

MINUTES of a MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL held on MONDAY 20th MARCH 2017 in the Council Chamber, St Austell One Stop Shop, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, PL25 5DR at 6.05pm.

Present: Councillors: Brown, Bull (Mayor), Colwill, Double, French, Heyward, Keast, King, Krishnan, Lake, Lanxon, Leonard, Murtagh, Oxenham, Palmer, Pears, Stewart and Walker.

In attendance: David Pooley (Town Clerk), Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Town Clerk), Steve Skinner (Operations Manager).

C/16/192) Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

C/16/193) Minutes of Meeting held on the 6th February 2017

Councillor Heyward advised that on page 6, minute number **C/16/185** the word "Community" should read "Cumulative".

It was **RESOLVED** that subject to the above amendment the minutes of the meeting held on the 6th February 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/16/194) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that further to minute number **C/16/181** he had spoken to the Police and Crime Commissioners Office (PCC) and following their advice, would be submitting an expression of interest form for funding towards the Truro Road CCTV camera. The Clerk further advised that Newquay Town Council has submitted an expression of interest to the PCC as part of a wider bid for an overall upgrade of the Newquay and St Austell cameras.

Members expressed their support for both submissions.

C/16/195) Declarations of interest and gifts or hospitality received

Councillor Oxenham declared an interest in agenda items 27 & 30 by virtue of being Vice-Chairman of the Friends of Sandy Hill Group.

Councillor Brown declared an interest in agenda item 9 by virtue of being the Town Council representative on SABEF.

Councillor French declared an interest in agenda item 9 by virtue of being the Cornwall Councillor representative on SABEF.

C/16/196) Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

Councillor Lanxon arrived

C/16/197) Mayor's announcements

The Mayor thanked everyone who attended her Civic Service and paid particular thanks to Councillor Lake for organising the raffle and Councillor Keast for leading the service.

The Mayor advised that she had met with Cornwall College recently about the community use of the Keay Theatre and had typed up a note for the information of Councillors detailing the latest charging arrangements.

The Mayor advised that she had recently met with Bridget Sampson, Managing Partner/Executive Manager of St Austell Healthcare where it had been agreed that a Town Councillor should be nominated to sit on the Patient Participation Group following the May elections. It was also agreed that regular liaison meetings between St Austell Healthcare and the Town Council should be organised and a monthly e-mail produced by St Austell Healthcare for communicating at Town Council meetings.

The Mayor reminded all Members that next week's Planning Committee was now a full Town Council meeting and was being held at the Sunday School Room, St John's Church.

In response to a question, the Clerk advised that St Austell Healthcare had been invited to attend the 3rd April Community Committee meeting but to date had not made a firm commitment to attend.

The Clerk **AGREED** to advise St Austell Healthcare that Members would appreciate their attendance at the meeting on the 3rd April to provide re-assurance about their proposals to close Woodland Road Surgery.

C/16/198) Members' Questions

There were no Members' questions.

C/16/199) Public participation

Mrs Earl thanked the Mayor for the civic service and paid tribute to the excellent choirs and Mount Charles Band. She advised that the Market House had submitted a Heritage Lottery Fund Stage 1 application form, the outcome of which should be known in June. The Friends of Mencuddle Well have submitted a grant application form to the Manor Solar Fund for the clearance of the pond, the result of which should be known within 6 weeks.

C/16/200) Sue Hill – St Austell Bay Economic Forum (SABEF)

The Mayor welcomed Sue Hill to the meeting. Ms Hill explained the proposals for a festival and clay exchange event entitled White Gold 2017 to be held from 29th September 2017 to 1st October 2017. Ms Hill explained the range of partners involved in the project and the value of recognising the clay heritage of the area. She also explained that Cornwall College St Austell were now one of the leading providers of training in ceramics and would be actively involved in the project.

Councillor Brown declared an interest in this item as the Town Council's representative on SABEF and outlined the role of SABEF and the potential benefits of the proposed festival.

Councillor Brown left the meeting

Councillor French declared an interest in this item as the Cornwall Council representative on SABEF and expressed his support for the project before leaving the meeting.

Councillor French left the meeting

Members asked a number of questions regarding funding and the proposals and were very supportive of the plans. It was noted that the initial festival in 2016 was very successful and Members agreed that it was important to support this initiative. It was however felt that suitable conditions should be placed on the grant funding requiring reimbursement in the event that the festival does not go ahead.

During the course of debate, Mr Bishop (member of the public) advised that the Baptist church would be prepared to make their premises available for an exhibition if this would be helpful.

It was **RESOLVED** to offer a grant of £2,500 for the White Gold 2017 festival subject to conditions to be determined by the Clerk.

Councillors Brown and French returned to the meeting

C/16/201) Benjamin Nash – St Austell Sea Cadets

The Mayor welcomed Benjamin Nash, Commanding Officer of the St Austell Sea Cadets, to the meeting. Mr Nash outlined the history of the accommodation currently occupied by the Sea Cadets and explained that they had a once in a life time opportunity to purchase their current premises for the sum of £80,000 which was considerably lower than the market value of the site. He explained that £50,000 had been promised by the Marine Society and Sea Cadets (MSSC) and further funding was being sought from other funding bodies.

Members were very complimentary about the services provided by the Sea Cadets and their value to young people in the area. The importance of this opportunity to purchase their premises to the Sea Cadets was recognised and it was felt that the Town Council should help the Sea Cadets but safeguard any contributions made with suitable conditions to ensure that the premises continue to be used for community purposes in the event that the Sea Cadets leave the building.

The Clerk advised that a number of conditions could be applied to the grant including:

- (i) making the grant payable on exchange of contracts.
- (ii) placing a charge on the property if permitted by other funding bodies for a period of time to be agreed.
- (ii) making the grant repayable if the premises ceased to be used for community purposes.

It was **RESOLVED** that a grant of £10,000 should be awarded to the St Austell Sea Cadets for the purchase of their premises subject to suitable conditions to be determined by the Town Clerk.

C/16/202) Cornwall Council – Section 106 Projects

Councillor Heyward provided an update on progress with the footpath from the rear of the Co-op to Penwinnick Road. She explained that there was an issue with regard to land ownership which it was hoped could be resolved shortly and that a surface would then be laid on the lower end of the path which would not adversely affect the tree roots for key trees in the area. She explained that if there were any monies left over she hoped that it would be possible to repair the bandstand and shelter in Truro Road Park.

Councillor Brown explained that the appointment of a project officer was helping to speed progress with the Section 106 projects. He advised that at Chapel Field the playground equipment was due to be upgraded.

Councillor Brown explained that with regard to Sandy Hill, the proposed scheme could still proceed despite the mining works issues in the park and that there might indeed be more than enough funding for this scheme. The proposal involved a natural play area which would be very attractive in the lower half of the park.

Councillor King explained that a site visit had been undertaken recently at Woodland Road Park and that revised costs had been obtained from a potential installer of the playground equipment. Cormac were investigating the drainage issues in the area and it was hoped that the scheme could now be progressed.

Councillor French advised that due to the shortage of open space in St Austell, the Charlestown School all-weather pitch had been identified for a lighting scheme which would allow it to be made available for community use in the evenings.

Councillor Bull advised that architects had been appointed to the Poltair Park project and that they would be on site on the 6th April 2017 to discuss potential designs for a kiosk/toilet facility. It was hoped that a number of designs will be available for consultation as soon as possible.

Councillors Oxenham and Colwill declared an interest in this item and left the meeting before members debated the issues

The Clerk advised that in order to ensure that the Town Council does not delay any of the proposed projects, a number of delegations were required. He asked that Members authorised him to permit Cornwall Council and/or its contractors to enter the Town Council's land to undertake works and that authority be granted to sign off warranties and to appoint an independent assessor to approve and sign off the completed works.

In response to a question, the Clerk advised that the Town Council should pay for the cost of the final independent assessor to sign off the completed works.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the updates received and to approve delegation to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor to:

- i. Grant permission to Cornwall Council and its contractors to enter on to the Town Council's land and complete works;
- ii. Sign off warranties;

- iii. Appoint an independent assessor to approve and sign off the completed works at the Town Council's expense.

Councillors Oxenham and Colwill returned to the meeting

C/16/203) Conservation Area

The Clerk explained that the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan had been re-drafted and following consultation it was hoped that the plan would be adopted by Cornwall Council prior to the submission of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Townscape Heritage Scheme.

Mrs Earl advised that she was delighted that the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) had been brought up to date and drew Members' attention to paragraph 4.1.60 which identified the benefits of a link between Priory Car Park and North Street. She explained that a parcel of land on the North Street side of the potential link had recently changed hands and that she hoped that a meeting would be arranged shortly to try to progress this initiative. Councillor Heyward advised that she hoped to arrange a meeting shortly.

It was **RESOLVED** to endorse and support the revised Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

C/16/204) Devolution

The Operations Manager advised that the play equipment defects identified recently were being addressed by a local contractor. He advised that he had recently completed a RoSPA course which allowed him to undertake operational inspections of play equipment. He outlined the DDA compliance findings with regard to the parks and explained that a number of improvements would be made as funding and resources permitted. He explained that a new tipper truck had been delivered which increased the capacity of the team to undertake work and significant improvements had been made to The Meadows. Other works undertaken included wall repairs at Bethel Park, ceiling repairs in the Priory toilets and the second wave of drilling and mining investigation works at Sandy Hill Park. He concluded by advising that he expected the grass cutting programme to start on the 10th April 2017 working from west to east across the town.

The Clerk provided an update on a number of issues including the car parks and library devolution and Pondhu House. He explained that his priority for the next few weeks would be car parks and the library.

Members expressed their pleasure at the improvements made to parks and open spaces around the town and made particular reference to the bulbs and flower beds. In response to a Members' question, the Operations Manager confirmed that the grass cutting cycle would be fortnightly, weather permitting, and that some areas would be cut before the 10th April. Issues with regard to the public convenience were discussed including the benefits and dis-benefits of installing a radar key system to the disabled toilets.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the reports received, to thank the grounds maintenance team for their excellent work and to record Councillors' pleasure at the quality of the parks and open spaces.

C/16/205) St Austell Railway Bridge and Signal Box

The Clerk advised that following recent correspondence, it was felt that it would be of value to make representations to Network Rail and Cornwall Council about the state of repair of the St Austell Railway Bridge, the railings around the station and the Signal Box. Mrs Earl thanked the Members that had attended the meeting recently with a representative of Network Rail at the station and explained that she was awaiting a further meeting with more senior officers of Network Rail to discuss their intentions.

During the debate that followed, it was noted that Cornwall Council's Conservation Officer was due to produce a report on this issue shortly and was aware of the condition of the historic features in the station.

It was **RESOLVED** to make representations to Network Rail and Cornwall Council about the state of the St Austell Railway Bridge, the railings and signal box and to seek remedial action.

C/16/206) Biddicks Court Paving – at the request of Councillor Stewart

Councillor Stewart expressed concern at the replacement of granite slabs in Biddicks Court and Fore Street with black tarmac. Councillor Lake supported Councillor Stewart.

Councillor Heyward explained Cornwall Council's policy with regard to the repair of cracked or uneven granite slabs utilising its pot hole team and tarmac. She explained that the reinstatement of the granite slabs was provisionally in the 2017/18 highways repairs programme. During discussions, concern was expressed with regard to parking enforcement in Biddicks Court and the impact of parking on the granite paved area.

It was **RESOLVED** to make representations to Cornwall Council for the reinstatement of the granite paving slabs at Biddicks Court and Fore Street which had been replaced with tarmac over recent years.

C/16/207) Local Residents – Foreign Pensions

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk should be authorised to sign foreign pension entitlement documents for local residents.

C/16/208) Code of Conduct

The Clerk advised that a Code of Conduct complaint had been investigated by Cornwall Council's Monitoring Officer and the findings of the investigations were as set out in the report circulated with the agenda.

The Clerk advised that it was essential that Members kept their Register of Interest entries up to date and invited any Members who wished to check their entry to contact him.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report and findings of Cornwall Council's Monitoring Officer.

C/16/209) Standing Orders

Councillor Brown explained that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had reviewed the Standing Orders in some detail and thanked the Clerk for reproducing the Standing Orders to reflect the changes approved.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft Standing Orders as amended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

C/16/210) Health and Safety Policy

The Clerk advised that the Operations Manager and the Council's consultants, Ellis Whittam had undertaken a tremendous amount of work to ensure that the Town Council's approach to Health and Safety matters was robust and sound. He explained that the Finance and General Purposes Committee considered a draft Health and Safety Policy and an Environmental Policy and had suggested a number of minor amendments which were incorporated in the documents attached to the Council report. He also explained that Councillors had a responsibility with regard to Health and Safety and that these responsibilities were set out in the report. Councillor King asked that the Town Council consider Cornwall Council's Environmental Growth Strategy in due course.

It was **RESOLVED** that the draft Health and Safety Policy Statement and Environmental Policy statements be approved and the Health and Safety responsibilities of Councillors be noted.

Councillor Pears left the meeting

C/16/211) Members appointed to outside bodies update reports

Councillor Palmer advised that he had not attended a larger Council's CALC meeting since the last Town Council meeting but that he had attended a BID meeting where a discussion took place about the BID re-election timetable and the appointment of a specialist to help with the process. Councillor Palmer advised that he had attended the St Austell Bay Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting and congratulated Councillor Pears on his appointment as Vice Chairman.

Arising from the above, Councillor Brown advised that he had attended the St Austell Bay Chamber of Commerce AGM and was disappointed with critical remarks made about Cornwall Council.

C/16/212) Cornwall Councillor update reports

Councillor Brown advised that Cornwall Council's budget had been approved, a licensing cumulative impact zone for St Austell was being considered and a design brief was being worked on for the electoral boundaries. He added that the A30 link road preferred route had been agreed, although it did not have the full support of all Cornwall Councillors.

Councillor Heyward advised that she was working closely with Cornwall Council in trying to resolve the ongoing vandalism problems at Karenza and is hoping that Cornwall Council's Investment Board will make a positive decision about the way forward in April.

C/16/213) Planning & Regeneration Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Planning & Regeneration Committee held on the 13th February 2017.

C/16/214) Community Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Community Committee held on the 27th February 2017 and approve the **RECOMMENDATION** contained therein.

C/16/215) Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was noted that Code of Conduct training after a bi-election was particularly important.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on the 15th February 2017 and approve the **RECOMMENDATIONS** contained therein.

C/16/216) Calendar of Meetings – 2017/18

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the calendar of meetings for the 2017/18 civic year.

C/16/217) Payments Schedule

It was **RESOLVED** that the Schedule of Payments for the period 1st February 2017 to 13th March 2017 in the sum of £77,812.74 be approved.

***Councillor Oxenham declared an interest and left the meeting ***

C/16/218) Sandy Hill Park

The Clerk advised that the secondary drilling had revealed a further mining feature slightly lower down the park and that the advice received from the consultants and Cornwall Council's mining expert was that the area should be fenced off. The Clerk further advised that he had verbally received assurance from the consultants that the soil sample tests have revealed no issues.

Councillor French recommended caution with regard to any tree planting on mining works.

C/16/219) To consider excluding the press and public

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the next item of business under Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 because of the commercially sensitive details contained therein.

C/16/220) Sandy Hill Park

It was **RESOLVED** to note the verbal update and to approve delegation to the Town Clerk to enter into a suitable procurement process for the installation of fencing and trees at Sandy Hill Park.

It was further **RESOLVED** to issue a press release once the full details and timescales of the proposed fencing works are known.

C/16/231) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the dates of the next meetings are Monday 27th March 2017 and Monday 24th April 2017.

The meeting closed at 8.29 pm.