

MINUTES of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 5th JUNE 2023 at The Registrar's Office, Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4LD at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Cohen, Fox, George, Pearce, Stephens, Thompson and Young.

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

CC/23/01) Election of Chair

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Thompson be elected Chair of the Community Committee for the 2023/24 Civic Year.

CC/23/02) Election of Vice-Chair

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Cohen be elected Vice-Chair of the Community Committee for the 2023/24 Civic Year.

CC/23/03) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Double, Guest, Nott and Rowse.

CC/23/04) Declarations of Interest

None.

CC/23/05) Dispensations

Councillor Fox declared an interest in Agenda Item 11 (Small Grants Scheme) by virtue of being the applicant for the St Austell St Piran's Event grant request.

CC/23/06) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 27th March 2023

Councillor Young advised that he was present at the meeting on the 27th March 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** that subject to Councillor Young being added to the list of attendees, the minutes of the meeting held on the 27th March 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Councillor Stephens arrived to the meeting

CC/23/07) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that he had nothing to add.

CC/23/08) Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

CC/23/09) Mr Barry West – King Edward Memorial at King's Avenue

Mr West referred to the King Edward memorial at Kings Avenue and the desire to have it restored and elevated, if possible, to make it more visible.

He explained that Cornwall Council own the building where it is located and that he is obtaining quotations for an independent assessment of its condition and the cleaning and restoration costs. Mr West expressed a view that in these challenging times it is important for the town to look nice and felt that the restoration of the memorial would add to the feel good factor of the town. Mr West praised the Town Council's grounds maintenance staff for their excellent work across the town.

It was **RESOLVED** to support in principle the restoration of the King Edward Memorial and await further details from Mr West.

CC/23/10) Alice Walker – Studio 4 Dance

Ms Walker explained the background to the restoration of 3 unused units in Old Vicarage Place and thanked the Town Council for their funding support in December 2021 to enable Phase 1 (dance studio) to get off the ground which is supporting the regeneration of the town centre, has created job opportunities for local people and brings people into town helping local businesses. The studio has created two jobs and is the home for a Level 3 Performing Arts course which is run in partnership with Cornwall College. She advised that there are 23 learners on the books, up from 9 learners last year and around 100 dancers come to the town each week to attend the studio, which along with their parents/guardians has increased the town centre footfall considerably.

Ms Walker explained that the Community Event Space in Unit 4 opened in December last year and delivers performance, education, community activities and a coffee shop. This space has provided further job opportunities and an additional 100 people per week into the town centre.

The two learners in attendance with Ms Walker expressed their support for Studio 4 and the opportunities available to them which has helped their development.

Ms Walker advised that in December 2021 the Town Council provided Studio 4 Dance CIC with a £5,000 grant and a £5,000 loan, £2,000 of which has been repaid. She reiterated her gratitude to the Town Council for their support and outlined how she is trying to keep the CIC sustainable but that a bid to the Good Growth Fund had not materialised which she was hoping would provide a programme of events in the town centre. She expressed a view that it is important to keep bringing people into the town centre and getting people to talk about the town positively and requested additional help from the Town Council to fill the funding gap to provide regular events in the town.

During discussion, Members expressed the importance of the CIC being sustainable and suggested strongly that signage to the Studio and Unit 4 needs to be erected in Vicarage Place/White River Place to make it clear the facilities that are on offer.

Ms Walker explained that she is working closely with St Austell BID to develop a programme of events, has submitted 5 funding bids in the hope that a full time Events Manager post can be created and continues to promote unit 4 for private bookings.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) commute the loan of £5,000 previously awarded in December 2021 into a grant and;

- (ii) award a grant of £5,000 towards a sustainable programme of town centre events.

CC/23/11) Small Grants Scheme

Imerys Singers

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 towards the purchase of music and paying for the use of a rehearsal room.

Kernow Men's Society

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 towards the running expenses and social activities of the Society.

Councillor Fox outlined the event and left the meeting

St Austell St Piran's Event

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 towards the costs associated with putting on the 2024 St Austell St Piran's Event.

Councillor Fox returned to the meeting

Sky Primary and Eden Project Nursery

Although supportive of the school and its keenness to develop childrens' reading, Members felt that they were unable to support the request as Sky Primary and Eden Project Nursery is located outside of the Town Council's area.

It was **RESOLVED** to refuse the grant request of £250 and refer the school to St Blaise Town Council and the Cornwall Councillor Community Chest Scheme.

CC/23/12) Climate and Environment Projects Update

The Clerk advised that the Beryl Bikes have been installed across the town and appear to have settled down reasonably well. He added that the EV charging points are being installed in Priory Car Park and should be finished shortly.

Arising from the above, Members asked if Beryl Bikes could instal bike racks, particularly on the pavement across from Aldi as bikes are regularly left lying on the pavement blocking access for users, including some with wheelchairs and prams. Members also expressed a wish that the range of the Beryl Bike is extended to include areas like Wheal Martyn and Heligan so they can be better used for leisure purposes.

CC/23/13) St Austell Railway Station

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that Mrs Wendy Earl had approached the Town Council to advise that she would like to step back from her volunteer activities at the station and is looking for the Town Council to assist the volunteers with their efforts to keep the station planted up and watered. She added that Councillor Double is involved with the activities at the station but cannot commit to additional meetings.

Councillor Thompson volunteered to be the Town Council's representative to support the volunteers at the Station.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Thompson should represent the Council in support of volunteers at St Austell Station.

CC/23/14) Projects Update

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

Town Centre Regeneration

The Clerk advised that an invitation to tender for feasibility and design work for the rooftop garden is on the Government website with a closing date of the 4th July. A GWR funding bid has also been submitted for public realm improvements near the station as identified in the Masterplan.

CCTV

All 20 cameras are working across the town and the re-deployable camera has had success in its new location close to the urban village.

Poltair Park

The planning application for the bat house has been approved with work due to start as soon as the bat licences have been approved.

Poltair Café

The tenant is still in situ at the café on a Tenancy at Will. The Town Council is currently covering the cost of utilities and some of the business rate costs. This will be reviewed later in the year with the tenant.

Priory/Tregonissey Lane End Car Parks

Car park income is still slightly better than budget but well below pre pandemic levels. The season ticket income is steady with a few regular users. The Pay 2 Park mobile app is working well but the Phone and Pay app not so well with a few issues reported recently which are being followed up. Cornwall Council enforcement officers will be patrolling Tregonissey Lane End Car Park from June to September to reinforce the maximum stay of 3 hours.

Priory Toilets

The coin machines/doors are coming to the end of their life and quotations are being sought for their replacement. Officers are very pleased with the quality of the cleaning contract.

Anti-Social Behaviour

St Austell has a new Inspector, Inspector Matt Trevivian, who has agreed to attend the Finance and General Purposes Committee in July to speak to Town Councillors about policing matters in St Austell. The security guards are working well with the Police and in conjunction with the CCTV, shopwatch radio and DISC systems; ASB in St Austell is overall fairly quiet. The security guards are still patrolling outside of the town centre 2-3 times a week, with no issues to report. The ASB caseworker for St Austell advised at a recent meeting that St Austell is very quiet compared to Truro, Newquay and Liskeard and praised the excellent work of the security guards.

St Austell Library

The latest statistics from Cornwall Council show that St Austell Library is performing extremely well and provides an excellent service to the community. The whole school visits are proving extremely popular with approximately 30 children visiting the library at a time with their teachers. The baby classes, lego groups, reading and writing classes and support groups continue on a regular basis and SALSA have a number of summer events planned over the coming months. SALSA have also agreed to hold a cheese and wine evening as a social event for the Mayor planned for 1st September 2023.

Bethel Park improvement

The funding for the Bethel Park improvement scheme has been approved and work is due to start during the week commencing 12th June 2023 with a completion date, all being well, before the summer holidays. The Clerk clarified that the footprint of the playpark will remain the same and that if required, the air ambulance would still be able to land between the goal posts following the refurbishment as it can now.

Truro Road Park

The Clerk advised that the safety surfacing work at Truro Road Park will commence around the same time as the Bethel Road improvements as the same contractors are being used.

Allotments

One of the tenants at Alexandra Road has not tended his allotment for a while, so after following due process, a new tenant will be pursued shortly.

Grounds Maintenance

The summer bedding plants are being planted up across the town this week and some watering will take place which is permitted by SWW as the Town Council is deemed to be a commercial organisation.

Footpaths

The "Public Rights of Way" footpaths are no longer contracted out to be cut and will be maintained by the Town Council's grounds maintenance staff. The Deputy Town Clerk agreed to circulate a map showing the footpaths maintained.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the projects update.

CC/23/15) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next meeting of the Community Committee is scheduled for Monday 11th September 2023.

The meeting closed at 7.26pm