

St Austell Town Council



Anti-Social Behaviour Summit – Thursday 6th July 2017

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

Apologies

Abraham, Pam – Holy Trinity Church
Baines, Jez – Cornwall Council
Brown, Malcolm – Cornwall Councillor
Cardigan, Richard – Penrice School
Catherall, Helen – Addaction
Frost, Sara - Addaction
Hager, Kim – Cornwall Council
Hamilton, Vicki - Freshstart
Hitchins, Malcolm – Devon and Cornwall Housing
Lees, Tamsin – Cornwall Council
Matthews, Natasha – Cornwall Council
Necke, Sarah – Cornwall Council

Present

Bray, Gareth – Street Pastors
Cohen, Anita - St Austell Town Council
Day, Nigel – Holy Trinity Church
Gard, Ed – Inspector, Devon & Cornwall Police
Gibson, Sara – Seven Stars
Gwilliams, Sara – St Austell Town Council
Hamley, Jon – Devon & Cornwall Police
Harrison, Sam – Poltair School
Heath, Kate - Cosgarne
Heyward, Sandra – Cornwall Councillor
Holland, Bill – White River Place
Hurst, Richard – White River Place
Kneller, John – St Austell BID
Liney, Caroline - Addaction
Miller, Annette – St Austell BID
Nicholson, Helen – Cornwall Council
Oxenham, Nicky – St Austell Town Council
Palmer, Brian – St Austell Town Council

Pooley, David – St Austell Town Council
Potts, Eve - Addaction
Putko, Malcolm - Cosgarne
Teague, Sue – ABC Residents Association
Toms, Helen – Cornwall Council
Williams, Stephen – Ocean Housing

Election of Chairman

It was resolved that Councillor Brian Palmer, Town Councillor for Poltair Ward be elected as Chairman.

Introductions

The Chairman asked the group to introduce themselves.

David Pooley, Town Clerk

The Town Clerk thanked everybody for coming and provided general background information on the St Austell Anti-Social Behaviour Group and the work to date. He outlined the benefits of partnership working, good communication and the need to provide information to the public about what is being done to address ASB and advice on how to report crime. He expressed concern about the repeated criticism that the town receives and the harmful effect it has on the community and prosperity of the town. He explained that the summits have been held up as good practice and are now being replicated in other parts of the county, including Truro.

Notes from the meeting dated 24th January 2017

The notes from the meeting dated 24th January 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

Police update

Inspector Ed Gard explained that the Police resource for St Austell had been challenging over recent years but that the sector had received a number of transferees recently which had resulted in the numbers being back to where they should be.

He explained that PC Yasmin Vokes has been assigned predominately to the town as part of the neighbourhood beat team and is working closely with the Cornwall Council ASB caseworkers.

There had been a cut in the PCSO numbers across the sector, but he was committed to retaining two in St Austell. He outlined an incident in the town earlier in the day which had resulted in three arrests.

Inspector Gard warned the group that there will be an increase in crime statistics over the next 12 months due the Police being asked to record more crime, including historical crime.

Inspector Gard thanked Cosgarne and Freshstart for their continued assistance in the town and urged the group to keep reporting crime on either 101 telephone or 101 email.

Members of the group raised the following issues/concerns:

- The escalation of CBO's in Truro
- The perceived irregular use of the Police shopwatch radio
- The recent increase in begging in the town.

Helen Toms, Cornwall Council ASB Caseworker

Helen advised that she covered the whole of SE Cornwall as far as Torpoint and is currently spending about 50% of her time in St Austell. She explained that she works closely with the Police Neighbourhood Team and is in regular contact with the BID, White River Place and Addaction.

She advised that there is no quick fix to eradicating begging in the town as there is a process that has to be followed. There are individuals on warnings from a stage 1 up to Criminal Behaviour Orders for various forms of Anti-Social Behaviour. All perpetrators of ASB are dealt with by the ASB Team in partnership with the Police.

She thanked the members of the group who attended the multi-agency walkabout and spoke about her recent work with PC Yasmin Vokes (nee Street) providing advice to the public and traders on how to report crime.

Helen advised that she had obtained a key from the Town Council for the public conveniences at Priory Car Park for monitoring purposes as there have been reports of rough sleeping after they have closed. Helen has also been supporting St Petrocs with their outreach work.

Town Council update

The Town Clerk advised that two new CCTV cameras have been installed at Truro Road and Priory Car Park and are being monitored in Newquay alongside the other 13 cameras in the town.

The Town Council remains committed to the Newquay/St Austell Town Council CCTV partnership and both towns are receiving nearly 24/7 monitoring. The last monitoring report from Newquay shows that there had been 28 incidents in St Austell in June captured on camera which had resulted in two arrests. The Town Council has a maintenance budget for the CCTV cameras and the camera on Tengo is due to be replaced shortly.

The Clerk advised that the Town Council are responsible for 17 parks and open spaces across the town and the grounds maintenance staff are working hard to improve and keep them in good order so that they are respected more. Needle finds in the parks have shown a decrease over the last few weeks which is pleasing.

The Priory Car Park public conveniences are being carefully monitored as the drug taking in the premises has increased over recent months. Newquay CCTV suite are monitoring the situation and liaising with the ASB caseworker/Addaction to pursue further as required.

The library is due to transfer to the Town Council on the 18th September. It is hoped to use the premises to promote the work of the Town Council and its partners in due course.

Safer St Austell

Helen Nicholson advised that a Safer St Austell group had been formed and there had been four meetings to date. She advised that a Communications Strategy was being drafted in conjunction with the Town Council and that an information leaflet on how to report crime was being produced. Cornwall Council are in the process of producing a Rough Sleeper Strategy and the Deputy Mayor will be attending the launch.

HN referred the group to the actions on the previous minutes and confirmed that Cornwall Council could not locate the mobile CCTV camera and that Jez Baines was collating evidence to justify St Austell becoming a Community Impact Zone as requested at a recent Cornwall Council Licensing Committee.

Members of the group raised the following issues/concerns:

- The high strength and cheapness of alcohol on sale in the Polish shop
- Article 4 restrictions
- The problem of illegal drugs in the town
- Street drinking

- The alcohol restriction signage in the town centre

Cornwall Councillor updates

Councillor Heyward advised that she was on two Cornwall Council Licensing Committees.

Addaction

Eve Potts advised that Addaction continued to work closely with Cosgarne and Freshstart as well as providing targeted twice weekly patrols around the town centre which they adapt according to the intelligence received. They have a shopwatch radio and are supported by Newquay CCTV. They are currently working with some change resistant drinkers although overall, street drinking levels in the town are down. The group noted that Addaction are holding an open day on Friday 14th July, 1.30pm to 4pm to celebrate their 50th year of operations.

BID

John Kneller advised that the last few weeks in the town has been frustrating as the begging situation in the town has escalated and negative articles have been appearing again in the press. The BID has provided funding for additional security patrols, Safer St Austell jackets and is producing a leaflet in partnership with Addaction and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Mr Kneller thanked everyone for their continued good work.

Cosgarne

Malcolm Putko updated the group on the work of Cosgarne which included a litter picking session and an educational tenancy course for their residents. He advised that they have had lots of referrals recently and only have one empty room at the present time.

Mr Putko confirmed to the group that Cosgarne has no intention of purchasing Clinton House and that he is due to meet with the Police and Crime Commissioner on the 15th August 2017.

Freshstart

Sara Gwilliams provided an update on behalf of Vicki Hamilton who was unable to attend. Regular patrols are still being undertaken. Residents are being kept busy completing tasks in and around the service and completing workshops including gardening, wood carving, beach cleans and furniture renovation.

Currently 3 residents are volunteering, 1 has just sourced and started employment and 1 has moved to private accommodation in Wadebridge. 2 residents have recently been nominated for awards. The merger with the Salvation Army Housing Association (SAHA) is proceeding and should be completed in September.

Holy Trinity Church

Nigel Day advised that the church has a group of volunteers who open the church up most days for the public to visit and who interact regularly with people in the town centre. He welcomed the information leaflet planned. He also advised that the Church have plans to demolish their old hall with a view to the site being redeveloped.

Housing/Homelessness Agencies

Stephen Williams from Ocean advised that he worked closely with the Police, Cornwall Mental Health Team and Cornwall Council who help him deal to with various tenancy issues at Ocean. These range from protection for the vulnerable through to eviction or prosecution in cases of serious anti-social behaviour. He advised that Ocean have been awarded a Troubled Families Contract by Cornwall Council and that they were due to appoint a Troubled Family Worker in the early autumn.

Sarah Gibson – Licensee

Sarah expressed her frustration at the lack of support for local families who are touched by anti-social behaviour. She outlined the issues with regard to the Sanctuary Housing flats opposite the Seven Stars which are currently the subject of severe anti-social behaviour (drug taking/rough sleeping/squatters). She highlighted begging as a particular issue in the town and was very disturbed to recently witness a beggar asking children for money. She reiterated her concerns about the licencing of the Polish shop selling extremely strong lager and urged Cornwall Council to review their licensing arrangements as a matter of urgency.

Action: PC Hamley to liaise with Helen Toms regarding the sale of alcohol in the Polish shop.

Action: Helen Toms to speak to Sanctuary Housing about the anti-social behaviour.

Action: Helen Nicholson to speak to Cornwall Council Licensing Team about carrying out test purchases and reviewing off-licence sales in the Town.

Sue Teague – ABC Residents Association

Mrs Teague expressed her thanks at being invited to the meeting and expressed her concern about ASB behaviour occurring in the Bethel area.

Sam Harrison – Poltair School

Mr Harrison advised that Poltair School worked closely with PC Hamley in educating young people in the dangers of drug use and that a recent search for drugs in the school using a trained sniffer dog had been negative. The school's student services team are supporting a number of vulnerable families some of which include child exploitation concerns.

PC Hamley reiterated his drugs educational work with Poltair School and thanked Mr Harrison for the good partnership working between the school and the Police.

Street Pastors

Mr Gareth Bray advised that the street pastors patrol the town on a Saturday night and liaise closely with the police and CCTV at that time. He advised that they are increasingly having to deal with people missing the last bus or train home who end up sleeping at the railway station.

The House

The Town Clerk advised that he had attended a Steering Group meeting recently where he was pleased to learn that the behaviour of young people appeared to be improving. The House continues to offer many services for young people and is supported by the Town Council. There has been a change of personnel recently and it is hoped that the new Team Leader will attend the next meeting.

White River Place

Richard Hurst advised that shop lifting and begging still continue in the town and they have the occasional rough sleepers in the car park. Drug use has been noted in the White River Place toilets which recently resulted in some damage.

He reported some good communication between CCTV/Shopwatch radio. He expressed concern with regard to the recent negative publicity and felt that the group should do more to negate this. He advised that he had also been invited to meet the Police & Crime Commissioner on the 15th August.

Arising from the above, Inspector Gard advised that the meeting date with the Police & Crime Commissioner might change and that he was due to meet with the new Editor of the St Austell Voice next week to discuss the negative publicity.

Any other business of relevance to the meeting

SH reiterated her concern regarding the anti-social behaviour in and around Subway.

SH advised that Poltair School was holding a Summer Safety Assembly to reiterate the importance of good behaviour in and around the town during the summer holidays.

RH advised the group of a potential Addaction Awareness Day taking place in WRP most probably in August.

JH advised that Aaron, the new Manager of Weatherspoons is interested in joining the group.

Action: SG to invite to future meetings.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressed his gratitude for the continued support.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.