

St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership
Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at 9.45am – Stable Block/TEAMS

Attendees:

Democratic: Malcolm Brown (TC), Steve Nott (TC), Deborah George (TC) Richard Pears (CC) (TEAMS), Anne Double (CC) (TEAMS).

Voluntary/Community: Sandra Heyward (Market House), Chris Sampson (Community), Alan Lawler (NHS), Laetitia Mayne (Cornwall College).

Business: Neil Woodward (South West Financial Services), Miles Lovegrove (Fluid Branding) (TEAMS), Dale Lovatt (St Austell BID).

Advisors: Sara Gwilliams (TC), David Pooley (TC), Helen Nicholson (CC) (TEAMS), Annette Miller (St Austell BID), Mark Ellis (CC) (TEAMS).

Welcome

MB welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the reason for postponing April's meeting. He apologised for the clash of meetings with full Council at Cornwall Council and welcomed Councillor Nott to the meeting who has replaced the current Mayor, Councillor Crystal Pearce as one of the Town Council's representatives.

Apologies for absence

Democratic: Steve Double (MP), Jordan Rowse (CC).

Voluntary/Community: Rev Howard Flint (Holy Trinity), Jonathan Aberdeen (St Austell Arts Centre), Dr Stewart Smith (NHS).

Business: John Watkins (White River Place), Mark Lewis (former Town Centre business owner), Peter Moody (St Austell Print)

Advisors: Louise Wood (CC), Bill McCardle (Town Council).

Rooftop Garden Project

The Town Clerk advised that a funding agreement in the sum of £194,400 has been received from Cornwall Council's Good Growth Fund/Shared Prosperity Fund with match funding from St Austell Town Council in the sum of £24,300 and Cornwall Council's Town Vitality Funding in the sum of £24,300 giving a total budget of £243,000 for feasibility/design work for the rooftop garden project. He advised that the funding agreement is 169 pages long and that the Town Council as Accountable Body is required to follow a stringent procurement process for the work.

The Clerk advised that the Town Council met on the 10th May 2023 and after a long debate and the project risks considered, agreed to proceed as follows:

*It was **RESOLVED** to:*

- 1. Authorise the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to sign the Good Growth feasibility study funding agreement on behalf of the Town Council and authorise the Town Clerk to proceed with a procurement process subject to the Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership being supportive of the approach proposed to the funding and procurement of consultants for the feasibility study.*
- 2. That in the event of a disagreement with the St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership and further discussions being necessary, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor French be authorised to liaise with the partnership and the Town Clerk to seek a mutually agreeable way forward.*
- 3. Authorise Councillors Brown and French to undertake an evaluation process of any tenders received with up to two members of the St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership, who are not Councillors and who do not have a prejudicial interest in the project.*

The Clerk emphasised the level of scrutiny with the tender process from both the Government and Cornwall Council and the importance of a robust procurement process which includes a 10 day challenge period when unsuccessful tenderers can challenge the process/decision.

The Clerk advised that with the assistance of a procurement specialist, he had drafted the tender documentation, which is ready to go onto the Government's tender websites, subject to partnership approval.

The Clerk explained that the partnership is required to comply with the code of conduct and asked all members of the group that if they are known to the Directors of or have an interest in either Willake Ltd or Colvase Estate they should declare that interest now.

A debate took place with regard to the interests of Mr Lovatt and Mr Woodward and the degree to which they had a declarable interest in the procurement of a feasibility study for the rooftop garden.

The Clerk advised Mr Lovatt and Mr Woodward that he believed they both had a prejudicial interest and advised them that they should not take part in the voting or be on the evaluation panel.

Councillor Double strongly stressed the need for a transparent and robust procurement process and reiterated that the project will be closely monitored by government officials.

Declarations of Interest

Mr Neil Woodward declared a pecuniary interest in the procurement of the feasibility study for the rooftop garden by virtue of being the managing agent for Willake Ltd.

Mr Lovatt declared a prejudicial interest in the procurement of a feasibility study for the rooftop garden by virtue of being a tenant of Colvase Estate.

Councillor Heyward advised that when she was a Cornwall Councillor she worked closely with Mr Coles to assist with his purchase of Old Vicarage Place.

The Clerk confirmed that this was not a prejudicial interest as she was no longer a Cornwall Councillor.

No other Partnership Members declared an interest.

The Clerk explained that the Town Council had resolved to appoint Councillors Brown and French to undertake an evaluation process of the tenders received with two members of the St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership, who are not Councillors and who do not have a prejudicial interest in the project.

In order to clarify the tender process, the Clerk explained the process that will be adopted and the timescales involved.

Councillors Double and Pears left the meeting

The Partnership discussed which two members of the Partnership should be on the evaluation panel and a proposal was put forward for Sandra Heyward and Peter Moody.

A discussion ensued about the merits of having a different composition of panel members and Chris Sampson and Peter Moody were put forward.

It was **AGREED** that:

1. The funding agreement and procurement process for the feasibility study should be taken forward as outlined by the Town Clerk;
2. Chris Sampson and Peter Moody be the St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership representatives on the tender evaluation panel.

Mr Woodward and Mr Lovatt did not take part in the voting of this item

The partnership confirmed the full evaluation panel as follows:

Councillor Malcolm Brown (Town Council), Councillor Tom French (Town Council), Peter Moody (St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership) and Chris Sampson (St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership).

Mark Ellis welcomed the robust discussions and expressed his support for David Pooley's advice and the decisions made.

Helen Nicholson also expressed her support for the project.

Minutes of the meeting dated 28th March 2023

The minutes of the meeting dated 28th March 2023 were accepted as a correct record.

Arising from the above, concern was expressed with regard to the advice received from Cornwall Council's Building Control Service that the banner on the Poundland building is safe and requested that they are asked to re-visit the site for further consideration.

Action: David Pooley to ask Building Control to review the safety of the banner on the Poundland Building.

Councillor Brown took the opportunity to thank the college for hosting the meeting and the student who demonstrated the app. He also advised that he had attended the exhibition showing the plans for the new college and that the local amateur dramatic society had been reassured that their use of the Keay Theatre would not be adversely affected. He added that following some initial teething problems, the Beryl bike roll out had appeared to settle down. Annette Miller added that the bikes were a positive to the town centre, but the lack of racks to keep them tidy was disappointing.

Good Growth Funding Bids

The Clerk advised that only the rooftop garden bid was successful and no feedback had been provided on why the bids for the banner and an event manager had failed to gain approval.

Action: Town Clerk to ask Cornwall Council for feedback on why the banner and Event Manager funding bids failed.

Levelling Up Fund

The Town Clerk advised that Cornwall Council are keen to submit a constituency Levelling Up Fund bid that would benefit both Newquay and St Austell. The linking of the metro project between the two towns and student accommodation in St Austell is currently being explored.

Mark Ellis left the meeting

Town Council update

The Clerk added that the Regeneration Officer is about to submit a funding bid to GWR for public realm works at the station as identified in the Masterplan and that the Bethel Park upgrade is due to start in early June.

Cornwall Council update

Mr Ellis had left the meeting and Helen Nicholson was not available.

Financial Update

The Clerk advised that £140,000 was received from Cornwall Council for the Masterplanning exercise with approximately £27,000 left, £24,000 of which will be used as match funding for the feasibility study work. The remaining £3,000 has been earmarked for pre-planning advice for the Roof Top, Fore Street and Priory Car Park projects.

Education Report – at the request of the Chair

Councillor Brown advised that he did not wish to lose sight of the recommendations within the Education Report and would like to discuss with the partnership at a future meeting what the next steps are. Chris Sampson added that some of the recommendations are already being done but a discussion at the next meeting would be helpful.

Action: Town Clerk to place “Education Report” on the agenda for the next meeting and circulate the report to all members.

Helen Nicholson returned to the meeting and the Chair asked if she had any Cornwall Council updates for the partnership which she did not but confirmed that there would be an announcement shortly with regard to the new Community Link Officer (CLO) for the Community Network.

Any Other Business

None.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 27th June 2023, 9.45am at The Stable Block.

Meeting closed at 11.14am.