

**MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL held on MONDAY 8th MAY 2018 in the Council Chamber at the St Austell One Stop Shop, Penwinnick Road, St Austell at 6.05pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Bishop, Brown, Bull (Mayor), Cohen, Colwill, French, Heyward, Jones, King, Lanxon, Leonard, Oxenham, Palmer, Pearce, Pears, Rees, Styles, Thompson and Walker.

**In attendance:** David Pooley (Town Clerk), Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Town Clerk).

**APM/17/01) Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hanlon.

**APM/17/02) Minutes of the Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**APM/17/03) Matthew Thomson, Chief Executive – Fifteen Cornwall**

The Mayor welcomed Mr Thomson to the meeting.

Mr Thomson explained that he is a member of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership (LNP) and Chief Executive of Fifteen Cornwall. He advised that he grew up in the area and is committed to St Austell. He explained the need to share and address environmental responsibilities and referred to the decrease in pollinators and curlews across the country as indicators of the problems faced. Mr Thomson praised the "greening vision" for the Town and drew reference to the greening intentions for new roads such as the one proposed at Carland Cross and suggested that this could be considered for the new A30 link road for St Austell. He explained the relationship between the LNP and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board and outlined the priorities for the LNP which included the need to:

- Use nature resources in the right way;
- Encourage environmental skills, knowledge and understanding;
- Connect people and process
- Allow environmental growth

Mr Thomson advised that he was committed to the STARR flood protection scheme and the principles of the Environmental Growth Strategy, both of which should have a positive effect on St Austell.

Mr Thomson explained his work at Fifteen Cornwall and outlined their commitment to the Good Cornwall Sea Food Guide, which sought to protect endangered fish, and the Cornwall Food Foundation. He explained that over the years 200 young people had been trained at Fifteen Cornwall, half of which had come from St Austell.

Members raised a number of issues including:

- Air Quality in St Austell
- Modern farming practices
- The pressure of tourism on the environment

- The quality of housing being built
- Funding for environmental initiatives
- The role of the Cornwall Leadership Board

The Mayor thanked Mr Thomson for his very interesting and thought-provoking presentation.

### **APM/17/04) Mayor's Review of the 2017/18 Civic Year**

Councillor Walker referred to an extensive list of achievements for the 2017/18 civic year and outlined some of the key elements including:

- Taking over of management of St Austell library which is one of the busiest in Cornwall;
- The recruitment of an Apprentice to the Grounds Maintenance Team;
- The refurbishment of The Meadows;
- A 4\* Award for Poltair Park;
- Facilitating the refurbishment and long-term future of youth services at The House;
- Facilitated a partnership arrangement with Square Sail, Cormac and the Town Council to pipe the Leat at Linear Park to prevent flooding on to the footpath;
- Assisted with the recruitment of a Townscape Heritage Property Officer to take the Townscape Heritage Scheme forward;
- Upgraded the Town Council's website;
- Planted 100 trees across the town;
- Financial assistance towards the Christmas lights and Pirate FM marketing campaign;

He thanked Councillors and staff for their hard work during the year and everyone else for their support and assistance. He stressed the need for pride in St Austell and the need to fully support SABEF's greening town/ceramics vision and to continue the great work that is currently being done in partnership with Eden, Helligan, BID, Chamber of Commerce and the College.

*\*\*Councillor Pears left the meeting\*\**

### **APM/17/05) 2017/18 Financial Accounts**

The Town Clerk provided an overview of the Council's Accounts for the 2017/18 financial year and explained that the detailed accounts would be available at the Annual Town Council meeting.

He advised that the Town Council's turnover had increased from £263,000 in 2015/16 to £878,000 in 2017/18 and that this was funded by £463,000 of Council Tax and £415,000 of other income. He explained that the Town Council continued to provide excellent value for money and that the Council Tax level was well below the average for Town and Parish Councils in Cornwall. He further explained that a surplus of £26,000 had been made in the year after delivering the biggest devolution project in the country and making a significant investment in parks and open spaces, tree works, fencing works, staff and machinery.

The Clerk advised Members that St Austell Town Council's Band D Council Tax for 2018/19 is £97.75 compared with the Cornwall average of £110 per annum. By way of comparison, he drew Members attention to an article in a recent Clerk magazine

featuring Newquay Town Council who employ 38 staff with a budget of £2.4 million, a precept of £1.68 million and a Band D Council Tax of £215.49 per annum.

### **APM/17/06) Priorities of St Austell Town Council for the 2018/19 Civic Year**

The Town Clerk advised that he had been giving some thought to the possible priorities for the Town Council in the next civic year. He advised that he would be recommending a number of priorities for the Council including:

- Champion for the St Austell area
- Input to the strategic vision and planning for the area including the NPPF and Local Plan, major developments and the A30 link road;
- Town centre issues including the BID and the Town Heritage Scheme;
- Anti-social behaviour measures including an upgrade of the CCTV system;
- To continue to support youth services and The House;
- Further work on parks and open spaces including another improvement scheme, a resolution for the shared use of Woodland Road Park by Mount Charles School and a strategy for parks and open spaces;
- Governance issues with regard to GDPR, social media, recruitment of a Projects Officer, Member training and the boundary review.

The Clerk explained that there was a need to consolidate the work undertaken with regard to service devolution and the provision of the services adopted from Cornwall Council.

### **APM/17/07) Open Forum for questions from the public**

Mrs Earl asked Members if they could take the following into consideration during the next civic year:

- A “passive house” style toilet at Poltair Park;
- Continued work to secure adequate hospitals and medical provision in St Austell including enquiries about an urgent care service at Penrice;
- Discussions with Network Rail about the improvements required at St Austell station.

Mrs Earl also updated Councillors on the latest clearance and restoration works at Menacuddle Well and the contact made with Historic England about the restoration works required for the Baptistry.

Mr Halton advised that he was this year’s Chairman of the St Austell Bay Chamber of Commerce and confirmed that they are willing to help the Town Council where they can.

### **APM/16/08) Mayor’s closing comments**

The Mayor thanked everybody for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm