

St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership
Tuesday 26th April 2022
8.45am to 9.45am
TEAMS

Attendees:

Democratic: - Anne Double (CC), Richard Pears (CC).

Voluntary / Community: Sandra Heyward (Market House) (CHAIR), Ann-Marie Rogers (Ocean), Chris Sampson (Community).

Business: Dale Lovatt (Business Improvement District), Miles Lovegrove (Fluid Branding), Neil Woodward (South West Financial Services).

Advisors: Mark Ellis (CC), Steve Facer (CC), Rachel Galbraith (CC), Sara Gwilliams (TC); Caitlin Lord (CC), Bill McCardle (TC), David Pooley (TC).

Welcome

Sandra Heyward (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the group for accommodating the change in time and meeting platform to permit attendance at Harry Billinge's funeral.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Malcolm Brown (TC), Deborah George (TC), Crystal Pearce (TC), Rev Howard Flint (Holy Trinity Church), Dr Stewart Smith (NHS), Mark Lewis (Lewis Estate Agents), Peter Moody (St Austell Print), John Watkins (Running Hare Investment Management), Rachel Smith (CC), Steve Double (MP), Jordan Rowse (CC), Kym O'Mara (Cornwall College, St Austell) and Louise Wood (CC).

Arising from a question, the Clerk referred to the Terms of Reference and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

Minutes of the meeting dated Tuesday 22nd March 2022

The minutes of the meeting dated Tuesday 22nd March 2022 were accepted as a correct record.

Project Update (BM/DP)

Bill McCardle (BM) updated the group as follows:

Contract Finder

The Revitalisation documents were put onto Contract Finder on 24 March 2022 and questions have been received from interested consultants. All questions are responded to within 48 hours through a Clarification Log on Contract Finder and consultants are advised to review that website frequently.

Expressions of interest

So far 8 potential consultants have expressed their interest. The closing date for tenders is 12 noon on 3 May 2022.

Outputs

BM explained that all outputs are being worked on and should be delivered within the December 2022 deadline. The exception is output 7 which has been given a deadline of December 2023.

Output 1 – Develop a strategy, vision and masterplan to revitalise St Austell Town Centre

BM explained that he had almost completed a review of the various reports, strategies and vision work produced by various stakeholders since 1994 and that a report will be produced summarizing the findings, common themes and issues. The report will be available to the successful consultants.

Output 2 – Inclusivity and Accessibility

Shopmobility has recently created a “users hub” who have expressed an interest in contributing specific local knowledge to assist with this output. Other organisations with professional expertise in this area are also being sought.

Output 3 – Engagement and Activity

BM advised that this output is due to be discussed as a separate item later on the agenda.

Output 4 - Education

This output is progressing with two key activities:

- A review of town centre business skills working with the college, BID and employer organisations including Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Business.
- Projects involving local primary and secondary schools on St Austell’s past, present and future with CELT.

Output 5 – Leisure

This output cuts across a number of outputs and is an integral part of outputs 1,3,6 and will be delivered through that activity.

Output 6 – Town Centre Property

A key element of the consultants’ work is to identify town centre properties that could be re-purposed. Local work is currently underway on the identification of vacant properties and their owners.

Output 7 - Active Transport

This output is reliant on the LCWIP work currently underway by Cornwall Council and Sustrans. The latest information received from Cornwall Council is that the work is on track and due to be completed in August 2022. The report produced will inform the Partnership's approach to Active Transport in St Austell.

Arising from a question from Mark Ellis, David Pooley confirmed that the Lead Officer at Cornwall Council for the LCWIP is Adrian Roper.

Town Council update

David Pooley (DP) provided an update as follows:

Cornwall Council is hoping to move 300 jobs into White River Place which has left less space in White River Place for the library than originally anticipated. He advised that the Town Councillors considered the advantages and disadvantages of moving the library into White River Place at two informal meetings with Cornwall Council and on the 4th April 2022 the Finance and General Purposes Committee recommended to the full Council that, primarily due to the insufficient space now available for the library in White River Place, it should remain at Carlyon Road.

The Town Council's Planning and Regeneration Committee considered the Penwinnick Road Planning Statement produced by Cornwall Council at their meeting on 11th April 2022 and have expressed a number of concerns which will be communicated to Cornwall Council shortly.

The Town Council will remain working closely with Cornwall Council's Housing Department to ensure that they continue to reduce the number of complex needs people in St Austell which in the long term will assist with the regeneration of the town centre.

St Austell BID

BM explained that successful town centres generally have a high-quality programme of events and that the proposal from St Austell BID sets out an enhanced range of activity and engagement events delivered by local partners. He advised that he has been in discussion with the BID and subject to a couple of minor tweaks, he is confident that the proposal will contribute to the Partnership's work to revitalise the town centre, whilst creating a lasting legacy of quality events and town centre activity for the future.

During discussion, Steve Facer stressed the need to produce a strategy and legacy of events for the town centre. BM advised that the Events and Engagements Partnership is putting a structure in place to create a strategy and legacy to deliver enhanced events activity for future years by local stakeholders.

DP added that the aim is to build capacity in the town utilizing local cultural organizations co-ordinated by the Event and Engagements Partnership which would ultimately lead to the town being less reliant on one-off expensive events organized by consultants.

Arising from a question, DP confirmed that the BID had £9,000 to contribute towards the proposal and that the shortfall of £32,700 identified in the proposal is being sought from the Partnership. DP suggested that in order to retain some flexibility he would prefer to see the Partnership's contribution reduced to approximately £28,000.

It was **RESOLVED** that the St Austell BID proposal should be accepted and that the partnership should contribute up to £28,000 towards the events programme subject to the Town Council's procurement arrangements.

The Chair took the opportunity to ask the Cornwall Council officer's present if they are happy with the process and progress of the St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership to date. All the Cornwall Council officer's present confirmed that they are happy with progress so far and are looking forward to the outcome of the tender exercise.

Financial update

David Pooley explained that a simple budget had been produced for the meeting which at the present time did not show any expenditure as the little expenditure incurred to date had been absorbed by the Town Council. He added that as the project progressed and more significant expenditure was incurred, the budget report produced for each meeting would show income against expenditure.

Mark Ellis suggested that the Town Clerk should top slice the budgets for contingency purposes. The Town Clerk confirmed he had contingency arrangements in place.

Councillor Double expressed her gratitude to Mr McCardle for his hard work to date.

Any Other Business

None.

Date of Next Meetings

The next meeting was noted as Tuesday 24th May 2022, 9.30am at the Council Chamber, St Austell Information Centre.

Councillor Double tendered her apologies as it clashed with Cornwall Council's Annual Meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.25am.