 on the upkeep & improvement of those areas.

The Council had continued to demonstrate strong & effective financial management & governance; through ensuring that it had sufficient resources in place to provide a solid base, the Council could continue to make improvements in the services which the public saw & which supported the community, at a cost of less than £1 per week for most Maryport people.

5/15 Observations of Allerdale Borough Councillors for each of the Town's Wards

Report from Councillor Mrs A Kendall, Allerdale Borough Councillor for Netherhall Ward

The past year had been one of ups & downs in the ward. The Carleton had been again closed, & following its sale, had then been re-sold. The Fish Factory had closed but, supported through Allerdale Borough Council funding, had subsequently opened again. Meetings had taken place with officers from Allerdale Borough Council & Cumbria County Council concerning the proposed introduction of a Transport Hub located at Maryport Railway Station, based on an idea submitted by the Town Council several years earlier. In addition to that development, the provision of a new supermarket in Maryport would be welcome.

Councillor Kendall reported that she continued to take a very active part in licensing issues across the borough as Chairman of Allerdale Borough Council Licensing Committee. As representative for Allerdale Borough Council on Maryport Harbour & Marine Authority, it was reported that the number of berths had been increased & most of the fishing fleet had paid due debts.

Councillor Kendall thanked the people of Netherhall, of whom she hoped she had been able to help with any issues which had been brought to her attention.

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

Councillor Mrs J Wood reported on the ongoing problem in the ward of Ellenborough of a leak of water on the A594 at Chagford Villas. The water was causing a nuisance to people living in the area. She advised that she had spoken to Environmental Health at Allerdale, and they in turn had spoken to Connect Roads, who were the County Council's contractor who had advised that they would have to excavate the pavement and the road at Chagford Villas but would require permission from the Environment Agency, due to its proximity to a water course, and this was the reason for the delay in the excavation works.

In other areas of the ward where the town service bus route had ceased, Councillor Mrs J Wood reported that she was pleased to inform the Council that a bus company from Aspatria had picked up the baton and would take over where Stagecoach had left off, which would be good news for the people of the ward.

As Allerdale Councillors, Councillors Mrs J Wood & M Wood were available to the people of the ward to help with problems they may encounter, such as planning applications, flooding and vermin control. They were members of a number of Allerdale Borough Council committees, including Standards Committee, which Councillor Mrs J Wood chaired; Councillor M Wood was a member of Licensing, Development and Scrutiny Panels.

Ellenborough ward had benefitted from major development over the past few years which can be seen in the minutes of the last town assembly.

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

Councillor McCarron Holmes reported that many things had changed in Maryport over the previous year. She stated that, in accordance with her prediction, planning permission had been granted for the development of the Lidl supermarket, which she firmly believed would bring back shoppers to the town, hopefully reversing the trend to shop in Workington, where some 60% of shopping was currently carried out. She stated that work had commenced on the armed forces veterans' housing scheme at Ennerdale Road, which, as Allerdale Forces Champion, she was pleased to see Maryport being chosen for, a first for the county. She noted that planning permission had been granted for Ewanrigg Hall housing estate & that its development would undoubtedly lead to an increase in traffic flow in the area, which would need to be watched from a road safety perspective.

Councillor McCarron Holmes noted the clear link between housing & health, & stated that Maryport & other areas of Allerdale required accessible housing, meaning those with facilities such as stair lifts, ramps & safe shower facilities, together with homes which were insulated against the health impact of fuel poverty. She stated that the housing fraternity of the country had repeatedly asked to be involved at government level with issues relating to health in hospitals, to try to assist with the early release of patients to suitable accommodation.

Councillor McCarron Holmes advised that her responsibilities at Allerdale Borough Council included housing & public health, & that she had deep concerns with the services at both Carlisle & West Cumberland hospitals. She reported that the appropriate organisations were being engaged in offering rented accommodation for nurses recruited from overseas. Councillor McCarron Holmes noted that at the previous year's Annual Assembly, whilst mention was made of the impact of lorries travelling to Iggesund through the town, those lorries provided work for many of Maryport's residents. She noted with sadness the closure of Rhodia & Eastman, expressing her concerns at the work prospects for their former employees. Conversely she noted that with St Bees school closure there would be free point of entry education for the affected pupils through local authority operated schools, citing Netherhall, Cockermouth, Silloth, Aspatria, Nelson Tomlinson & the new academy in Workington.

Councillor McCarron Holmes advised that in her role with health at Allerdale, she had established a Borough Health Forum, which she hoped every town in the borough would soon have, to set out their health plans, noting that National Health Services were in a crisis, & that all needed a good NHS & not private profiteers. She also stated that Maryport needed a new general practice capable of dealing with the 14,000 patients which were served in the area, well above the norm of 7,000. In common with other areas, Maryport

had smoking, obesity & alcohol misuse problems which were being carefully watched. She considered it fortunate that the new health bus which was visiting the town.

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

Councillor Kendall reported that over the previous twelve months he had worked as ward councillor with the area county councillor to ensure problems with wood debris on the A596 were kept to a minimum. He was also concerned with flooding on that road.

Working with other town councillors, he had supported the reintroduction of Flimby carnival after many years' absence, & was looking to develop the carnival further. In addition, he stated that he had worked with others to ensure that wind farm funding was made available to all organisations in the village.

Councillor Kendall reported that street lighting failures had been a problem in the winter months & that the county council had responded as quickly as possible with a depleted workforce. He continued, along with others, to meet with Home Housing & Derwent & Solway Housing Associations' representatives, carrying out ward walks & addressing tenants' problems in line with Allerdale Borough Council environmental health officers. Progress was also reported on the cottage adjacent to Flimby band room.

The war memorials at Flimby & Maryport had been refurbished to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of World War One, with funding from the Town Council & Cumbria County Council & Councillor Kendall stated that Remembrance Sunday was an occasion he had always been passionate about & that it should always be supported.

Councillor Kendall reported that he represented Allerdale on the Solway Area of Natural Beauty Partnership & through that had supported, along with Cumbria County Council, the development of the cycleway extension from Siddick to Allonby, which had led to an increase in tourists with a positive impact on businesses in the area. Coastal erosion was a concern in the area & he hoped that the proposed tidal lagoon development would proceed & help address those concerns.

Councillor Kendall reported that he represented Allerdale on the Alliance for Regional Aid Group, which had benefited Flimby Community Centre, the Sure Start Centre & others in the area. He had lobbied & continued to lobby for funding, citing support obtained for the Fit for Life Gym, through the Coal Restoration Trust & the Resource Centre on Selby Terrace, as well as funding for the new housing on Victory Crescent.

As a representative on the Carlisle Leisure Board, Councillor Kendall noted the positive impact on people visiting the area of the Klip & Klimb facility at the Wave Centre, developed through joint funding by Carlisle Leisure & Allerdale, & advised that further improvements were planned in that facility.

Councillor Kendall stated that the proposals for the development of a transport hub in the Maryport Railway Station area, as well as increased rail services, would help to encourage visitors to the area

Councillor Kendall represented Allerdale on the Health Scrutiny Board & continued to express his concerns at the transfer of services from the West Cumberland Hospital to Carlisle, including proposals for maternity, accident & emergency, & endoscopy services. Such arrangements would leave the public in a vulnerable position, particularly with the poor ambulance service. He was concerned to ensure that services for the area were fit for purpose for the West Cumbrian community.

Report from Councillor G Kemp, Allerdale Borough Councillor for Netherhall Ward

No report received.

Report from Councillor A Moore, Allerdale Borough Councillor for Ewanrigg Ward

No report received.

6/15 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 her responsibilities with Cumbria County Council included representation on the Scrutiny Board, which had been looking into the integration of health & social care, the Forces Veterans County Forum & the Audit Committee.

She advised that the County Council needed to shed some 1,800 staff posts over the following three years as a result of funding cuts by central government. That action, without doubt, would lead to a depletion in services for Maryport in common with the rest of the county.

Councillor McCarron Holmes advised that she supported, wherever possible, at local area committee level, funding for local organisations with a good application. She attended Broughton Moor & Crosscanonby Parish Council meetings, which fell within her Allerdale & County divisions. She had requested clearer speed limit signage in the Crosby Village area following the serious road accident there earlier in the year.

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

Councillor Little reported that over the past twelve months he had continued to represent the division within the County Council, during very difficult financial times, with the County Council losing significant funding from central government. In common with district councils, it was becoming increasingly difficult to ensure that essential services to the public could be maintained.

Councillor Little held County Council Cabinet responsibilities for Highways and Transport, which included Flooding and Fleet, &, together with representing the County on a number of outside bodies and statutory providers, kept him very busy and often out of county.

With development opportunities along the West Cumbrian coast over the next few years, there would be a big ask of government to provide financial support for infrastructure improvements in the area's roads and rail networks. With the new rail franchises taking place there would be exciting new opportunities for improvements to the West Cumbria coastal line through Maryport and Flimby. The county would be working closely with the new provider, when announced, to ensure the area got the very best for its travelling communities.

Councillor Little stated that he would like to take the opportunity to thank the Town Council for its continued vital support of Netherhall School, Citizens Advice, and the numerous other projects which benefit the area. In addition, he gave his personal thanks to the Town Council Clerks for the support and advice on other aspects of work within the division that were being actively worked on together.

7/15 Statements & Reports from representatives on Voluntary Organisations

Report from Councillor W Pegram, representative on Maryport Harbour Authority

Councillor Pegram reported that the Harbour Master, Mr Richard Key, wished to thank the Town Council again for its continued support, stating that all funding from the Council went towards the upkeep & workings of the harbour.

He reported that a partial dredging would take place towards the end of the year, where a different method to that previously used would be applied, which involved agitating the mud on outgoing tides to reduce the levels around the slipway used by the Inshore Rescue service, & areas used by shipping. The method was a tried & tested one elsewhere.

Councillor Pegram reported that forums were being held on the proposed tidal lagoon stretching from Workington to Dubmill Point, creating a large expanse of calm water. The development, he advised, would help develop further the harbour & marina, as well as bring much needed leisure activities & tourism to Maryport, which he believed would be of great benefit to the town's trades' people.

Report from Councillor Ms C Tindall on the Fawcett Johnson Charity

Councillor Tindall reported that fund benefited retired seamen & their widows in the Maryport area, through the distribution amongst qualifying recipients of the interest earned annually on the capital sum bequeathed. Some thirty people had received a payment from the fund in 2014. She considered it appropriate to review the basis of distribution should the number of beneficiaries fall to single figures.

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

No report received.

8/15 Resolutions for which Notice has been given

None received.

9/15 Questions from Parishioners

None received.

10/15 Members' 2014/15 Meeting Attendance Record

Maryport Town Council members' attendance figures were noted.

The meeting finished at 7.40pm.

Signed

Chairman

Date