

MINUTES of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 28th FEBRUARY 2022 in the Council Chamber, Cornwall Council Information Centre, 39 Penwinnick Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5DR.

Present: Councillors: Clemo, Cohen, Double, Fox, George, Guest, Nott, Stephens, Thompson (Chair) and Young.

Also Present: Councillor Hamilton.

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

Also in attendance: Annie Etheridge, Communication Support Services (accompanying Councillor Nott).

CC/21/46) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pearce, Pears and Rowse.

CC/21/47) Declarations of Interest

Councillor Fox advised that St Austell BID is a sponsor of the St Piran's Day Parade that she is helping to organise.

CC/21/48) Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations received.

CC/21/49) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 29th November 2021

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 29th November 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

CC/21/50) Matters to note

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that further to minute CC/21/39 the ABC Residents Association did not take up the grant awarded as their Christmas event was cancelled due to Covid concerns. In relation to minute CC/21/41 an agreement has been signed by Bosum Buddies for the location of a re-cycling bin in Priory Car Park.

The Deputy Town Clerk further advised that a letter had been received from the Chairman of the St Austell Street Pastors advising that at their Extraordinary Meeting on 10th February 2022 they had taken the decision to disband the St Austell Street Pastors Group.

CC/21/51) Public Participation

None.

Councillor Deborah George arrived during the next item

CC/21/52) Helen Toms, Community Safety Officer (Mid Cornwall) and Catherine Kemp, Anti-Social Behaviour Caseworker (St Austell and Liskeard Sector)

The Chair welcomed Helen Toms and Catherine Kemp to the meeting.

Mrs Toms explained the membership of the Safer St Austell Partnership and outlined the five priorities detailed in the Safer St Austell Delivery Plan:

- Public Confidence
- Anti-social behaviour
- Young People and youth crime
- Drugs and alcohol
- Domestic abuse and sexual violence

She advised that on Friday the partnership had hosted a community safety engagement event in the town centre and that they have plans for another community event at Chapel Field in April. An environmental visual audit targeting areas to address community safety concerns such as poor lighting, CCTV coverage, overgrown hedges and graffiti is also being planned.

With regard to anti-social behaviour, Mrs Toms advised that Catherine is now patrolling the town centre with partner agencies and is focussing on issues associated with young people. She expressed her delight that the Probation Service has confirmed that they will erect the new PSPO signage across Cornwall, including St Austell which has been outstanding for a long time.

Mrs Toms advised that there is a general issue with young people causing anti-social behaviour across the County, but stressed that compared to other towns, the current problems in St Austell are not too serious. Young People Cornwall and Action 4 Children are both fully engaged with Safer St Austell and are concentrating their efforts in the surrounding villages where most of the issues seem to be taking place.

Mrs Toms advised that reports of drink spiking are on the increase in Cornwall, but all tests carried out so far have been negative. Drink aware campaigns continue, and Safer St Austell works closely with We Are With You.

Training is being offered to help people understand/identify sexual violence and domestic abuse. Town Councillors are welcome to attend these sessions.

Catherine Kemp outlined to Members her previous role as a Senior Parking Officer and advised that her patch as an Anti-Social Behaviour Caseworker covers St Austell (including the Clays and St Blazey) and Liskeard. She advised that she has started to go out on patrols with the Police and that in the main it is the under 18 age group that is causing most concern. She advised that 7 Stage 1 warnings have been issued recently; 5 for St Austell and 2 for St Blazey. With regard to over 18's, 3 Stage 1 warnings have been issued; 1 for St Austell, 1 for St Blazey and 1 for Roche.

Arising from a question, she advised that a Stage 1 warning lasts for 3 months and if the behaviour has not changed in that time scale a Stage 2 is issued and then finally, if appropriate, a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO). Mrs Toms advised that of all the Stage 1 warnings issued, on average 80% of people are not seen again and only 20% are escalated up to a Stage 2 warning and beyond.

Mrs Toms advised that they have a good relationship with schools and that she is due to meet with Cornwall College shortly following concerns about anti-social behaviour both inside and outside of the campus.

The Chair thanked Mrs Toms and Ms Kemp for their interesting presentation.

CC/21/53) Small Grants Scheme

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Small Grants Scheme budget was set at £8,000 for the 2021/22 financial year and that there is approximately £4,000 left for the year ended 31st March 2022. She advised that 6 applications have been received for consideration, although at the suggestion of the Chair, the SALSA application would be considered with the other Jubilee Grants.

St Austell BID – Security PPE

The Deputy Clerk outlined the importance of the security guards to the town and the benefits of adding a stab vest to their existing PPE, particularly as they are patrolling areas outside of the town centre at the request of the Town Council. The BID suggested that the cost of the vests could be split three ways between the BID, Town Council and Councillor Double's Community Chest. Members noted that £300 has been secured from Councillor Double's Community Chest.

It was **RESOLVED** to award St Austell BID £257.12 towards the cost of two stab vests for the BID and Town Council funded security guards.

St Austell BID – Christmas Lights

The Deputy Clerk advised that the electrical wiring and boxes for the town centre Christmas lights are old and in desperate need of replacement. She advised that the Town Council contributes towards the cost of leasing the Christmas lights in the sum of £5,000 per annum.

Arising from a question, the Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council is in a good position nearing the year end and could afford up to £5,000 if Members wished.

It was **RESOLVED** to award St Austell BID up to 50% of the costs involved, up to a maximum of £5,000.

Cornwall Air Ambulance

It was **RESOLVED** to award Cornwall Air Ambulance £250 towards paramedic training.

Cornwall International Male Choral Festival

It was **RESOLVED** to award the Cornwall International Male Choral Festival £250 towards the Festival due to take place in April at St Austell Brewery and St John's Church.

St Austell Choral Society

It was **RESOLVED** to award St Austell Choral Society £250 towards their Spring concert in May 2022.

CC/21/54) Community Platinum Jubilee Grant Request

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that £2,000 has been set aside for the community to apply for funding to hold street parties etc to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

She explained that in order to encourage lots of community activities she would like to make the process of applying for a grant as easy as possible for residents and avoid lots of form filling and bureaucracy. She advised that a jubilee poster inviting communities to apply is on social media and a few grant application forms have been sent out to interested parties, three of which were due for consideration at the meeting. She added that the Town Council normally provide grants for constituted bodies only but felt that an exception should be made for the jubilee grants as it is likely that individuals rather than organisations would be organising jubilee parties and the restriction to organisations only might limit the number of parties that can take place. The Deputy Clerk suggested that in order to safeguard any funding provided to individuals/organisations the following conditions could be applied:

- Receipts to show that the money has been used to purchase Jubilee items
- Submission of pictures of the event to go onto social media

The Deputy Clerk advised that as time draws closer to the Jubilee weekend in June, there will probably be more interest and applications received for funding nearer to that time and that a cautious approach should be taken now to ensure that funding is still available nearer to June. She also suggested that in anticipation of an influx of grant applications and the need to turn them around quickly, it might be prudent to put a process in place where they can be reviewed and approved by the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.

The Deputy Clerk concluded by advising that she had approached Stepping Stones, Young People Cornwall and the Friends of Truro Road Park to see if they would be interested in putting on a Jubilee event in the Council's parks but to date no response had been received.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- The need to be cautious to ensure that there is enough budget available nearer to the Jubilee weekend when it is anticipated that an influx of applications will be submitted;
- The need to ask for receipts for items purchased;
- Make it a condition that alcohol cannot be purchased using Town Council funds.

Residents of Glen-Dale Crescent and Glen-Dale Close

It was **RESOLVED** to award the residents of Glen-Dale Crescent and Glen-Dale Close £50 towards their proposed Platinum Jubilee Street Party.

Poltair Residents' Association

A proposal was put forward to award Poltair Residents Association £250 towards their Jubilee Party at Lostwood Gardens.

An amendment was also put forward to award Poltair Residents Association £200 towards their Jubilee Party at Lostwood Gardens which was carried 7 votes to 1.

It was **RESOLVED** to award Poltair Residents Association £200 towards their Jubilee Party at Lostwood Gardens.

St Austell Library Support Association

The Deputy Town Clerk outlined the proposed events that SALSA are hoping to organise for the Queen's Jubilee as follows:

- Photography exhibition
 - Queen's reign over her seven decades
 - Photos depicting events taken place locally to celebrate the various jubilees throughout her reign
 - Photographs and memories archived for prosperity
- Photography masterclasses
- Tea dance prior to the Jubilee

It was **RESOLVED** to award St Austell Library Support Association £250 towards their Queen's Jubilee Jamboree.

Residents of Brookside/Parkway

Members reviewed the application but felt that they needed a bit more information to decide on the appropriate level of funding.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should ask the residents of Brookside/Parkway for more details to enable a decision on the appropriate level of funding.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee be authorised to determine future Queen's Jubilee Grant Applications.

CC/21/55) St Austell Townscape Heritage Scheme

The Town Clerk outlined the progress to date of the Townscape Heritage Scheme the first phase of which is drawing to a close. He advised that one of the properties agreed for improvement had fallen through and other properties were being identified to take its place. The Clerk advised that works to the Old Sunday School, Café Tengo and the Holy Trinity Church drinking fountain are still ongoing.

During discussion, Members expressed their full support for the Scheme and felt strongly that additional funding should be found to allow a Phase 2.

CC/21/56) Projects Update

The Deputy Town Clerk provided the following update:

CCTV

Out of the 20 cameras in the town centre, one is not working due to the change of ownership of the building that it is attached to and failed attempts at trying to contact the owners. It is anticipated that an alternative will now have to be found on the advice of the Police and CCTV suite.

Grounds Maintenance

The two apprentices are due to qualify in May/June and the recently installed polytunnel is proving to be a valuable part of their training. The grass cutting will, weather permitting, start towards the end of March at which time it is hoped that most of the winter maintenance jobs will be finished. The recent recruitment process for two grounds maintenance posts has unfortunately not been successful and will be the subject of a staffing report shortly. The Town Council fared quite well during the recent storm with no major damage within the Town Council's ownership. The most notable items of damage being a damaged fence at Poltair Park and a wall collapse at Woodland Close Park.

Woodland Road Park

The Town Council's Working Group is due to meet with Mount Charles School tomorrow evening to discuss a revised proposal for their acquisition of part of the park. A full report will be submitted to full Council in due course once the Working Group has worked up a recommendation.

Bethel Park

The goal posts for Bethel Park will be installed shortly and resource permitting the park will be the subject of a future refurbishment.

Weed Treatment

The foam spray treatment has recently been used to clean the play equipment and surfacing at Poltair Park and treatment of all parks utilising this method will be started soon. Complete Weed Control still spray the highways and pavements.

Poltair Park

The toilet block cannot be demolished until a further bat survey has been undertaken in May. The goal posts have been installed.

Café

Meetings have been held with two ladies who are very interested in running the café. They are however concerned about the layout of the café – particularly the lack of space for indoor seating. The Operations Manager is awaiting a quotation from a local builder for improvement of the layout.

Allotments

Edible St Austell are still running the Landrew Road Community Garden and once constituted, hope to formally lease the land from the Town Council to enable them to obtain grant funding. The Alexandra Road allotments are all let, although one tenant had just handed her notice in. There is a waiting list of approximately 25 people.

Public conveniences

The cleaning contract for Priory toilets is working very well.

Car Park

Repairs to the surfacing in the car park next to St John's Church are due to be undertaken shortly. G4S are performing well, and the car park income is slightly better than budget but significantly below 2019/20 levels. The sale of season tickets is steady. The Falmouth University mobile telephone payment system "Pay 2 Park" is trialling very well and may result in the Phone and Pay mobile telephone app system being dropped in due course.

Youth Services

A good outreach service is still carried out by Young People Cornwall with youth workers currently keeping an eye on Poltair Park and Thornpark Road following concerns about youths gathering in these areas.

Eden to Heligan Trail

Cornwall Council has this week advertised a tender for an e-bike trial for a number of locations in Cornwall including St Austell. All being well, the trial should start in May/June.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The security guards which are jointly funded by the BID and the Town Council are working really well and have recently been praised by the Sector Inspector and his Sergeant for the excellent work that they are doing which has helped them immensely by alleviating them from some of the day to day issues. The complex needs figures recently released by Cornwall Council are disappointing and will be followed up shortly.

Communications

As suggested at the recent Finance and General Purposes Committee a short survey of users of the library is being undertaken over the next three weeks, starting tomorrow to assess the location, mode of transport and parking data of the existing users of the library.

CC/21/57) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next meeting of the Community Committee is scheduled for Monday 28th March 2022.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.