



Morecambe Town Council

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Proper Officer: Mr Luke Trevaskis

Minutes of Annual Town Assembly
held at Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road East, Morecambe, LA4 5AF
on Thursday 5 May 2022 at 6 p.m.

Held in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part III.

Advice for members of the Public:

Electors of the Morecambe Town Council area may attend and ask questions or raise issues which they would like the Council to consider at an appropriate future meeting.

Any matter, as decided by a majority of those present and voting, is not legally binding on the Council, however must be considered by the Council at a future date.

Each local government elector present has one vote on any issue which is put to a poll.

Meeting commenced at 6:02pm

Cllr Cary Matthews, Chairman of Morecambe Town Council, presided.

- 1. Apologies for absence received from Cllr Goodwin and Cllr Bates.**
- 2. Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on 27 May 2021 were approved.**
- 3. Annual Report was delivered by Cllr Cary Matthews, Chairman of Morecambe Town Council:**

“As I reflect on the past year I am incredibly honoured to have been the Chair of Morecambe Town Council.

I would like to thank all councillors, partners and officers for the commitment and support they have given.

To be effective, we need to pull people together, be the focal point of our town, and add value to a collective effort to ensure our town remains a great and safe place to live.

Morecambe Town Council must be credible to businesses, to public sector partners, and most importantly to our surrounding community.

Last year we renewed our policies and procedures. It was a time consuming and challenging venture, which involved a lot of patience and collaborative working, with all members working together with Luke, the Council’s Chief Executive, to achieve the outcomes we have today. I believe it has been a very worthwhile and necessary undertaking and I would like to thank everybody involved in reaching this goal.

As a result, we are now an effective town council to represent our community. The Council has published its three-year Community Action Plan which is now well on its way to being realised. I am also particularly proud to have been involved in the Council’s climate emergency declaration this year. I know from many conversations that I’ve had with business leaders and community groups that their perception of Morecambe Town Council has changed - they can see the improvements we’ve made and, more importantly, the impact we are having on residents.

This year we began to organise a series of events with a two-day Dino-Shore-Us event and a Spring into Morecambe artisan market. Our next event is a celebration of Her Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee on 2 June with fireworks, pyrotechnics, entertainment, food stalls, and a record-breaking attempt on 5 June to host the longest Jubilee lunch, with 500 tables spanning 2500ft of Morecambe’s promenade. I hope you’ve booked your table, because they are going fast! These events are creating a revived sense of civic pride in Morecambe - an opportunity for the community to come together to celebrate our town. But this is only the start and as our credibility grows, and we gain expertise and experience, I believe we can deliver an even greater level of enhancement and value for

our town, our residents and the local economy. It is only right that we take more responsibility for our community and its assets, and dialogues with Lancaster City Council and Lancashire County Council are already underway - a feat that would not have been possible without the reforms we have made and the way in which we have conducted business as a council over the past twelve months.

So, I am proud to be able to report the progress we have made this year, and will continue to make in 2022-2023. We are in a much healthier place as an organisation and I fully believe we have served our community well.

Thank you for your continued support as we all work for our town, our Morecambe, our home.”

4. Representations were received from electors and community organisations who wished to address the assembly.

A resident spoke of concern of sending emails to the Council without receiving a response. The resident advising that members of the public are entitled to see the same papers as councillors prior to a meeting. The resident said that they had asked a question at the last council meeting, advising that the question was followed by a statement confirming the payment of a contractor. The resident advised the response was not true and the contractor had not been paid. The resident requested to know why they had not been paid. The resident stated that it was unfortunate that the External Auditor had passed the Council's internal audit for 2021-2022.

Noting that this was a Town Assembly, as opposed to a council meeting, Cllr Roger Dennison clarified that the agenda item provided an opportunity for residents to make representations as opposed to asking a series of questions.

After previously stating that a question had been asked at the prior council meeting, the resident then advised they just don't get the opportunity to ask questions.

Cllr Hanson asked for clarification regarding the payment of the contractor, recollecting that an officer had advised in a previous meeting that the contractor had been paid. An officer clarified that the meeting was a Town Assembly and such questions relating to

council business should be reserved for council meetings. The officer clarified that the recollections of statements made in previous meetings regarding the contractor were inaccurate and the only clarification provided at the prior meeting was that the final External Audit had concluded. It was clarified that in the opinion of the auditor the AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return) is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have given cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. It was also clarified that the External Auditor had raised no issues with the fact that the Council had changed its auditor.

Note:

Following the meeting, Cllr Hanson listened to a recording of the prior meeting and retracted the statements made at the start of the Annual Meeting of the Council, apologising to the officer for recollecting statements made at the previous council meeting incorrectly.