

**MINUTES of a MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 4<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2022 in the Council Chamber, 39 Penwinnick Road, St Austell, PL25 5DR (Cornwall Council Offices) at 6pm.**

**Present:** Councillors Brown, Bull, French (Chair), George, Lanxon, Nott, Pearce and Young.

**Also Present:** Councillor Hamilton.

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

**F/21/72) Apologies for absence**

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

**F/21/73) Declarations of Interest**

None.

**F/21/74) Dispensations**

None.

**F/21/75) Minutes of meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Arising from a question, the Clerk read out a statement from Simon Mould, Head of Communities, advising that he and his colleagues are still working through the impacts of the changes within the Localism Service and are not able to update the Town Council at the present time. Members expressed their disappointment and asked that the Clerk secures a date for Mr Mould to update the Committee as soon as possible on the changes within the Localism Service and, in particular, the role of the Community Link Officer.

**F/21/76) Matters to Note**

The Clerk advised that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) bidding guidance has been received from Cornwall Council and a report will be submitted to a future meeting of the Council to consider an improvement project for Bethel Park utilising CIL funding. He added that securing lottery funding for Bethel Park is proving difficult and that bidding for CIL funding could be a better option.

**F/21/77) Public participation**

There were no members of the public present.

**F/21/78) Risk Management**

The Clerk advised that he had updated the Town Council's risk register to reflect the points raised at the last Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting.

During discussion, the following points were raised:

*Risk No: 1.13*

It was suggested that this risk could better reflect the impact a lack of formal consultation from Cornwall Council officers and Cornwall Councillors may have on the Town Council being able to influence major decisions that affect the future growth and prosperity of the town.

*Risk No: 8.7 and 8.8*

It was suggested that this risk could better reflect the possibility that the Government might not be able to deliver the large regeneration project grant funding anticipated.

*Risk No: 9.25*

It was suggested that the control in place should read "informal discussions and staff and public consultation to be undertaken before any formal decision to re-locate **or not**"

*Risk No: 9.26 and 9.27*

It was suggested that an audit could be undertaken of the meeting facilities in St Austell to ascertain the venues that can accommodate small as well as large scale meetings.

Arising from the above, the Deputy Town Clerk advised that an audit of meeting facilities had been undertaken a few years ago and that she would endeavour to locate the document for circulation.

It was **RECOMMENDED THAT** subject to the above amendments, the Council should approve the Strategic Risk Register.

### **F/21/79) Budget Monitoring Report**

The Clerk advised that the budget monitoring report for February is showing a slightly better position than will be shown at the year end due to safety surface repairs at Poltair Park and a section of tarmacking at Priory Car Park having been carried out recently, both of which will be reflected in the 2021/22 financial year. Car park income although down on previous years is slightly better than budget and the grant income received during the year exceeds budget. Members noted that there are two vacant Grounds Maintenance posts and that the election costs ended up being lower than anticipated. He concluded that the Town Council is in a healthy position and that the year end accounts for the 2021/22 financial year will show a surplus.

### **F/21/80) Asset Register**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Asset Register and Reconciliation of Assets as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

### **F/21/81) Internal Audit**

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Internal Audit checks carried out by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.

### **F/21/82) Bus Shelter Grants**

The Town Clerk advised that Cornwall Council is offering £3,000 to Town and Parish Councils to instal bus shelters in their parish and that a shelter over the seat at Holmbush Road, outside of Tescos has been identified as a suitable location. He explained that the pavement at this location is very narrow and that only a slim bus shelter would be suitable for the site.

Arising from the above, it was suggested that a bus stop on the north side of Carclaze Road might benefit from a shelter. The Clerk advised that he would contact the Clerk at Treverbyn Parish Council to see if they would like to pursue this further. In response to a question, the Clerk confirmed that funding for electronic signage is not on offer.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should explore with Cornwall Council the feasibility of installing a bus shelter over the seat located on Holmbush Road, outside of Tescos.

### **F/21/83) To consider excluding the press and public**

It was **RESOLVED** that under Section 1 (ii) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the business of the meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

### **F/21/84) St Austell Library/Cornwall Council Services**

The Clerk outlined the confidential discussions so far with Cornwall Council and the space currently occupied by the library at Carlyon Road. He advised that the lease on the library is due to expire in September and that there is a need to start negotiations for a new lease with effect from September 2022 for a further 5 year period.

During discussion, Members expressed their support for the library to remain where it is and not be part of Cornwall Council's town centre office development.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Clerk should:

- (i) Formally decline the proposal from Cornwall Council to transfer St Austell Library to the town centre;
- (ii) Enter into negotiations with Cornwall Council to allow the Town Council to manage St Austell Library for a further five year period with effect from September 2022;
- (iii) Arrange an agenda item at a future meeting of the Town Council to discuss Cornwall Council's strategy on their land holdings.

### **F/21/85) Dates of Next Meetings**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee is due to take place on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

The meeting closed at 7.21pm.