

St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership (joint meeting with St Austell Town Council).

Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 9.45am – Stable Block/TEAMS

Attendees:

Democratic: Councillor Malcolm Brown (MB) (St Austell Town Council), Councillor Anne Double (AD) (Cornwall Councillor), (TEAMS).

Voluntary/Community: Heather Batho (HB), Chris Sampson (CS), David Hendry (DH).

Business: Peter Moody (PM) (St Austell Print), Dale Lovatt (DL) (St Austell BID), Neil Woodward (NW) (South-West Financial Services).

Advisors: Sara Gwilliams (TC), David Pooley (TC), Bill McCardle (TC) (TEAMS), Sarah Scoltock (CC)

Also in attendance: Jon Nicholls (JH), Director, Hayhurst and Co Architects, and Claire Taggart, (CT) Hayhurst and Co Architects (TEAMS)

Town Councillors also in attendance: Councillors Hamilton, Preece, Guest and Young.

Councillor Brown arrived during the next item

Welcome

The Town Clerk welcomed everyone to the joint meeting of the partnership and Town Councillors and the group agreed that the meeting would proceed with agenda item 6 (Rooftop Garden).

Rooftop Garden Project

Mr Moody welcomed Jon Nicholls, Director of Hayhurst and Co Architects and his team to the meeting.

Mr Nicholls provided the group with a detailed PowerPoint presentation outlining the access from Vicarage Hill, the access from the West (butchers slope) and the development of landscape, café and studio spaces.

Mr Nicholls advised that he is keen to obtain feedback from the partnership and Town Council on the latest designs and confirmed that the structural survey, currently on hold, should commence soon.

During discussion, the following comments/issues/concerns were raised:

- The need for rigorous security arrangements for the site
- Whether an alternative to wood (mould and mildew issues) could be considered to make maintenance of the area easier;

- Whether 4m x 3m units would be attractive to tenants or considered too small;
- The practicality of high roof coverings in high winds;
- The visual impact of high roof coverings;
- The potential for an alternative to timber decking to mitigate slips and falls;
- The need to ensure that people will use the space, including the working community;
- Disappointment that the heritage square has been removed from the designs
- The need to ensure that the proposal is viable/sustainable
- The potential for a garden feature to attract people to the area
- The need for the area to be a footfall driver

Mr Nicholls:

- advised that Willake Ltd has indicated that small units are in high demand and will be let easily;
- agreed to review the wooden decking and other wooded areas whilst being mindful of accessibility for wheelchair users;
- advised that he is due to re-engage with engineers within the next couple of weeks to review the roof heights to ensure that they will withstand high winds from all directions;
- suggested that a full calendar of events could be a footfall driver and make the area attractive to a wide range of people;

Overall, the partnership and Town Councillors present welcomed the new designs and thanked Mr Nicholls and his team for the presentation.

The Clerk also thanked Mr Nicholls and confirmed that he would arrange a meeting with the landowner.

Election of Chair

The Town Clerk referred to the Terms of Reference and the need to consider the Chair and Vice-Chair positions for the next 12 months.

A proposer and seconder was received for Peter Moody.

It was **RESOLVED** that Peter Moody be elected Chair for the next 12 months.

Election of Vice-Chairs

It was agreed to defer the election of the Vice-Chairs until the next meeting.

Apologies from Partnership Members

Steve Double MP, Annette Miller, Tom French, Sandra Heyward, Jordan Rowse, David Atkinson-Beaumont, Miles Lovegrove, Mark Ellis and Louise Wood.

Apologies from Town Councillors

Councillors Clemo and Styles.

David Hendry – Welcome

Mr Moody welcomed Mr Hendry to the meeting. Mr Hendry advised that he is an ex teacher, very interested in the arts and thanked the group for inviting him to join the partnership.

Minutes of the meeting dated 19th March 2024

It was pointed out that on page 3 of the minutes "Grade II" should read "Grade I"

It was **RESOLVED** that subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting dated 19th March 2024 be approved.

Actions

Councillor Double advised that the first meeting of the Treveth Penwinnick Road Working Group should take place shortly.

Town Centre Revitalisation

The Clerk referred the partnership to the previously circulated paper outlining the improvements in the St Austell and surrounding area to date, a summary of the work of the partnership and the Town Vitality Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund Projects.

The group expressed their general support for the progress to date although a concern was expressed that the viaduct uplifting feasibility project was being progressed before other projects. Councillor Brown advised that the Town Council's Planning and Regeneration Committee is supportive of the projects being progressed, including the viaduct uplifting feasibility study which was suggested in the High Street Task Force Report. The Town Council has asked for an informal meeting in due course to discuss the High Street Task Force report and other potential projects contained therein.

The group thanked the Clerk for his informative update paper.

Town Council update

The Clerk advised that the Town Council has expressed concern with regard to the St Austell bus service changes and that Members are due to consider the matter further tomorrow evening. A comment was made that there appear to be less buses to and from the town centre which should be challenged.

Cornwall Council update

Sarah Scoltock read out a statement from Mark Ellis which advised that the Carlyon Road Masterplan has been drafted and circulated to the stakeholder group for comment and that a further stakeholder session will be convened shortly to

seek feedback prior to finalising the document. Briefings will also be offered to the Cornwall Councillors, Town Council and Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership prior to publication on Cornwall Council's website.

Cormac has been commissioned to undertake a feasibility study in relation to traffic calming options on the highway around the General Wolfe and CIL capital funding for the highways/public realm elements has been secured (subject to a business case). Grant funding has been obtained to refurbish the building and discussions are taking place between Cornwall Council and Corserv (the owners of the building) to enable the funding to be passed across to Corserv to allow them to start the works.

A further update from the Estates Transformation Team is awaited with regard to White River Place.

The group expressed concern with regard to the lack of progress with the refurbishment of the General Wolfe building and the worrying amount of ASB associated with it, which includes regular break-ins, vandalism and squatting. The group felt that its visual impact is extremely damaging to the town centre and requested an urgent update from Cornwall Council as to when the refurbishment is likely to commence.

The lack of progress with regard to the building of new Cornwall Council Offices in White River Place was also raised as a concern.

Action: The Town Clerk AGREED to raise these two concerns with Senior Officers at Cornwall Council.

Sarah Scoltock added that she had recently met with a representative from Mencap about their Active Community Project which is a national network project with the aims of helping people with a learning disability to live happier and healthy lives. She advised that they are trying to link up with as many organisations as possible and suggested that the partnership might like to receive a presentation from Mencap in due course.

Action: Review the consultation stakeholder list to ensure that the partnership is consulting and considering the wider needs of the community including people with learning disabilities.

Financial Update

DP referred to a table of income and expenditure relating to the town centre revitalisation project for the financial years ending 31st March 2022, 2023 and 2024. He explained that grants totalling £203,533 had been received and expenditure of £271,196 incurred which left an acceptable deficit for this stage of the project.

The report was noted.

Any Other Business

Mr Sampson advised that there will be a Skills Forum Event on 4th June 2024 and the Deputy Town Clerk updated the group on the latest information with regard to an individual who had been causing immense ASB issues in the town centre.

Future Meeting Dates

Tuesday 11th June 2024 (if required) and Tuesday 9th July 2024.

*** Neil Woodward declared an interest in the next item and left the meeting ***

To consider a request from Willake Ltd for payment towards property management costs in relation to the roof top garden project

DP advised that the owner of Old Vicarage Place had requested a contribution of £5,000 towards property management costs incurred to date and a further £1,500 towards the cost of supervising and supporting the planned structural testing. He explained that it would not be possible to progress the project satisfactorily without reimbursing the owner's costs.

It was agreed to authorise the Clerk to make the payments requested subject to obtaining a breakdown of the costs if possible.

NB It was subsequently clarified that the costs to date were £3,500 not £5,000 as stated by the Clerk.

The meeting closed at 11.35am.