

St Austell Town Council



Climate and Environment Committee

To: All Members of the Climate and Environment Committee
(Councillors: Clemo, Cohen, Guest, Hamilton, Lanxon, Preece, Stephens, Styles, Thompson and Young).

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend a **Meeting** of the **Climate and Environment Committee** to be held at **The Registrar's Office, Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4LD** on **Monday 21st October 2024 at 6pm.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Pooley', is positioned above the printed name of the Town Clerk.

David Pooley
Town Clerk

15th October 2024

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AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
(Purpose: To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other non-registerable interests in respect of items on this agenda).
- 3. Dispensations**
(Purpose: To receive requests for dispensations under the Code of Conduct).

4. Public participation (15 minutes maximum)

The Chairman will invite members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be carried out at the meeting.

15 minutes will be allocated for public participation (this can be extended at the Chairman's discretion). Each person addressing the Council will be allocated a maximum of two minutes.

5. Minutes of Meeting held on 1st July 2024

**Pages
1 to 4**

(Purpose: To agree that the minutes of the above meeting be signed as a correct record). (Attached).

6. Matters to note

(Purpose: A verbal update from the Town Clerk on the actions taken since the last meeting).

Note: No decision may be made under this agenda item.

7. White River Project

(Purpose: To receive a presentation from representatives of the White River Project).

8. Climate Emergency Action Plan

**Pages
5 to 18**

(Purpose: To receive an update on progress against the Climate Emergency Action Plan). (Action Plan attached).

9. Climate Action St Austell (CASA)

(Purpose: To receive an update on the work of CASA). (Verbal update).

10. Dates of Meetings

(Purpose: To note the date of the next meeting – 20th January 2025)

MINUTES of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 1st JULY 2024 at The Stable Block, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5DP at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Cohen, Hamilton, Lanxon, Preece, Stephens, Styles and Young.

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

CE/24/01) Election of Chair

The Town Clerk asked for nominations for Chair. A nomination was received for Councillor Cohen.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Cohen be elected Chair of the Climate and Environment Committee for the 2024/25 civic year.

CE/24/02) Election of Vice-Chair

The Chair asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. A nomination was received for Councillor Stephens.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Stephens be elected Vice-Chair of the Climate and Environment Committee for the 2024/25 civic year.

CE/24/03) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clemo and Thompson.

CE/24/04) Declarations of Interest

None.

CE/24/05) Dispensations

The Clerk advised that no requests for dispensations had been received.

CE/24/06) Public Participation

None.

CE/24/07) Minutes of Meeting held on 22nd January 2024

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd January 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

CE/24/08) Matters to note

The Clerk advised that following damage, the water fountain plaque has been refixed to the churchyard wall and South West Water has taken further water samples for testing. The results are expected back in 10 working days.

CE/24/09) Climate and Environmental Policy

The Clerk advised that it is good practice to review policies from time to time and a review of the Town Council's Climate and Environmental Policy has resulted in no changes being required.

Arising from a concern, the Clerk advised that the proposed De-Salination Plant at Par will be discussed by the Town Council when a planning application is put forward for consideration and that an opportunity for the community to air their views will be provided at that time.

It was **RESOLVED** to re-approve the Climate and Environmental Policy.

CE/24/10) Biodiversity Net Gain – Briefing

Members received a briefing via TEAMS from Andrew Towlerton Associates on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Mr Towlerton explained that new planning applications for a single dwelling or more, a commercial development of 1,000 square metres or more than 1 hectare, working of minerals and waste developments will all need to provide a 10% net gain in biodiversity – sometimes higher. Very small developments such as household extensions do not qualify. Failure to meet BNG requirements may trigger enforcement action by the Local Planning Authority.

CE/24/11) Climate Emergency Action Plan

The Town Clerk advised the following:

- So far, no excess fly tipping has been found in the Town Council's car park or parks following the roll out of the new waste regime.
- Renewable energy sources are being monitored but at the present time they are cost prohibitive;
- The potential for Members to opt in or out to receive hard copies of the agendas (to be reviewed after the May 2025 elections);
- LED's for Streetlights are being rolled out as and when bulbs fail as they are too expensive to do all in one go.

During discussion, concern was expressed with regard to the rise in QR code scams and the significant resource required (monetary and grounds staff) to maintain wildflower areas.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the updated Climate Emergency Action Plan.

CE/24/12) Climate Action St Austell (CASA)

Councillor Hamilton advised that CASA meet monthly and Mr John Hubbard is now Chair of the group. They support organisations where they can with climate change activities, carry out litter picks and produce a bi-weekly article for the Voice Newspaper championing climate change initiatives. He added that Mr Colin Bristow (former chief geologist with Imerys) is due to speak to CASA on the 24th September about the effect of climate change on the geology in Cornwall and that he will hopefully attend a Town Council meeting in due course to provide a similar briefing. Mr Bristow is of the view that the geology in this area of Cornwall makes it an ideal site for a geothermal facility.

CE/24/13) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the date of the next meeting of the Climate and Environment Committee is 21st October 2024.

The meeting closed at 7.11pm.

St Austell Town Council



Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020 – 2024

Action	Responsible Officer/Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Implement new in-house waste management function.	Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk Operations Manager Finance and General Purposes Committee	March 2020	New arrangements implemented utilising existing staff with reduced travel compared to previous contract. Will monitor impact of new domestic waste arrangements.	Yes.
Explore the potential to purchase energy from renewable sources for Priority Toilets, Poltair Park and town centre electric point.	Town Clerk Finance and General Purposes Committee	Sept 2025	Library and Poltair Park electrical supplies to be negotiated with renewable energy companies when the market stabilises.	Closely monitoring

Action	Responsible Officer/Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Develop a tree planting programme to compliment the Forest for Cornwall	Operations Manager Council	Ongoing	644 trees planted since 2017. All trees planted are logged with Forest for Cornwall. Around 30 trees are being brought on at the Town Council's nursery.	Ongoing
Installation of a polytunnel to allow the re-cycling of plants and growing on of trees/shrubs and creation of a tree nursery.	Operations Manager Community Committee	Ongoing	Polytunnel well used since 2022 for the growing on of plants and trees. 700 plants have this year been grown from seed or plugs in the polytunnel.	Fully operational.
Replacement of external lights at The Stable Block with low energy LED lights	Operations Manager Community Committee	February 2021		Complete
Replacement of internal lights in the Committee Room at the Stable Block with low energy LED lights	Operations Manager Community Committee	November 2021		Complete
Installation of rainwater harvesting facility at Alexandra Road allotments	Operations Manager Community Committee	February 2021		Complete

Action	Responsible Officer/Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Establish a small grants scheme for community climate change initiatives or amend existing scheme.	Deputy Town Clerk Community Committee	February 2021	Existing grant criteria reviewed to encourage climate emergency projects.	Complete.
Review horticulture service/employ a horticultural apprentice dependent on workloads.	Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk/ Operations Manager Council	February 2021/ongoing	2 apprentices employed with effect from February 2021. Further apprentice being recruited.	New apprentice started April 2024
Trial of an organic foam based weed solution in the Town Council's parks and car park.	Operations Manager Community Committee	Spring 2021/ongoing	Method is not suitable for all areas across the town and is powered by diesel. Machinery and service proved unreliable.	Trial complete.
Engage with GI4G to maximise improvements in biodiversity through "making space for nature"	Town Clerk/Operations Manager Community Committee	March 2021/ongoing	The Meadows and Cemetery Park schemes were completed and the Town Council have taken on maintenance responsibility for both sites.	Complete and waiting for future opportunities

Action	Responsible Officer / Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Development of a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy	Town Clerk/Operations Manager Community Committee	March 2021/ongoing	Signed off by Council 22.03.21. Review due.	Complete
Develop Environmental Policy based on good practice identified by Cornwall Council.	Deputy Town Clerk Community Committee	April 2021/ongoing	Reviewed and approved July 2024	Complete
Enter one or more parks in the South West in Bloom Pride in Parks competition to demonstrate environment initiatives.	Operations Manager/Deputy Town Clerk Community Committee	May 2022/ongoing	Poltair Park entered into the 2023 Pride in Park competition part of which is judged on sustainability. 3 Stars achieved. Truro Road Park will be entered in 2024.	Truro Road Park achieved a Silver Gilt award
Assist Community Groups to enter SWIB In Your Neighbourhoods	Deputy Town Clerk Community Committee	July 2022	Community Groups provided opportunity to enter IYN competition 2023. Library & Lostwood Gardens entered.	Ongoing
Install re-cycling bins	Operations Manager Finance & General Purposes Committee	May 2022/ongoing	Poltair Park café now under new management and open for business Tenant actively re-cycling and in contract with BIFFA.	

Action	Responsible Officer / Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Assist the St Austell BID with SWIB BID entry	Operations Manager Deputy Town Clerk Community Committee	July 2022	BID have stopped entering due to resource issues.	
Lobby Government and Cornwall Council to introduce subsidised retrofit programmes for housing in deprived areas	Town Clerk Council	December 2021	Cornwall Council and housing associations have taken advantage of funding opportunities.	
Improve planting in Bethel Park.	Operations Manager Council	31 st October 2022	Major improvement scheme completed and further planting to be undertaken Spring 2024.	Wildflower area created at Bethel Park in Spring 2024.
Lobby for improvements to public transport and more flexible hopper/community bus service	Town Clerk Council	Ongoing	Revitalisation Partnership to consider as part of the revitalisation works.	
Procure re-cycled paper for St Austell Library and the office.	Deputy Town Clerk Community Committee	Ongoing	Due to the costs involved, ecolabel paper rather than recycled paper is procured for most uses at the present time.	
Review management and ownership of Gover Woods	Town Clerk Finance & General Purposes Committee	-	Woods sold to a private individual.	

Action	Responsible Officer/Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Explore ways to reduce paper production.	Town Clerk Council	March 2022/ongoing	A trial was undertaken with the previous administration where 10 Councillors agreed not to receive paper copies of agendas. Councillors to be surveyed post May 2025 elections to gauge appetite for receiving electronic agendas/minutes only.	
Street Lights. Explore energy saving measures for Town Council owned street lights.	Operations Manager Finance & General Purposes Committee	Ongoing	Town Council street lights being replaced with LED's on a phased basis. Comprehensive replacement cost prohibitive.	
Community Engagement	Operations Manager Climate & Environment Committee	Ongoing	TC worked closely with CASA. Garden festival and green festival supported. Rotary Club carrying out planting and litter picks across various sites	
Liaise with St Austell BID with regard to the efficiency of the Town Centre Christmas lights.	Deputy Town Clerk Finance and General Purposes Committee	December 2022/ongoing	All Christmas lights are LED and were replaced in 2023.	Complete

Action	Responsible Officer/Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Review composting arrangements and explore the potential to develop own compost.	Operations Manager Climate & Environment Committee	Spring 2022/ongoing	Orchard Car Park identified as a potential site to create formal composting bays. Town Council's future at the Stable Block uncertain due to re-development of the Penwinnick Road site. Awaiting contact from Treveeth.	
Explore carbon accounting for Town Council activities.	Town Clerk Climate & Environment Committee	December 2021/ongoing	Potential solution identified. Insufficient resource currently to complete project. Still to be progressed.	
Investigate and consider installing electric charging point(s) in Priory Car Park	Town Clerk Operations Manager Climate & Environment Committee	February 2022/ongoing	EV charging points installed and operational.	
Explore potential for a cycling facility at The Meadows	Operations Manager Community Committee	February 2022	Funding streams, designs and costs being explored for a new pump track	

Action	Responsible Officer/Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
In order to reduce the need for cash collection, explore the installation of a contactless payment system on at least one of the car park payment machines in Priory Car Park.	Town Clerk Finance & General Purposes Committee	April 2022/ongoing	Contactless payment systems installed February 2024.	
Consider suitable buildings for photovoltaic panels and explore viability	Town Clerk Finance and General Purposes Committee	May 2025	Priory Car Park Toilets identified. Suitability to be determined. Will review resource implications at next budget round.	
Consider how best to engage with the town's residents to raise awareness of climate change issues.	Deputy Town Clerk Community Committee	Ongoing	A further climate awareness event in the library is being planned for Spring 2025.	
Enhancement of current wildflower areas	Operations Manager Community Committee	Ongoing	Wildflower areas maintained at: Penwinnick Road, Daniels Lane, The Meadows and Trenowah Road. The Meadows wildflower areas refreshed October 2023.	Areas have been reseeded in spring 2024 and again in 2025

Action	Responsible Officer / Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Identify opportunities for green/climate emergency projects through the Town Revitalisation Partnership	Town Clerk Council	Ongoing	LCWIP completed. Rooftop Garden feasibility being thoroughly tested. Report due December 2024. Church piazza project incorporates sustainable planting. Due to be completed March 2025.	Awaiting update from CC on LCWIP projects.
Follow a buy local policy to support local businesses and reduce miles travelled by goods.	All officers Council	Ongoing	Unless mitigating factors prevail, local suppliers and contractors are used.	
Improvement of Multi Use Trails	All officers Council	Ongoing	Signage improved by Sustrans and Rotary Club in partnership with Town Council. Trail at Tremena Gardens improved. LCWIP completed.	

Action	Responsible Officer/Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Provision for re-cycling	Deputy Town Clerk Council	Ongoing	Contract held with Biffa. Recycling of cardboard and plastics on a fortnightly basis for both the office and library. Shrubs and plants recycled where possible. Wood from Poltair pavilion and Lostwood Garden recycled.	
To keep grass cutting, wildflower and tree planting policies under review to support pollinators and carbon sequestration.	Operations Manager Community Committee	Ongoing	Grass cutting policy reviewed May 2024. Tree watering systems acquired to save water and watering.	
Provision of battery-operated grounds maintenance equipment	Operations Manager Community Committee	Ongoing	Battery operated blower acquired and is successful. Another will be ordered in spring 2025	
Engagement with young people to encourage environmental issues	Deputy Town Clerk Community Committee	Ongoing	Litter picks in Poltair Park and new litter bin purchased for the park on the recommendation of Young People Cornwall.	Further engagement with young people to be progressed in the new year.

Action	Responsible Officer /Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Environmental activities with regard to Town Council maintained public rights of way	Operations Manager Community Committee	Ongoing	Maintenance work being absorbed by the Council workforce to reduce travel and carbon emissions.	
Creation of Truro Road Park – Friends Group	Operations Manager Community Committee	Ongoing	Truro Road Friends Group resurrected and involved in improvement projects for the park. Recycling shrubs from Lostwood Garden to Truro Road.	Friends Group achieved a Silver Gilt award in the Pride in Parks competition in 2023
Landrew Road community garden	Operations Manager Community Committee	Ongoing	Growing group of volunteers at the garden. Compost toilet created, covered area erected utilising re-claimed wood and regular composting at the site	
Planning & Regeneration Committee to look favourably on planning applications where it can be demonstrated that consideration has been given to the impact the proposal has on the environment and mitigating actions put in place.	Town Clerk Planning & Regeneration Committee	Ongoing	National policy changes introduced regarding biodiversity. Committee has raised environmental concerns and issues for a number of planning applications and will continue to do so.	

Action	Responsible Officer/Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Purchase re-cycled material where possible	Steve Skinner Operations Manager	Ongoing	All new benches, tables and safety surfacing in parks are now made from recycled materials.	
Explore efficient ways to provide assistance in terms of warmth, shelter and food for the disadvantaged.	Sara Gwilliams Deputy Town Clerk	Winter 2022/23	St Austell Library engaged with NHS and Volunteer Cornwall to support the Safe Space and Warm Space initiatives. Small Grants Scheme terms and conditions reviewed to permit revenue expenditure such as energy costs to funded for voluntary groups.	Complete Complete

Action	Responsible Officer/Committee	Deadline	Progress	Complete
Repairing play equipment rather than buying new.	Steve Skinner Community Committee	Ongoing	Winter maintenance includes comprehensive repairs and servicing which should extend the life of play equipment. Local engineering company used to manufacture some parts.	
Creation of bat shelter in Poltair Park.	Steve Skinner Community Committee	February 2024	Complete.	Summer 2024
Identify a suitable space in Priory Car Park for electric bikes to be located.	Steve Skinner Community Committee	Spring 2023	Beryl Bikes rolled out in St Austell by Cornwall Council in April 2023. Space in Priory Car Park identified, and line removal/re-lining carried out to allow the bikes to be picked up/dropped off in that location.	Beryl Bikes withdrawn in Sept 2024 due to lack of use.

