

## **MINUTES of a REMOTE MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 29<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2021 at 6pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Brown, Bull, Cohen, Hanlon, Heyward, Pearce (Chair), Pears, Rees, Styles (Mayor) and Thompson.

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

### **CC/19/108) Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jones.

### **CC/19/109) Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **CC/19/110) Dispensations**

There were no requests for dispensations received.

### **CC/19/111) Minutes of the Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

### **CC/19/112) Matters to note**

The Clerk advised that the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy was approved at the last Council meeting and has been placed on the Town Council's website. He added that the actions contained within the document will be taken forward and reviewed periodically by the new Council.

### **CC/19/113) Public Participation**

The Chair welcomed Mrs Burroughs, a representative of CASA, to the meeting.

Mrs Burroughs referred to the draft Environmental Policy and raised the following points/suggestions:

- A preference for the title of the document to be called **Climate** and Environmental Policy;
- Aims
  - Add a bullet point: "to mitigate climate change"
- Policies
  - Emphasise the need to be carbon neutral by 2030

- Awareness, lobbying and partnerships
  - Add climate crisis awareness/education

Mrs Burroughs felt that the switch to renewable energy and carbon accounting could be done now and that timescales could be added to the document.

The Mayor thanked Mrs Burroughs for her comments.

### **CC/19/114) Nick Smith, Chief Executive, Young People Cornwall**

The Mayor welcomed Nick Smith, Chief Executive of Young People Cornwall to the meeting.

Mr Smith advised that Young People Cornwall were established in 1974 and continue to provide youth services for young people aged between 8-25 across the county with their Head Office operating out of The House in St Austell.

All services became digitally operated in the first week of the national lockdown in March 2020 consisting of web-chat, Teams, Zoom, WhatsApp and on-line youth clubs. The digital offer includes mindfulness videos, online cognitive behaviour therapy, book clubs, music lessons, quizzes and cookery courses with an average of 240 individual young people being supported through digital interventions per week. In addition, Covid secure face to face work has been carried out for vulnerable young people who cannot engage online and mobile youth work has been undertaken in villages and towns across Cornwall. Food and welfare packs have been delivered to 81 young people and their families in St Austell and outreach teams have engaged with an average of 60 young people per week in Gover, Sandy Hill Park and Poltair Park. Over 600 young people from the St Austell area have accessed support via The House both in person and online during 2020/21.

Mr Smith advised that there has been an exponential rise in safeguarding concerns across the whole organisation and described the type of issues that young people are facing and the progress made against the "star outcome" reports.

Mr Smith thanked the Town Council for their continued support and advised that the Town Council's funding has helped to draw in an additional £40,000 for youth work in St Austell.

The Mayor and Members thanked Mr Smith for his very interesting and thought provoking presentation.

### **CC/19/115) Small Grants Scheme**

There were no Small Grant applications to consider.

## **CC/19/116) Environmental Policy**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the policy is loosely based on a template produced by Cornwall Council and adapted to St Austell Town Council's current practices and aspirations.

She responded to Mrs Burrough's points and some additional comments submitted by Mrs Earl.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that to pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030 might restrict expansion of the Town Council and that the Local Planning Policy does not go as far as insisting that all developments are carbon neutral. She added that the Town Council's energy contracts cannot be switched immediately due to contractual commitments and that timescales are generally not placed within policy documents.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues/points:

- Broad agreement that the title should be changed to "Climate and Environment Policy"
- That the Council should "work to be carbon neutral by 2030"
- The need to link the policy to the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and other relevant policies/strategies.

The Clerk advised that there are now carbon audit methodologies suitable for Town and Parish Councils which Members might wish to consider in the near future.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Environmental Policy be approved subject to:

1. The title to read "Climate and Environmental Policy"
2. Links to other relevant policies placed within the document
3. Under "climate change" the first line of the first paragraph to read "The Town Council has declared a climate emergency and will work to be carbon neutral by 2030."
4. Under "climate change" amend the second to last bullet point to read "a carbon accounting audit to assess the Council's current emissions."

*\*\*Councillor Heyward arrived at the meeting and apologised for her lateness\*\**

*\*\*Councillors Thompson and Rees abstained from voting on this item\*\**

## **CC/19/117) Town Heritage Scheme**

The Clerk explained that the Town Heritage Scheme is progressing well and outlined the works progressing, the grant offers made and the applications

being progressed. There are some schemes being developed, subject to funding and ongoing complimentary initiatives such as skills training and the Discover St Austell app.

Members generally expressed their support for the scheme, although a concern was expressed with regard to the accessibility information within the Discover St Austell app.

## **CC/19/118) Projects Update**

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk provided an update on the following:

### *CCTV*

All 20 cameras are working across the town and discussions are ongoing with regard to the re-deployable camera in Bethel. Extra CCTV hours are being paid for by Cornwall Council to assist their Environmental Team.

### *Grass Cutting*

The new foreman has been in post for a couple of weeks and the two apprentices have started, 4 days practical work and 1 day at college. Grass cutting has started in key areas with full time grass cutting due to commence in early April.

### *Bethel Park*

The Operations Manager is pricing up options for the replacement of the set of swings and safety surfacing in Bethel Park which are both nearing end of life.

### *Boat*

The Town Council has been gifted a boat which it is hoped can be placed on the grass area on Edgcumbe Road and filled with flowers. This area will be within the Town Council's area with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

### *Weed Treatment*

An environmentally friendly foam based weed treatment system has been trialled in Poltair Park the results of which are encouraging, particularly with regard to the treatment of moss. Further trials will take place later in the year.

### *Poltair Café*

The existing tenants have confirmed that they would like to open the café up as a takeaway service with effect from the 12<sup>th</sup> April.

### *Allotments*

The community garden at Landrew Road is progressing well. It is anticipated that Edible St Austell will approach the Town Council for a formal lease of the garden once they are fully constituted. All the useable allotments at Alexandra Road have been let.

#### *Public Conveniences*

The cleaning contract for the public conveniences has been reviewed and will be placed before the next Finance & General Purposes for consideration. All the toilets will be open with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April to coincide with the re-commencement of car park charges.

#### *Eden to Heligan Trail*

The Clerk advised that Cornwall Council are working on cycle routes through St Austell a draft of which should be available soon. He added that the Town Centre Revitalization Partnership has identified the improvement of cycle trails in the area as a potential project.

#### *Anti-social behaviour*

The Town Clerk is due to meet with Cornwall Council shortly with regard to the funding of a dedicated ASB caseworker for St Austell. The commitment from Cornwall Council to reduce the number of people in emergency accommodation in St Austell is being monitored and an update on progress, including the production of a cross service Action Plan will be sought in June/July.

#### *Safe Work Stream*

The Clerk advised that he sits on a Cornwall Council Safe Work Stream Cell which focuses on Covid19 issues and solutions. The Kestrel Guards, focussing on business Covid19 compliance will remain in situ until June and the Information Officers, co-ordinated by the BID have also received an extension of funding until June.

#### *Tour of Britain*

Once the Covid19 restrictions are lifted in June, discussions will resume with community groups about organising events in the Town Council's parks which are on the route to celebrate the tour passing through the town.

### **CC/19/119) Dates of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Community Committee is scheduled for Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

The meeting closed at 7.05pm.