

MARYPORT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Monday 1 July 2013 in the Council Chambers, Town Hall, Maryport at 7.00pm.

Present

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| Councillor Mrs A Kendall | Councillor P Kendall |
| Councillor D King | Councillor A Long |
| Councillor G Mitchell | Councillor A Moore |
| Councillor W Pegram | Councillor Mrs L Radcliffe |
| Councillor Ms C Tindall (Chairman) | Councillor Mrs J Wood |
| Councillor M Wood | |

In Attendance

Mr P Bramley (Clerk)
Mrs V Patterson (Press)
Mr R Rhodes, Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner

14/13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ms D Charlton, Councillor Ms G Elliot & Councillor Mrs C McCarron-Holmes.

15/13 Declarations of Interest

None received.

16/13 Requests for Dispensations

None received.

17/13 Minutes of Meeting held on 25 February 2013

Resolved that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 February 2013 be confirmed as a correct record & signed by the Chairman.

18/13 Minutes of Mayor Making Meeting held on 20 May 2013

Resolved that the minutes of the Mayor Making meeting held on 20 May 2013 be confirmed as a correct record, subject to the removal of Councillor D King from the attendance list, & signed by the Chairman.

19/13 Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 3 June 2013

Resolved that the minutes of the Special Council meeting held on 3 June 2013 be confirmed as a correct record & signed by the Chairman.

20/13 Presentation from Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner

A presentation was given by Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner Mr Richard Rhodes. Mr Rhodes stated that his role did not add an extra layer of bureaucracy, as many thought, since the role of the Police & Crime Commissioner replaced that of the Police Authority, & oversaw the strategic management of the authority. In conjunction with the Chief Constable, he had to develop a five year Police & Crime Strategy for Cumbria, into which he was building arrangements for dealing with issues which had arisen in his communications with the general public during his election campaign. The main issues were seen to be:

- 1) Anti-social behaviour
- 2) Personal disputes
- 3) Young offenders
- 4) Rural crime
- 5) Hate Crime
- 6) Speeding vehicles

Each of these areas varied in type & impact across the county, could manifest in a number of forms & had knock-on effects on other areas & types of crime. For example, Youth Offending, which was a particular concern, was often a cyclical problem, reflecting experiences of home life, with interrupted education exacerbating the problem, leading to significant costs for the state in dealing with the results of this during the offender's lifetime. Mr Rhodes felt that if the problem could be addressed at an early stage, it could have a positive impact across the board. Hate crime was an under-reported problem in Cumbria, with racist issues in some areas, domestic violence, & rape & other sex crimes prevalent across the county. Mr Rhodes was looking for a significant improvement in the reporting & addressing of these issues, & outlined his responsibilities for improving arrangements for the support of victims of crime, with funding for that becoming the direct responsibility of the Police & Crime Commissioner from 2014.

The five year Police & Crime Strategy addressed & budgeted for dealing with these issues. Weekly meetings were held with the Chief Constable, whom the Police & Crime Commissioner was responsible for holding to account. Mr Rhodes stated that he believed there was general satisfaction with the police by the public across the county.

Mr Rhodes responded to questions concerning a number of matters raised by members:

- It was reported that Maryport used to have fifteen police officers, but now had just one PCSO, operating on foot, covering the area from Flimby to Dearham. That officer had to clock-on at Workington, which they travelled to on public transport. The issue was a real concern for the public, particularly given the number of burglaries in recent weeks, (some fifty in the Maryport area over the last three months reported), & for victims of burglaries, the level & timing of support was inadequate.

Mr Rhodes advised that he had employed someone to work on the assessment of & development of a strategy for victim support, but he was very concerned to hear of the decline in police numbers in the Maryport area & of their deployment arrangements, & he agreed to take up the matter with the Chief Constable & report back to the Council.

- It was reported that the change in policing arrangements introduced over the last year or so had led to a loss of local knowledge which had impacted on response to issues. In addition, CCTV in Maryport was used by, but not funded by, Cumbria Police, & it was believed that such a resource should be shared between public services. The closure of police stations in Maryport & Wigton meant long journeys for people wishing to access a police station, as they now had to travel to Carlisle or Workington. It was believed that a base was needed in Maryport, & a public office at Maryport Town Hall was suggested. Reference was made to the Working Party established by the Town Council which had made recommendations to the Police & Crime Commissioner.

Mr Rhodes advised that the Police Authority had determined closure of police stations based on footfall, & under-used facilities were the victims of cuts in the police budget. Allerdale Borough Council, he advised, had decided not to continue with CCTV operations prior to his commencement in his role, but he had a budget of £100,000, which he was investigating operating a central CCTV monitoring operation from Cumbria Constabulary Headquarters at Penrith with, based on a minimal specification, with bodies able to access the services of at that level of specification, & higher levels of service costing extra. Mr Rhodes stated that he had seen a successful arrangement for the provision of a police service from a public office in operation at Milnthorpe & would like to explore that further, suggesting that the Council write to him on the matter of a Maryport office operating from the Town Hall.

- Information was requested on how the allowances receivable by the Police & Crime Commissioner compared to those received by the former Police Authority. Mr Rhodes was also questioned on why he had alluded to working class youths causing the most crime, in his presentation, & whether & why crime reporting methodologies changed

Mr Rhodes advised that the Police Authority operation had cost some £240,000 per annum, whilst his salary was £60,000 plus expenses. He disagreed that he had referred to the working class, stating that he had referred to all youths. He had held a general discussion on the gathering & presentation of statistics with the Chief Constable, & was comfortable with the current position but was keeping it under review.

- In response to Mr Rhodes proposals for addressing youth crime, it was noted that a proactive approach, rather than a reactive one, would need to be adopted, involving different professions & areas of public service, with a change in the education programme required. Anti-social behaviour in Maryport was stated to be being exhibited by younger & younger people, who had no access to acceptable behaviour. Domestic Crime was a hidden problem in the Maryport area, & hate crime was a concern, with persecution of the Polish community, a nation which had fought alongside Britain in World War 2, a particular concern. There was also a concern that public housing providers across the country sought to move on problem families, with the Maryport area receiving an unreasonably high percentage of such relocations. An example was given of Flimby, which had some 250 housing authority properties & had received 9 problem families in over recent years, with a consequent impact on village life & on the police, who had to deal with the results of such actions.

Mr Rhodes Advised that he would seek further information on the increased levels of crime reported in Flimby, & on hate crime in the area. As a former headmaster, he agreed with the need for the education system to take into account how it could assist with the control of the development of a criminal mentality. He said that he understood that specialist input was needed to deal with certain crimes, such as domestic violence & sexual crimes. He proposed to appoint resources to a role which addressed such problems.

- Mr Rhodes was asked if the police should have a more central role, with links to other bodies, in dealing with crime issues & whether he had a proposal for addressing this.

Mr Rhodes advised that he appreciated the extent of the problem across society & what the boundaries of police responsibility were, & cited the role of Community Safety Partnerships, (CSP's), as being important in managing this. He advised that there were four CSP's in the county, who were familiar with their areas & who could report issues to the Police & Crime Commissioner, for potential funding, & he was particularly keen on providing a non-bureaucratic service for small groups to access funds through this means.

Resolved that Mr Rhodes be thanked for his contributions, that it be noted that he had agreed to respond on the following matters:

- 1) Police numbers in Maryport
- 2) Crime & police issues in Flimby
- 3) The possibility of the police operating a service in Maryport from the Town Hall, on which the Council agreed to write to Mr Rhodes setting out its proposals.

21/13 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reported that she had attended the following events:

- 1) 20 May Maryport town Council Mayor Making
- 2) 23 May Young Cumbria event
- 3) 24 May Maryport Harbour Festival
- 4) 26 May West Coast Terrier & Whippet Show
- 5) 1 June Queen of the Solway Dance Festival
- 6) 3 June Dales opening
- 7) 7 June Clip & Climb official opening
- 8) 10 June Our Lady & St Patrick's School Golden Jubilee
- 9) 11 June Flimby Wind Farm official opening
- 10) 19 June Ewanrigg Junior School Sports Day
- 11) 22 June Maryport Sea Cadets
- 12) 24 June Armed Forces Day
- 13) 24 June St Patrick's School Sports Day
- 14) 26 June Flimby School Sports Day
- 15) 27 June Ewanrigg Boys Club

The Mayor announced that she had met some lovely people & had generally been well received. She also announced that in the coming weeks there were some 35 events that she had agreed to attend.

Resolved that the Mayor's announcements be noted.

22/12 Review of Standing Orders

Resolved that the matter be deferred to the next Council meeting.

23/12 Green Hut

Resolved that the Council contact Allerdale Borough Council to ask that Green Hut be repaired, rather than demolished, from its dilapidated state, & the cost of the proposed repair in the event that the Town Council be asked to contribute towards this.

Following the conclusion of the meeting, a meeting of the Planning & Economic Development Committee commenced.

Signed

Chairman

Date