

**Silloth-on-Solway Town Council**  
**Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 26 May 2017 at 7.00pm at Silloth Community Hall**

**Present**– Cllr. A.J. Markley

**Councillors**

J. Cook (JC), O. Martin (OM), A. Emmerson (AE), G. Wilkinson (GW),  
M. Orchard (MO), W. Jefferson (WJ), S. Graham (SG) & A. Reid (AR).

**Also present:** Wendy Jameson – Town Clerk (WEJ) & 25 members of the public.

	Cllr. Martin stated he would be recording the meeting.	
<b>424.</b>	<b>Apologies</b> Cllrs. D. Pattinson (DP), J. Snaith (JS) & I. Baty (IB).	
<b>425.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> Cllr. Martin declared an interest in relation to item 4 on the Agenda.	
<b>426.</b>	<b>Exclusion of Press &amp; Public</b> None.	
<b>427.</b>	<b>Press Article</b> Cllr Markley read out a statement which acknowledged the fact that Cllr. Martin does a great deal for Silloth but his comments in the press had left older members of the Council, who have also made a major contribution to the town, feeling aggrieved and requiring an explanation. It was hoped that his explanation would clear up any ageism issue. Cllr. Graham asked Cllr. Martin to explain his comments in the News & Star and what his expectations were from the article. Cllr. Graham read out a statement from Age UK which explained about Ageism which is prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age and the effects it can have on people which can impact on confidence and public attitudes etc. Cllr. Martin's response was heard in which he referred to the freedom of expression which is the power or right to express one's opinions without censorship, restraint, or legal penalty. He felt his comments had been misinterpreted and what he had stated in the press was true and simply a statement of fact. He had expected the article to be published but had not expected to be summoned to a Council meeting to explain himself. Cllr. Martin stated he had not discriminated against anyone on the grounds of age and had checked it over with CALC and a solicitor. CALC advised the Clerk that the Council could hold a meeting to discuss the matter and could refer it to the monitoring officer if it so wished. Other members of the Council had an opportunity to respond. The meeting was not stopping Cllr. Martin's freedom of speech but was in fact giving him an opportunity to explain. Some people have been on the Council for a long time and have done a lot over the years, with everyone entitled to their own opinions. Cllr. Markley found it difficult to keep the meeting in order due to the intervention from members of the public, who had to be reminded that they were not allowed to speak as it was a Council meeting. Cllr. Martin had referred to older members of the Council which actually meant everyone, as everyone on the Council is older than him and stated he was not ageist in any way. Things can be in the press that are not necessarily portrayed correctly. Cllr. Cook suggested that Cllr. Martin is on a learning curve, as with all younger members of the Council. He suggested there needs to be younger people on the Council to represent the younger generation. The Town Council had listened to Cllr. Martin's explanation of his comments in the press which was accepted by the Council.	

Signed.....

Date.....