

MINUTES of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 22nd JANUARY 2024 at The Registrar's Office, Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4LD at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Clemo, Cohen, Hamilton, Lanxon, Thompson and Young.

In attendance: David Pooley (Town Clerk), Steve Skinner (Operations Manager).

CE/23/17) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Double, Guest, Pearce and Styles.

CE/23/18) Declarations of Interest

None.

CE/23/19) Dispensations

The Clerk advised that no requests for dispensations had been received.

CE/23/20) Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

*** Councillor Lanxon arrived ***

CE/23/21) Minutes of Meeting held on 3rd July 2023

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd July 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

CE/23/22) Matters to note

The Town Clerk advised that further to minute CE/23/09 details of Cornwall Council's highways grass cutting standards and retrofit schemes had been circulated previously. He explained that EV charging points had been fitted in Priory Car Park and were working but as yet did not appear on many of the apps which direct users to the chargers (Minute CE/23/11 refers). In response to a question the Clerk advised that there was no usage data as yet but he would talk to Cornwall Council about management information and reports.

The Clerk advised that further to minute CE/23/12 a useful update on Beryl Bikes had been received last week and the scheme was performing well and remained viable. In response to a question the Clerk advised that there was a reluctance to expand the coverage of the scheme greatly but the possibility of incorporating Mevagissey was being considered.

Further to minute CE/23/13 the Clerk advised that Andrew Richards was still working to get an acceptable water supply to the fountain outside the Holy Trinity Church.

CE/23/23) Ocean Housing

The Chair welcomed Liam Augarde and Shaun Tryner of Ocean Housing to the meeting. They provided a presentation on the measures and schemes undertaken and planned to bring all properties within their portfolio to at least EPC C energy standard by 2030. This meant improving approximately 1500 dwellings. Mr Augarde outlined the successful Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund bids made and described a £1.1 million project recently completed at St Dennis and another commenced to upgrade 270 homes in Newquay and St Austell by 2025. Further funding bids were planned as approximately 687 houses in St Austell and a 100 in Par were EPC D-F and required retrofit work.

Typically retrofit works would reduce tenants energy costs from £1,000 to £500-£600 per annum. An independent expert was used to design retrofit schemes which could be:

Light touch – heating systems, hot water systems, insulation and improved electricity tariffs.

Deeper retrofits – As per light touch plus alterations, removing old insulation, external insulation, new windows and doors.

Mr Tryner described Ocean's "fabric first" approach which sought to drive down heating costs to the benefit of tenants and the environment. He talked about the importance of sound ventilation arrangements to control damp, mould and air quality. They undertake follow up visits with householders after works to discuss energy/thermal issues and use technology to monitor humidity and carbon monoxide.

In response to a question the speakers advised that having fitted air source heat pumps in one scheme they were not thought to be good value for money and that Ocean were exploring other sources of heating.

The issues with retrofitting Cornish units were discussed. Mr Augarde advised that there was a need to sell some properties to help fund retrofit work but that Ocean Housing were committed to building two new properties for each property sold. New developments are generally a minimum of EPC B rating.

The Chair thanked Mr Augarde and Mr Tryner for their interesting and comprehensive presentation and welcomed the measures being taken.

CE/23/24) Geothermal Engineering Ltd

The Chair explained that CASA held a Climate Festival event in October which was attended by Jane Charman of Geothermal Engineering Ltd. He explained that Geothermal Engineering were developing a project at United Down Industrial Estate which would offer the smallest footprint of any land based energy source and generate electricity for the National Grid independent of weather and the time of the day. Drilling to a depth of 13,000 feet has taken place and electricity generation is planned before the end of the year.

It was **RESOLVED** to arrange a visit to the United Downs visitor centre to help Members better understand processes and the possible implications for the St Austell area.

CE/23/25) Climate Emergency Action Plan

Members reviewed the Climate Emergency Action Plan which the Clerk explained had been updated and was now an impressive list of achievements. The Clerk ran through the actions completed, under way and yet to start. In the ensuing discussion Members asked if thought could be given to the management information available relating to EV charging points and where this should be reported. It was also suggested that Biddicks Court would be a good location for a Beryl Bikes bay.

Members noted the report.

CE/23/26) Climate Action St Austell (CASA)

The Chair provided an update on the work of CASA. He explained that he and Councillor Gray attended monthly meetings. Mrs Earl was standing down as Chair of the group and a new chair would be elected shortly. CASA actively support climate events across Cornwall, provide talks, write articles for the Voice newspaper and undertake regular litter picks. CASA representatives attended the opening of the Mid-Cornwall Climate and Eco Hub in Truro, supported Cornwall Council's Local area Energy Plan workshop and visited the Incinerator at St Dennis which was a very informative visit. A major achievement of CASA was the first Garden/Climate Festival which they sponsored and organised in October. It is hoped to repeat this event next summer.

Members noted the update.

CE/23/27) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the date of the next meeting of the Climate and Environment Committee is 1st July 2024.

The meeting closed at 7.10pm.