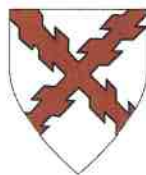


St Austell Town Council



Finance and General Purposes Committee

To: All Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee


Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend the **Remote Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting** of **St Austell Town Council** to be held on **Tuesday 6th April 2021** at **6pm**.

Any member of the public wishing to attend this meeting, should obtain a password from the Clerk by no later than **12pm on Tuesday 6th April 2021**.

For security reasons, no person will be admitted to the meeting without prior notification to the Clerk that they wish to attend.

*****This remote meeting will be held using Zoom*****



David Pooley
Town Clerk

31st March 2021

Tel: 01726 829859
Email: david.pooley@staustell-tc.gov.uk
Website: www.staustell-tc.gov.uk

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. Minutes of meeting held on the 22nd February 2021

**Pages
1 - 4**

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

5. Matters to note

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.

6. 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.

7. St Austell Library

(Purpose: To agree changes to the operation of St Austell Library). (Verbal report).

8. Budget Monitoring Report

**Pages
5 - 10**

(Purpose: To review the Town Council's budget monitoring report for the period 1st April 2020 to 28th February 2021). (Report attached).

9. Financial Accounts – 2020/21

(Purpose: To receive an update on the 2020/21 financial accounts) (Verbal update).

10. Asset Register

(Purpose: To approve the Asset Register as at 31st March 2021). (To follow).

11. To consider excluding the press and public.

Under Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it is proposed that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the business specified for the following item:

Item 12 is confidential because it contains commercial information.

12. Priory Car Park - Public Conveniences

(Purpose: To approve changes to the operation of the Priory Car Park public conveniences). (Report attached).

13. Dates of Next Meetings

(Purpose: To confirm the date of the Town Council's next Finance and General Purposes Committee: 28th June 2021 and 20th September 2021).

MINUTES of a REMOTE MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 22nd February 2021 at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Bishop, Brown, Cohen, Colwill, French, Jones, Lanxon, Oxenham, Palmer, Styles (Mayor) and Walker.

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

F/19/111) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rees.

F/19/112) Declarations of Interest

None.

F/19/113) Dispensations

None.

F/19/114) Minutes of meeting held on 9th November 2020

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 9th November 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

F/19/115) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that the installation of the welfare unit and polytunnel had become protracted as Listed Building Consent is still awaited from Cornwall Council.

F/19/116) Public participation

None.

F/19/117) Budget Monitoring Report

The Clerk advised that the car park income stands at £130,000 for the year to date which will be more or less the year end position and substantially below budget. Income of £64,000 and £63,000 has been received for hardship funding and Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme respectively and further claims under the hardship scheme will be made in due course.

The Clerk advised that he has agreed to act as banker for the Friends of St Austell Station and Climate Action St Austell (CASA) groups until they are both constituted and have opened bank accounts.

EU funding in the sum of £15,000 was successfully claimed for two town centre Information Officers for the period January to March and a further bid in the sum of £9,000 has been approved for them to continue in the town from April to June. The administration and co-ordination of their activities is carried out by St Austell BID.

Arising from a question, the Clerk advised that the Kestrel Security guards patrolling the wider St Austell area from time to time are employed by Cornwall Council and are primarily employed to provide COVID-19 advice and guidance to businesses.

The Clerk advised that the Town Council has received a large water bill of just over £3,500 from South West Water for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st January 2021 for water consumed at the Bowls Club and that due to the lack of any communication or receipt of a bill until now, discussions are ongoing about a fair and reasonable payment to be made. He advised that he will contact the Bowls Club to provide them with notice that with effect from 1st April 2021, they will be billed for the water consumed at the Club.

F/19/118) Risk Management

The Clerk referred to the previously circulated Risk Register and explained that the Council is required by the Auditors to have an in depth detailed document and suggested that the areas highlighted in red should be the risks that Members look closely at. These are:

- Insufficient staff
- Public toilets
- Non-renewal of leases
- Pandemic

Members expressed concern at the size of the document and suggested that risks below 3 could be taken out and anything above 4 left. It was noted that a heading "climate change/extreme weather" is missing from Section 16.

The Clerk advised that he would liaise with the Auditor about whether a summary document with the key risks could be produced and ratified by full Council.

It was **RECOMMENDED THAT** the Council should approve the Risk Management Strategy and Strategic Risk Register.

Councillor Oxenham abstained from voting on the Strategic Risk Register as she had been unable to view the document due to IT issues

F/19/119) Treasury Management

The Clerk advised that the Treasury Management Strategy once again assumed a low risk approach to investments and that all excess funds at the present time are with Cornwall Council in a variable rate deposit account which offers flexibility and instant access. Members noted the investment income of approximately £3,000 per annum.

During discussion, Members expressed a wish that the Town Council should invest as ethically as possible and suggested a statement to be added to the Treasury Management Strategy to reflect this wish.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Treasury Management Strategy subject to the following statement being added.

"St Austell Town Council seeks to achieve maximum return from investments that have been selected prudently. The town council will strive to invest in organisations where the activities of the organisation are, on ethical grounds, consistent with the values, aims and objectives of the town council, even though this may reduce returns. St Austell Town Council is committed to transparency about how and when

investment decisions are made, and will review and publish this policy annually to ensure that it remains fit for purpose"

F/19/120) Ellis Whittam – Annual Audit

The Clerk advised that there had been a mis-understanding in that the Audit undertaken at the beginning of the year was an interim review to look at the Town Council's Covid19 safe arrangements and that a full review is due to be carried out shortly.

Arising from the above, the Clerk agreed to review how the Member Internal Audit of the Town Council's governance arrangements can safely re-commence and report his recommendation to the next Finance and General Purposes Committee.

F/19/121) CCTV

The Clerk provided an overview of the CCTV service including the staffing changes to cover maternity leave. He advised that he is in discussions with the Police about the re-deployable CCTV camera and that there was a meeting on the previous Thursday with the Director of Housing at Cornwall Council regarding plans to reduce the number of emergency accommodation places in St Austell.

Arising from a question, the Clerk undertook to obtain more detail on the nature of the arrests made as a direct result of CCTV.

F/19/122) Virtual meetings

The Clerk explained that the legislation allowing virtual meetings to take place is due to expire on 6th May 2021 which, if not extended, will mean the resumption of face to face meetings. This would be a challenge due to the limited meeting space available to the Town Council. The Clerk advised that CALC is encouraging Town and Parish Councils to lobby the Government for an extension of the legislation that permits virtual meetings and suggested that the Town Council should write to Steve Double MP and the Government to emphasise the importance of allowing this legislation to remain in place whilst lockdown is being eased.

During discussion it was noted that Cornwall Council are considering hybrid meetings and the long-term environmental benefits which would accrue if legislation permitted the continuance of virtual meetings.

It was **RESOLVED** to lobby the MP and Secretary of State for an extension of the current legislation that allows virtual meetings.

F/19/123) Elections/New Members

The Clerk advised that he is pressing Cornwall Council for maps and more detail on the May 2021 elections for publication on the Town Council's website and social media. He advised that CALC is producing some literature for Town and Parish Councils to adapt to try to encourage people to stand.

Councillor Brown advised that the Register of Electors will be made available on the 1st March and that there is resistance from some schools about being a polling station which is causing difficulties.

It was suggested that it might be easier to find people to stand as independents rather than for a party and that it could be considered discriminatory to people who are shielding if they cannot attend face to face meetings. Concern was expressed about the accuracy of the electoral roll and the need to exercise caution with regard to Council business during purdah.

F/19/124) St Austell Library

The Deputy Town Clerk updated Members on the library click and collect service. She advised that on average the library handles 4,000 books each month and that two trolleys go out into the lobby every day for customers to collect their reservations. Each trolley holds approximately 80 reservations.

In addition, two lists are received every day detailing St Austell Library stock needs prepared from the online requests made by customers. These lists contain approximately 30 requests which are found and then processed for either St Austell customers or for customers of other sites.

The incoming customer return items are usually 50-60 items per day and each item is wiped down and set aside in clean boxes to quarantine for 72 hours.

The Home Library Service is still operating and some of the reading groups are operating by Zoom. It was noted that the number of people accessing the public computers is currently quite low with an average of 6 people per week using the computers.

F/19/125) Dates of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee is due to take place on Monday 6th April 2021.

The meeting closed at 7.21pm.

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
6th APRIL 2021
BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with an update on expenditure and income to the 28th February 2021 and a copy of the Council's latest bank reconciliation statements.

2. LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

It is a legal requirement for the Town Council to set a budget annually and it is good practice to monitor that budget at regular intervals. The Town Clerk monitors budgets on a monthly basis and provides regular budget monitoring reports to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. It is part of the remit of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to monitor and manage budgets on behalf of the Town Council.

3. RESOURCE ISSUES

None outside of existing budgets.

4. EQUALITIES ISSUES

None.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

None.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members note the attached budget monitoring reports and bank reconciliation statement.

DAVID POOLEY - TOWN CLERK

Profit & Loss

St Austell Town Council 1 Feb 2021 to 28 Feb 2021

	Actual	Budget	Var GBP	Var %	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Var GBP	Var %
Income								
Car Park Income	423	25,000	(24,577)	-98.3%	130,455	269,000	(138,545)	-51.5%
Council Tax Grant	-	-	-	0.0%	31,067	31,066	1	0.0%
Interest Income	187	250	(63)	-25.1%	2,906	2,750	156	5.7%
Library Income	26	916	(890)	-97.2%	403	10,084	(9,681)	-96.0%
Other Grants and Contributions	8,637	-	8,637	0.0%	151,271	-	151,271	0.0%
Other Income	-	50	(50)	-100.0%	3,583	550	3,033	551.4%
Precept Payments	-	-	-	0.0%	762,958	762,958	-	0.0%
Public Convenience Charges	-	360	(360)	-100.0%	501	3,940	(3,439)	-87.3%
Rent Received	-	878	(878)	-100.0%	7,882	9,658	(1,776)	-18.4%
Total Income	9,273	27,454	(18,181)	-66.2%	1,091,025	1,090,006	1,019	0.1%
Gross Profit	9,273	27,454	(18,181)	-66.0%	1,091,025	1,090,006	1,019	0.0%
Less Operating Expenses								
Employee Expenses								
Recruitment	-	150	(150)	-100.0%	360	1,600	(1,240)	-77.5%
Salaries / Wages	39,154	44,052	(4,898)	-11.1%	435,012	484,572	(49,560)	-10.2%
Training	370	700	(330)	-47.1%	1,600	7,700	(6,100)	-79.2%
Total Employee Expenses	39,524	44,902	(5,378)	-12.0%	436,972	493,872	(56,900)	-11.5%
Premises Expenses								

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Profit & Loss

	Actual	Budget	Var GBP	Var %	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Var GBP	Var %
Cleaning & Domestic Supplies	601	608	(7)▼	-1.2%▼	6,655	6,688	(33)▼	-0.5%▼
Electricity	204	675	(471)▼	-69.8%▼	5,408	7,425	(2,017)▼	-27.2%▼
Gas	468	250	218▲	87.3%▲	1,860	2,750	(890)▼	-32.4%▼
Grounds Maintenance Supplies	1,172	1,829	(657)▼	-35.9%▼	15,010	20,119	(5,109)▼	-25.4%▼
Play Equipment	-	4,166	(4,166)▼	-100.0%▼	48,758	45,826	2,932▲	6.4%▲
Rates	6,739	7,027	(288)▼	-4.1%▼	76,434	77,297	(863)▼	-1.1%▼
Rent / Room Hire	-	440	(440)▼	-100.0%▼	5,180	4,840	340▲	7.0%▲
Repairs / Maintenance Premises	529	3,433	(2,904)▼	-84.6%▼	20,236	37,763	(17,527)▼	-46.4%▼
Water	343	195	148▲	76.0%▲	1,017	2,145	(1,128)▼	-52.6%▼
Total Premises Expenses	10,057	18,623	(8,566)	-46.0%	180,557	204,853	(24,296)	-11.9%
Supplies and Services	-	-	-	0.0%	-	150	(150)▼	-100.0%▼
Books and Publications	-	-	-	0.0%	-	150	(150)▼	-100.0%▼
Contract Payments	3,153	12,301	(9,148)▼	-74.4%▼	123,783	135,311	(11,528)▼	-8.5%▼
Insurances	-	-	-	0.0%	5,864	6,000	(136)▼	-2.3%▼
IT / Communications	896	1,483	(587)▼	-39.6%▼	13,637	16,313	(2,676)▼	-16.4%▼
Mayors Allowances	-	62	(62)▼	-100.0%▼	-	682	(682)▼	-100.0%▼
Members Allowance	-	20	(20)▼	-100.0%▼	-	220	(220)▼	-100.0%▼
Miscellaneous Expenses	4,394	3,172	1,222▲	38.5%▲	27,563	34,892	(7,329)▼	-21.0%▼
Miscellaneous Grants	-	2,916	(2,916)▼	-100.0%▼	20,712	32,076	(11,364)▼	-35.4%▼
Office Supplies	337	354	(17)▼	-4.9%▼	2,428	3,894	(1,466)▼	-37.6%▼
Printing and Stationery	168	310	(142)▼	-45.7%▼	2,826	3,410	(584)▼	-17.1%▼
Protective Clothing	451	125	326▲	260.7%▲	2,785	1,375	1,410▲	102.6%▲
Publicity	250	116	134▲	115.5%▲	2,000	1,276	724▲	56.7%▲
Small Grants Scheme	65	666	(601)▼	-90.2%▼	5,075	7,326	(2,251)▼	-30.7%▼
Subscriptions	-	575	(575)▼	-100.0%▼	7,315	6,325	990▲	15.6%▲

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Profit & Loss

	Actual	Budget	Var GBP	Var %	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Var GBP	Var %
Total Supplies and Services	9,713	22,100	(12,387)	-56.0%	213,988	249,250	(35,262)	-14.1%
Transport Related Expenses								
Contract Hire and Operating Leases	1,073	1,087	(14)▼	-1.3%▼	12,851	11,957	894▲	7.5%▲
Fuel	541	562	(21)▼	-3.8%▼	4,956	6,182	(1,226)▼	-19.8%▼
Other Transport/plant expenses	300	195	105▲	53.8%▲	11,551	2,145	9,406▲	438.5%▲
Repairs/ Maintenance-Vehicles/Plant	61	558	(497)▼	-89.1%▼	4,897	6,138	(1,241)▼	-20.2%▼
Road Fund / Taxes	-	88	(88)▼	-100.0%▼	535	968	(433)▼	-44.7%▼
Transport Insurance	-	208	(208)▼	-100.0%▼	2,614	2,288	326▲	14.3%▲
Travel and Subsistence	-	98	(98)▼	-100.0%▼	130	1,078	(948)▼	-88.0%▼
Total Transport Related Expenses	1,975	2,796	(821)	-29.4%	37,533	30,756	6,777	22.0%
Total Operating Expenses	61,269	88,421	(27,152)	-30.7%	869,049	978,731	(109,682)	-11.2%
Net Profit	(51,996)	(60,967)	8,971	15.0%	221,975	111,275	110,700	99.0%

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