

St Austell Town Council



Anti-Social Behaviour Summit – Thursday 7th November 2019

Council Chamber, St Austell Information Service (formerly One Stop Shop), 39 Penwinnick Road, St Austell, PL25 5DR

Apologies

Bull, Jackie - Cornwall Councillor/Town Councillor
Heyward, Sandra – Cornwall Councillor/Town Councillor
Mellow, Mike – STAK
Oxenham, Nicky – St Austell Town Council
Putko, Malcolm – Harbour Housing
Styles, Tim – St Austell Town Council
Teague, Sue – ABC Residents Group

Present

Brown, Malcolm – Cornwall Councillor and St Austell Town Council
Catherall, Helen - Addaction
Cohen, Anita – St Austell Town Council
French, Tom - Cornwall Councillor and St Austell Town Council
Gard, Ed – Inspector, Devon & Cornwall Police
Gwilliams, Sara – St Austell Town Council
Hamilton, Vicki – SAHA Freshstart
Hill, Emily – Harbour Housing
Horton, Charity – Newquay CCTV Manager
Hurst, Richard – White River Place & St Austell BID
King, Gary – St Austell Town Council & Co-Op
Miller, Annette – St Austell BID
Nicholson, Helen – Cornwall Council
Palmer, Brian – St Austell Town Council (Chairman)
Pooley, David – St Austell Town Council
Potts, Eve - Addaction
Styles, Jen – SAHA (Freshstart)
Toms, Helen – Cornwall Council
Walker, Iain – Holy Trinity Church
Wonnacott, Zoe – Cornwall Council

Apologies

David Pooley read out the list of apologies.

Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting and invited the group to introduce themselves.

Notes from the meeting dated 28th March 2019

The notes from the meeting dated 28th March 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

Judith Cross – Cornwall Housing

The Chairman welcomed Jude Cross, Rough Sleeping Strategic Lead, Cornwall Housing to the meeting. JC provided a presentation on the measures in place to address issues surrounding rough sleeping in Cornwall. She advised that in February 2019 Cornwall had a rough sleeping estimate of 52 and in October 2019 the estimate was 32. Government funding has been received which has helped to fund additional staffing/projects across Cornwall such as:

- A homeless patient advisor
- A landlord liaison officer
- Additional cold weather provision
- Additional six beds in a night shelter
- 2 additional rough sleeper outreach workers
- 2 x prevention and engagement officers
- Short Term Accommodation and Resettlement Project (STAR)
- Private Rented Landlord Incentive scheme
- Housing First scheme
- Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub
- Tenancy Sustainment initiatives
- Mental Health for Homeless project
- Long Term accommodation and Resettlement
- Cold Weather Provision initiative
- Additional Hospital Discharge beds
- Nos Da Kernow (No First Night Out) – 627 referrals in to service up to January 2019.

By way of St Austell specific information, JC advised that 3 rough sleepers had been identified in the town in October and that they were working in

partnership with agencies such as Harbour Housing, Freshstart/SAHA, STAK and CN4C to help tackle the problem.

ASB Officer update (Helen Toms, Cornwall Council)

HT advised that she covered 2 sectors, St Austell and Liskeard. She felt that it had been a relatively good summer, although there had been some issues since the summer with an increase in aggressive begging. She advised that she had 5 under 18's in the St Austell area that were on her radar and 16 adults who are in the early stages prior to a CBO being issued. 4 CBO's have been issued in the sector, with 3 individuals being assigned to prison. She thanked Cosgarne, Freshstart, Addaction and The House for their assistance.

In response to questions, she said that St Austell was in a better state than some other towns. She confirmed that there was a massive issue with mental health and not enough resource to address it and that there were some issues with youth gatherings in green spaces in the outlying villages around St Austell. There appeared to be a shift away from drink related ASB towards aggressive begging and shoplifting in the town centre. HT stressed the importance of encouraging people to report issues because without intelligence, action cannot be taken.

Town Council update (David Pooley, Town Clerk)

CCTV

DP advised that the Town Council had completed a major upgrade and expansion to the Town Centre CCTV system and now had 20 fully digital cameras ranging from Poltair Park to Truro Road Park with a concentration around the Town Centre. He explained that these are connected to a monitoring suite in Newquay Police Station where excellent staff managed by Charity Horton monitor the cameras and have links to the shop watch radio system and the police airwaves system. He explained that representatives of St Austell Bay Parish Council from Charlestown had recently visited the CCTV suite in Newquay and were impressed with the systems operated. DP advised that he was also investigating and looking at options for the use of mobile or re-locatable CCTV cameras. He explained that there are transient issues outside of the town centre where it would be helpful if cameras could be located temporarily and this was something he wished to explore further.

Parks and Gardens

DP advised that the improvements to the parks and open spaces were continuing and that this appeared to have reduced graffiti, anti-social behaviour and drug use in the parks. Two knives have been found and handed to the police but a lot less needles and drug paraphernalia are being found now. In April 2020 the waste collection and litter collection service will hopefully be brought in house which will mean more staff patrolling parks and open spaces and allow the Town Council to address some of the grot spots around the town. Better maintained areas will hopefully improve the public perception of the area and in parallel the Council will work more closely with local communities to improve ownership of the parks and open spaces in their areas.

The House

Young People Cornwall are now settled in The House building, the leases have been completed and over 40 staff have transferred from Truro to St Austell which means that there are a lot more youth workers operating from St Austell and available to address issues.

Safer Cornwall Funding

DP advised that there was funding available and grants of up to £1,000 were being made from a proceeds of crime fund. He advised that he was hoping to put together bids for funding and if anybody wanted any assistance or to join in to contact him.

Police update – Inspector Ed Gard

Resource

EG advised that resourcing levels were pretty good currently and that St Austell is now seen as a priority by Senior Officers. There has been some movement in the neighbourhood team. Sgt Matt Trevivian has been promoted and a new Sgt, Reggie Butler, is due to start on the 25th November 2019. Chris Coot is currently acting Sgt. EG advised that he hopes to have 5 neighbourhood officers for the coming spring/summer and resource permitting, he would like to see a dedicated police officer for the town.

Police activity

EG advised that it had been a fairly good year and thanked the BID for their contributions to extra patrols.

He advised that resource was being drawn to the clay villages as ASB in these areas was increasing. He would be talking to The House about potential outreach work in that area. He advised that mental health continues to be a major challenge and a lot of resource is dedicated to mental health issues. He advised that cuckooing and exploitation of vulnerable adults was a major concern and expressed the importance of intelligence to the police. He thanked Cosgarne, Addaction and Freshstart, Town Council and BID for their regular input.

Crime Statistics

All crime is down 5.9% over the last 12 months. If domestic abuse is excluded, it is down by 10%. There appears to be an increase in burglary of dwellings with 96 burglaries in the sector. There has been a shift of shop lifting to out of town stores. He advised that prolific offenders were being targeted.

RH advised that he was seeing an increase in town centre shop lifting and had experienced a small number of grab and go incidents.

BP advised that drug dealing had been witnessed in the alley behind STAK.

Safer St Austell update – Zoe Wonnacott

ZW explained the make up and purpose of Safer St Austell and described recent walkabouts including a walkabout in the Bethel area with Councillor Brown at the Chapel Field Estate.

SW advised that she had attended an event in Truro Road Park which was a family fun day and been able to engage with a large number of local people. She also highlighted a PCC event in White River Place in April and multi agency meetings which were taking place in Charlestown to listen to residents and work with licensees to encourage reporting of crime following some incidents at Charlestown. Initiatives in the pipeline include a donation box scheme in the town centre in partnership with the BID, the production of a Safer St Austell video and the introduction of the Phoenix programme at Penrice School.

ZW highlighted a Domestic Abuse and Violence Campaign commencing on the 5th December 2019 and running for 16 days.

Cornwall Councillor updates

Councillor Brown provided an update on Chapel Field and described his experience with the walkabout organised at the estate. MB made a plea for funding from the Town Council for a mobile CCTV camera for use in the outlying areas of the Town. He also outlined a conversation with a member of the public which had caused him concern.

MB advised that Cornwall Council's Neighbourhood Scrutiny Committee had recently had a report refreshing the Safer Cornwall Plan which showed that crime was rising across the county. He also advised that Cornwall Council were reviewing its localism strategy to seek more powers from the Government to pool budgets for joint initiatives which might be helpful to the partnerships working on ASB issues.

Addaction

HC advised that Addaction had received 7 alerts in both quarters 1 and quarter 2 for their drug and alcohol outreach service. They continue to monitor key areas and maintain the needle exchange service. Addaction have recently been awarded an outreach contract to be known as SOS which will be a referral service for the homeless.

BID/White River Place/Retailers

RH/AM thanked Charity for the excellent CCTV service. RH/AM advised that they had increased security patrols and that they are experiencing some escalation of problems in the town centre with aggressive begging and shop lifting becoming an increasing problem.

GK advised that the Co-op had experience an increase in aggressive shop lifting and drug dealing in their car park. It was felt that the Co-op needed to improve the use of their Shop Watch Radio and communicate with the CCTV monitoring suite. EG advised that he would speak to the Co-op Manager.

CCTV

CH advised that she worked very closely with St Austell Town Council, BID and White River Place and that the radio issues had been resolved. She explained the benefits of the CCTV system and the improvements that had been made as part of the upgrade of the system.

Improvements to the image quality had made identifying people easier and allowed better quality images to be produced as evidence. CH advised that in 2018 the Monitoring Suite monitored 2,984 live incidents and assisted with 135 arrests.

Cosgarne/Harbour Housing

EH explained the adult social care contract that had been awarded to Harbour Housing and the homelessness referral system from Cornwall Council. She advised that they had upgraded their policies with regard to ASB.

Holy Trinity Church

IW congratulated the group on the work undertaken and suggested that it was important that the public knew how much wonderful work was being done behind the scenes. He explained that the church was now open from 8.30am to 4.30pm every day and was often unmanned. CCTV had been installed and, to date, more visits were being received by members of the public which was deterring any inappropriate behaviour. It was hoped that being open more would encourage people to view the wonderful church. To date there have been no incidents and the experiment was proving successful.

He advised that they had purchased the Hop and Vine and would be working to make this part of the town more attractive. A section of the railings had been removed and so far the feedback was complementary. He thanked the Town Council for tidying the area around where the railings had been. He explained that the Hop & Vine would include the church offices, a café, meeting rooms and training facilities. It was hoped that the area outside of the church would become a social area known as "church square".

SAHA

VH explained that Freshstart was no longer commissioned as a complex needs provider. Some staff had TUPE transferred over to Harbour Housing the new provider service. The SAHA facility had gone through a very testing period of time having de-commissioned the complex needs service and found places for 18 residents. They now had a six month contract to provide a 10 bed STAR service (short term homeless provision) and an 8 bed longer term service.

Initial experience of the new contract had proved chaotic with in the first month over 20 referrals being received of which 3 declined the offer of accommodation and 5 were deemed too high need to be given accommodation. VH advised that the contract lengths for adult social care contracts were 3 years with a possible extension of another 1 plus 1 years. Freshstart have a contract with Cornwall Housing Limited to provide homeless services on a 6 month pilot basis.

Others

Councillor King advised that he was involved with the Community Speedwatch. If anybody wanted to know more about Community Speedwatch or become involved, please contact GK.

Actions

1. SG to circulate the homeless reporting details.
2. All group members to report any homeless cases.
3. DP to explore neighbourhood watch further to help address issues in the wider town area.
4. DP to provide EG/RH with details of the Safer Street Fund.
5. DP to prepare a bid for proceeds of crime and send the details of the scheme to anybody interested.
6. EG/GK to liaise with regard to the Co-op and its issues.
7. All interested parties to contact GK regarding speedwatch.