

St Austell Town Council



Anti-Social Behaviour Summit – Tuesday 24th January 2017

Council Chamber, St Austell One Stop Shop, 39 Penwinnick Road, St Austell, PL25 5DR

Attendees

Bennett, Kirsty	Chapter 1, Freshstart
Bray, Gareth	Street Pastors
Brown, Malcolm	Cornwall Councillor/SATC
Bull, Jackie	Mayor of St Austell
Catherall, Helen	Addaction
Christophers, Wendy	Devon & Cornwall Police
Double, Anne	St Austell Town Council
Dowlen, Innes	Devon & Cornwall Police
French, Tom	Cornwall Councillor/SATC
Frost, Sara	Addaction
Gard, Edward	Devon & Cornwall Police
Gibson, Sara	St Austell Licensee
Gwilliams, Sara	St Austell Town Council
Hamilton, Vicki	Chapter 1, Fresh Start
Hamley, Jon	Devon & Cornwall Police
Harris, Malcolm	Cornwall Councillor (St Mewan)
Heyward, Sandra	Cornwall Councillor/SATC
Hitchens, Malcolm	Devon & Cornwall Housing
Holland, Bill	White River Place
Hurst, Richard	White River Place
Inchley, Ian	St Petrocs (Outreach)
King, Gary	Cornwall Councillor/SATC
Lanxon, Andrea	St Austell Town Council
Liney, Caroline	Addaction
Mellow, Mike	STAK
Miller, Annette	St Austell BID - Manager

Miles, Dawn

Nicholson, Helen

Oxenham, Nicky

Palmer, Brian

Pears, Richard

Pooley, David

Potts, Eve

Smith, Kate

Stanford, Mike

Stewart, Jenny

Toms, Helen

Walker, Paul

Addaction

Cornwall Council

St Austell Town Council

St Austell Town Council

St Austell Town Council

St Austell Town Council

Addaction

The House

St Austell Bay Chamber of
Commerce

St Austell Town Council

Cornwall Council

Cornwall Council, Service
Director of Resilient
Cornwall

Apologies

Abraham, Pam

Day, Cathy

Day, Nigel

Double, Steve

Flint, Howard (Rev)

Hager, Kim

Harrison, Sam

Justin Sarah

Keast, John

Kneller, John

Langdon, Paul

Lees, Tamsin

Holy Trinity Church

Holy Trinity Church

Holy Trinity Church

MP

Holy Trinity Church

Cornwall Council – Joint
Commissioning Manager

Poltair School

Sanctuary Housing

St Austell Town Council

St Austell BID - Chairman

Iceland

Cornwall Council –
Community Safety
Manager

St Austell BID

Addaction

Cornwall Council – Senior ASB Caseworker

Cosgarne

Penrice School

St Austell Town Council

Ocean Housing

Lewis, Mark

Liney Caroline

Matthews, Natasha

Putko, Malcolm

Richard Cardigan

Walker, Graham

Williams, Stephen

Chairman's Welcome

Councillor Brian Palmer welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed his pleasure at the number of groups and organisations represented. He explained that due to the judicial processes and

ongoing investigation, the group were not permitted to discuss the Truro Road incident.

Introductions

The Chairman asked the group to introduce themselves.

Councillor Oxenham asked that it be recorded that she had undertaken research into voluntary schemes for the limiting of the sale of strong alcohol.

Police update

Inspector Ed Gard advised that he was in the process of recruiting new Police Officers and was hoping to have a full complement for the sector for the summer season.

He circulated the latest crime statistics for St Austell, along with an analysis of town centre offences by street and answered questions regarding the types of crime that should be reported via either the 101 telephone number or 101 website facility.

Arising from a question, Inspector Gard acknowledged the frustrations with regard to the past inefficiencies of the 101 number but assured the group that as a force they were working hard to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

He advised the group that St Austell's statistics compared well with other Sectors and emphasised the benefits of partnership working.

Town Council update

David Pooley, Town Clerk advised that the Town Council continued to fund the CCTV in the town centre, in a joint partnership with Newquay Town Council and that a number of arrests had been achieved as a direct result of CCTV over recent months. The monitoring hours have been re-scheduled to provide a better coverage over the winter months and staff in the control centre were mostly local to the area and recognised many of the persons involved in incidents. He advised that there was a need to review the cameras in the town which would include a replacement programme for the older cameras and possibly a new camera for Priory Car Park.

The Clerk advised that the Town Council are maintaining their parks and open spaces to a high standard which was, so far, proving successful in deterring anti-social behaviour. He confirmed that when needles are found on Town Council property they are reported

promptly to Cornwall Council and Addaction but added that very few had been found in recent months which was pleasing.

Regrettably, the Priory Car Park toilets are continuing to see regular occurrences of anti-social behaviour including irresponsible disposal of needles in the drains and waste bins, evidence of drug burning on the baby changing unit and lewd behaviour in the mens' toilets. Addaction and the Police are aware of the issues and are both monitoring the area closely.

In answer to a question, the Town Clerk advised that he was watching the performance of the new Tolvaddon CCTV suite with interest, but at the moment felt that the partnership between Newquay and St Austell was the best option for the town for the time being.

Arising from a question, Inspector Gard confirmed that he would welcome additional CCTV cameras in the town.

Cornwall Council update

Community Safety Team

Paul Walker, Service Director of Resilient Cornwall advised that there was a Safer Cornwall Partnership and that county wide it had a good joined up approach and that there were opportunities for areas to join in with the county wide initiatives.

He acknowledged that the recent budget cuts had hit Cornwall Council's community safety team which had resulted in reduced activity from the service.

Mr Walker advised the group that consideration could be given to using a mobile CCTV camera for specific projects and/or to target certain areas.

Cornwall Councillors

Councillor Gary King

Councillor King advised that the main ASB issues in his Ward were graffiti in the Asda underpass and on a few street signs and some reported instances of drinking in Woodland Road park, although to date, no evidence of this has been found.

Councillor Jackie Bull

Councillor Bull advised that she had been talking to senior staff in Cornwall Council about the recent ASB issues in St Austell and is

hopeful that action will be taken to re-assure the public that the town is safe. She added that she had referred some homelessness cases to St Petrocs and liaised with Cornwall Council about litter on Tregonissey Road and a broken fence at Poltair Park.

Councillor Sandra Heyward

Councillor Heyward advised that she had some residents in her Division wishing to set up a neighbourhood watch scheme.

Councillor Malcolm Brown

Councillor Brown advised that one of the PCSO's had recently helped some residents in his division to revive a neighbourhood watch scheme.

Inspector Gard advised that he supported neighbourhood watch schemes as they were relatively easy to set up and could be effective.

Councillor Anne Double (on behalf of Steve Double MP)

Councillor Double read out a statement on behalf of Steve Double MP which included the following comments:

- He did not issue his statement regarding the Truro Road incident lightly;
- The conclusions in the statement were as a result of his recent inquiries;
- There is a strong message from St Austell residents that things cannot be allowed to continue as they are and something has to change;
- A high level of public support for his comments including thanks from local shop owners in the town;
- Only a few criticisms received of the stance taken;
- St Austell residents are concerned there is a lot of talk and not much action;
- Continuing pressure on the Police to provide extra resource.

Round Room updates

Addaction

Representatives of Addaction advised that they worked closely with Cosgarne, Freshstart and St Petrocs and that everyone should understand that it was a very small minority of people that tend to cause trouble within the Town. The team work closely with the criminal justice team to gather intelligence and receive needle alerts. Addaction provide a needle exchange service and bins for safe disposal of needles.

BID

AM and RH provided an update on the BID work. AM reminded Addaction of the availability of a radio and asked them to consider taking a radio to keep in touch with other agencies in and around the town centre. RH advised that 49% of BID levy payers stipulate security as their top priority. In response, the BID had funded two security guards for two days per week with variable shift patterns. In 30 shifts, 97 incidents had been recorded which included 47% drink related incidents and 8% drug related incidents. The highest number of incidents were in cemetery park with the area outside of Iceland coming second. Other areas identified were the car park and Holy Trinity Church Grounds. He advised that the BID and White River Place security staff had supplemented police resource in the town but that there was a need to review these functions going forward. He advised that the radio system was working well but he felt that there was an issue with regard to PCSO's using radios consistently.

Cosgarne

SG read a statement received from Cosgarne setting out the work undertaken by Cosgarne which included the following comments:

- All resources are being fully targeted in supporting residents, staff and the Police with their enquiries;
- Constructive comments have been sent through from social media;
- Cosgarne are happy to continue working with the Cornwall Safer Partnership and St Austell Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group;
- The Shopwatch radio is working well, patrols are ongoing and they continue to work closely with the police;
- Patrols are being performed in River Walk and Ledrah Road;
- Cosgarne Residents and the Police have recently joined up to perform a clear up operation in a nearby area;
- Pre-tenancy skills courses for residents are still being run;
- Joint float entry into the torchlight carnival with the Seven Stars Pub;
- Continued Phoenix courses at St Austell Fire Station
- Sports England grant to fund a sports activities programme;
- "Winter Wonderland" open day
- Community volunteering project
- Local barber visit to cut resident's hair

SH advised that she had undertaken a questionnaire and received 25 responses wanting a curfew at Cosgarne, 20 wanting closure of the premises and 20 recommending that the organisation should review its policies and procedures.

Freshstart

Vicki Hamilton advised that Freshstart like Cosgarne was a county wide commissioned service. She advised that 53% of placements at Freshstart were local to St Austell, 15% came from West Cornwall, 23% from Mid Cornwall and 9% from North Cornwall. She outlined a number of other statistics and agreed to circulate them if permitted to by her Managers. She advised that they have a number of house rules and a curfew at 11.30pm. ASB on or off site is not tolerated. ASB patrols are still undertaken and Freshstart are funding a shopwatch radio. Residents helped and became involved with the Christmas market and town centre Christmas activities. As a result of this work, a number of commissions were received for further work. VH expressed a concern that some of the social media comments were putting residents of both Freshstart and Cosgarne at risk. Addaction work at Freshstart 2 days per week.

In response to a question, VH advised that the definition of local connection was provided by Cornwall Council.

There is a requirement to have lived in the area for 6 out of the last 12 months or 3 years out of the last five years or to have relations living locally.

VH confirmed that the invitation was still open to members of the group to visit the premises and anyone who wished to visit should simply contact VH to arrange a suitable time.

VH concluded that Chapter 1 Freshstart are soon due to merge with the Salvation Army Association.

Devon & Cornwall Housing

MH outlined examples of a number of cases of ASB where vulnerable tenants had been targeted at flats and their premises taken over by people for the sale of drugs. He expressed a view that drugs were still a problem within the town.

It was noted that sofa surfing was an issue in some places and that the removal of wardens and the mixing of elderly and vulnerable people in flats might be exacerbating issues.

St Petrocs

II advised that St Petrocs were still working in the town but that they only had four outreach workers currently and a significant proportion of their time was taken up with the management of a winter shelter in Truro. He advised that he had dealt with a homelessness issue behind Asda and that the three people rough sleeping there had now moved on. He advised that their staffing levels should be back up to full strength in February.

Licensees

Sara Gibson advised that issues were not as bad currently as they once were. She did have concerns with regards to an off licence nearby to her premises which was selling very strong alcohol at a low price. She felt that social media and the media increase the fear of crime in the community. She highlighted ASB issues in some flats in East Hill and suggested that off licences should be subject to more information and training and consider a restriction on the strength of alcohol sold. SG suggested that services such as Addaction could be permanently housed in either Cosgarne or Freshstart or be located in a mobile unit to lessen the need for those with addiction issues to visit the town centre.

White River Place

RH advised that he had experienced an increase in shop lifting in recent times but that retailers were not always prepared to report issues. He expressed the view that the CCTV and shop radio system had improved.

An area of concern was the increase in anti-social behaviour from young people, particularly with those within the 12-16 age range and that there was a need for a respect campaign and/or to work more closely with schools. There is also evidence of possible rough sleeping in the White River Place car park.

It was noted that official statistics for shoplifting had showed a reduction.

SG read an e-mail from the Manager of Iceland which advised that his shoplifting cases had reduced significantly from 11 in October/November to 2 in December/January.

Arising from discussions it was noted that Cosgarne might be able to help with regular patrols to pick up bottles and litter on the pavement along Truro Road. It was accepted however that not all of the bottles and litter there would have arisen from the clients of Cosgarne.

STAK

MM advised that they had experienced a marked decrease in ASB recently and that they were grateful for the shopwatch radio system. He remarked that the two main areas of ASB still appeared to be cemetery park and the church grounds.

Chamber of Commerce

MS referred to the statistics published by the police and noted that shoplifting had dropped by 10% and suggested that the perception of ASB was worse than the reality. He expressed his gratitude to the BID for funding the security patrols in the period up to Christmas.

Street Pastors

GB advised that the CCTV system works well for them and thanked the BID for the shopwatch radio. He provided some statistics about the number of people helped and advised that they provide assistance to vulnerable people including the provision of flip flops, bottles of water and any other assistance that might be required. GB also advised that he is a Cosgarne Trustee and advised that a press statement had been issued by the Board with regard to the recent incident.

The House Youth Centre

KS advised that drop in evenings were provided three nights a week for 11-19 year olds and that educational services were provided for 16-18 year olds not in employment training or education.

On average, they experience 40 young people at each session and from time to time experienced difficulties with some of the young people and there were certainly some cultural and behavioural issues associated with the families and families of some individuals living close to the centre.

Any Other Business

RH advised that the BID would be looking for support from other parties to enable the additional security arrangements to be sustainable.

SH suggested that the Subway Manager should be invited to the next meeting as she had been made aware of ongoing anti-social behaviour in the premises toilets.

Future Plans and Ideas

The ideas for potential actions identified were:

1. **Addaction** to liaise with the BID with regard to taking a shop watch radio.
2. **Community Link Officer** to investigate the additional Government funding for Cornwall Council for homelessness initiatives.
3. **Cornwall Council** to take a greater part in dealing with antisocial behaviour in the St Austell area.
4. **Cornwall Council** to investigate the introduction of a "Reducing the Strength" Campaign in St Austell.
5. **Cornwall Council** to investigate the use of the mobile CCTV camera in St Austell.
6. **DP to liaise with PW** to share any lessons learned and recommendations arising from the investigations in to the Clinton House closure which might be relevant to the St Austell ASB group.
7. **DP to liaise with PW** to share any lessons learned and recommendations arising from investigations in to the recent incident in Truro Road park which might be relevant to the St Austell ASB group.
8. **Cosgarne** to investigate the potential to patrol Truro Road to deal with litter/bottles reported in the area.
9. **Freshstart.** Vicki Hamilton to provide statistics with regard to Freshstart if permitted.
10. **Police.** Inspector Ed Gard to circulate crime statistics.
11. **Town Council** to invite the Manager of Subway to a future meeting.
12. **Town Council** to arrange a meeting for the Mayor and Chairman of the ASB group with Cosgarne at an appropriate time.
13. **Town Council** to investigate an enhancement of the CCTV system.

14. **Town Council/Cornwall Council** to try to address the perception of crime through positive messages.
15. **Town Council** to actively encourage the two secondary schools to attend future meetings.
16. **Town Council** to review attendance levels of the ASB Working Group and Sub Group.
17. **All.** To discuss the findings of the Truro Road incident investigations when appropriate.
18. **All.** Ensure that any evidence of the sale of strong alcohol leading to ASB be reported to the Police to help inform any licensing reviews.
19. **All.** Contact Vicki Hamilton to arrange a visit to Freshstart should they wish.
20. **All** to lobby for more resource for Cornwall Council and the Police and the direction of that resource in St Austell.

Councillor Bull, as Mayor of St Austell thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressed her gratitude for the continued support.

The Chairman closed the meeting.