

MINUTES of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 1st JULY 2024 at The Stable Block, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5DP at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Cohen, Hamilton, Lanxon, Preece, Stephens, Styles and Young.

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

CE/24/01) Election of Chair

The Town Clerk asked for nominations for Chair. A nomination was received for Councillor Cohen.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Cohen be elected Chair of the Climate and Environment Committee for the 2024/25 civic year.

CE/24/02) Election of Vice-Chair

The Chair asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. A nomination was received for Councillor Stephens.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Stephens be elected Vice-Chair of the Climate and Environment Committee for the 2024/25 civic year.

CE/24/03) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clemo and Thompson.

CE/24/04) Declarations of Interest

None.

CE/24/05) Dispensations

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

CE/24/06) Public Participation

None.

CE/24/07) Minutes of Meeting held on 22nd January 2024

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd January 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

CE/24/08) Matters to note

The Clerk advised that following damage, the water fountain plaque has been refixed to the churchyard wall and South West Water has taken further water samples for testing. The results are expected back in 10 working days.

CE/24/09) Climate and Environmental Policy

The Clerk advised that it is good practice to review policies from time to time and a review of the Town Council's Climate and Environmental Policy has resulted in no changes being required.

Arising from a concern, the Clerk advised that the proposed De-Salination Plant at Par will be discussed by the Town Council when a planning application is put forward for consideration and that an opportunity for the community to air their views will be provided at that time.

It was **RESOLVED** to re-approve the Climate and Environmental Policy.

CE/24/10) Biodiversity Net Gain – Briefing

Members received a briefing via TEAMS from Andrew Towlerton Associates on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Mr Towlerton explained that new planning applications for a single dwelling or more, a commercial development of 1,000 square metres or more than 1 hectare, working of minerals and waste developments will all need to provide a 10% net gain in biodiversity – sometimes higher. Very small developments such as household extensions do not qualify. Failure to meet BNG requirements may trigger enforcement action by the Local Planning Authority.

CE/24/11) Climate Emergency Action Plan

The Town Clerk advised the following:

- So far, no excess fly tipping has been found in the Town Council's car park or parks following the roll out of the new waste regime.
- Renewable energy sources are being monitored but at the present time they are cost prohibitive;
- The potential for Members to opt in or out to receive hard copies of the agendas (to be reviewed after the May 2025 elections);
- LED's for Streetlights are being rolled out as and when bulbs fail as they are too expensive to do all in one go.

During discussion, concern was expressed with regard to the rise in QR code scams and the significant resource required (monetary and grounds staff) to maintain wildflower areas.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the updated Climate Emergency Action Plan.

CE/24/12) Climate Action St Austell (CASA)

Councillor Hamilton advised that CASA meet monthly and Mr John Hubbard is now Chair of the group. They support organisations where they can with climate change activities, carry out litter picks and produce a bi-weekly article for the Voice Newspaper championing climate change initiatives. He added that Mr Colin Bristow (former chief geologist with Imerys) is due to speak to CASA on the 24th September about the effect of climate change on the geology in Cornwall and that he will hopefully attend a Town Council meeting in due course to provide a similar briefing. Mr Bristow is of the view that the geology in this area of Cornwall makes it an ideal site for a geothermal facility.

CE/24/13) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the date of the next meeting of the Climate and Environment Committee is 21st October 2024.

The meeting closed at 7.11pm.