

MINUTES of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 9th SEPTEMBER 2024 at The Registrar's Office, Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4LD at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Fox, Kimber, Preece, Stephens, Thompson and Young.

In attendance: Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Town Clerk) and Steve Skinner (Operations Manager).

Also in attendance: Councillor Hamilton.

CC/24/16) Apologies for absence

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

Apologies for absence were also received from David Pooley, Town Clerk.

Councillor Young advised that he needed to leave the meeting early.

CC/24/17) Declarations of Interest

Councillor Fox declared an interest in agenda item 10 (St Austell – St Pirans Day) by virtue of being the grant applicant.

CC/24/18) Dispensations

None.

CC/24/19) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 3rd June 2024

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd June 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

CC/24/20) Matters to Note

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Childrens' Literacy Festival (CC/24/09), had been a success with approximately 1500 adults and children attending various events over the three-day period. The authors were also seen by 2,500 school children. The queues for book signings were long and the shops in White River Place reported an uplift in trade over the weekend of the festival.

The Table Tennis Club (minute number CC/24/10) launched a Table Tennis For Good project in the town centre on the 20th August 2024 which was attended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The event was well attended with many members of the public participating in a number of taster sessions.

CC/24/21) Public Participation

There were three members of the public in attendance.

CC/24/22) Wailim Wong, Communications Officer, CAB

The Chair welcomed Mr Wong to the meeting.

Mr Wong provided an overview of the work of the CAB and stressed that they provide confidential advice which is open to everyone, regardless of their age or financial status. He advised that the CAB has 8 offices in Cornwall and provide outreach work in the smaller towns. He added that they have a presence in some Trussell Trust Foodbanks, including St Austell. Mr Wong advised that they are open to the public at the Light and Life Centre on a Thursday morning, 10am to 12pm but are contactable on the telephone or text messages outside of these hours.

Mr Wong advised that the top 5 issues (April 2023 to March 2024) for the St Austell Parish are:

- Benefits and Tax credits
- Debt
- Benefits - Universal credit
- Housing
- Financial services and capability

Mr Wong advised that during the same period they assisted 14 homeless people and 13 people with threatened homelessness. Across the whole parish 394 people have been seen and 2,086 issues dealt with. 21% of the people were aged between 25-34 and 20% aged between 55-64. Mr Wong advised that ideally, they would like their own offices but cannot afford the commercial rents currently being offered.

During discussion, Members raised a concern about people sleeping in a layby and a suggestion of premises that might be suitable.

The Chair thanked Mr Wong for his interesting presentation.

CC/24/23) Grounds Maintenance

The Operations Manager advised that the demolition of the old pavilion building on the eastern boundary of Poltair Park has been completed and the new apprentice had settled in well and passed a number of courses.

The horticultural displays have been praised by many people with one person seen taking a selfie with the wildflowers at Daniels Lane. There have been a few unavoidable staff absences during the summer, but the team have coped well and are now on the 8th cut across the town. A good reactive service continues to be provided for vandalism repairs and graffiti as and when they occur. It is anticipated that there will be a 9th cut before the winter works start.

The play equipment continues to be inspected across all parks on a regular basis and once the grass cutting season is finished, play equipment maintenance will be scheduled in to be completed over the winter period.

Members thanked the Operations Manager for his presentation and the excellent horticultural displays across the town.

CC/24/24) Studio 4 Dance CIC

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the conditions of the grant approved in June 2023 had required the Director of Studio 4 Dance CIC to produce a report in 12 months' time confirming how the grant funding had been applied and sight of a recent set of accounts.

The Deputy Clerk referred to the report circulated with the agenda and added that the partnership with Cornwall College has seen a significant increase in students, many of whom gain the necessary qualifications to take their dance careers further afield. The Deputy Clerk added that Studio 4 Dance CIC had also taken part in the Mayor's Charity Fun Event and had raised over £300 for their danceathon. The Deputy Clerk added that the accounts had been produced and to date, the CIC appears to be operating well within its means.

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

CC/24/25) Small Grants Scheme

The Chair advised that in order to assist the members of the public present, the Cornwall Croquet Club grant application would be considered first and then the application from the St Blazey Amateur Operatic Society.

Cornwall Croquet Club

Ms Owen explained the importance of the club to the community and the club's desire to purchase the grounds from the landowners who do not wish to renew the lease.

Members expressed their support for the club and the community benefit that it brings but felt that the £1,000 requested could not be accommodated at this time.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £500 to Cornwall Croquet Club for funding towards the purchase of the club grounds.

St Blazey Amateur Operatic Society

Ms Prater explained that the Society has just finished auditions for the forthcoming Dick Whittington production and is currently fund raising as well as seeking funding from other sources. She outlined the increase in costs expected this year which includes the purchase of a storage container and the associated damp proof treatment for the storage of costumes and props.

Members expressed their support for the St Blazey Amateur Operatic Society and their excellent, professionally produced productions but felt that the £1,000 requested could not be accommodated at this time.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £500 to St Blazey Amateur Operatic Society for funding towards their 2025 production of Dick Whittington and storage container.

ABC Residents Association

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to the ABC Residents Association for funding towards their Christmas outing to Exeter.

Cornwall One Parent Support CIO (St Austell Group)

Members expressed their support for the work of the Cornwall One Parent Support CIO and suggested that the organisation seeks funding from the Cornwall Councillor Community Chest funds to continue their good work.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £240 to the Cornwall One Parent Support CIO (St Austell Group) for funding towards the Family After School Group.

Councillor Young left the meeting

Cornwall Performing Arts CIC

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to the Cornwall Performing Arts CIC for funding towards the St Austell Zombie Walk and Halloween Workshop.

Imerys Singers

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to the Imerys Singers for funding towards room hire, heating and Musical Director fees.

Pegasus Mens' Wellbeing Centre CIC

Members reviewed the grant application but felt that they could not make a decision until further information had been received.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer making a decision and invite Pegasus Mens' Wellbeing Centre CIC to the next Community Committee meeting to provide a short presentation on their work and clarification of the referrals process.

Stepping Stones Childcare

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to Stepping Stones Childcare for funding towards an ipad to assist with the childrens' learning and managerial support.

St Austell BID

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £240 to St Austell BID for funding towards four hi viz jackets for the security staff.

St Austell - St Pirans Day

The Chair invited Councillor Fox to speak before she left the meeting.

Councillor Fox outlined the success of the 2024 event and the plans so far for the 2025 St Pirans Day Event.

Councillor Fox reiterated her interest and left the meeting

Members expressed their support for St Piran's Day and a suggestion was made that the Duchy of Cornwall could be approached for funding.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to St Austell – St Piran’s Day Event for funding towards the 2025 St Piran’s Day Event.

Councillor Fox returned to the meeting

CC/24/26) Projects update

The Deputy Town Clerk updated Members on the following projects:

Town Centre Regeneration

It is hoped that the feasibility study for the rooftop garden will be completed by the end of the year.

A second design is awaited for the replacement banners on the Poundland building and the Holy Trinity Piazza Project is progressing well. Both projects are on target to be completed by March 2025.

A meeting is taking place this week with regard to the Student Accommodation. The Town Clerk is still awaiting contact from Cornwall Council with regard to the Highways feasibility work.

Feasibility studies have been commissioned for Duke Street and the viaduct uplighting. Following a site visit, first impressions indicate that the community benefit of lighting the viaduct is likely to be very little thus making it unviable. A full report is awaited.

CCTV

The CCTV monitoring for the town centre is on summer hours and the re-deployable camera is in Bethel. The monitoring costs for installing more cameras in the town centre are being negotiated with Newquay Town Council.

Youth

Nick Smith provided an update to the Town Council meeting on the 8th July.

Arising from a question, it was **AGREED** that Action for Children should be asked to attend a future meeting of the Community Committee to outline their work in St Austell.

Car Park

The car park income is reasonable and the new payment machines working well. The use of cash is falling away with many people taking advantage of contactless. The season tickets are steady with regular users.

Anti Social Behaviour

Extra security patrols are being funded through the Police and Crime Commissioner and Home Office until February/March time which is making a difference. Shop lifting remains prevalent in the town.

Allotments

There is just one allotment left to let – Plot 10. This will be made good in time for next year's growing season and re-let.

Footpaths

The footpaths are maintained by the Town Council and are cut regularly throughout the summer season. Drovers Lane at Menacuddle has been cleared and adopted for public use.

Parks

The Regeneration Officer is hoping to submit a CIL funding application for the Landrew Road and Meadows Parks improvements. The demolition and making good of the old toilet block at Poltair Park have been completed. Some wooden posts have been replaced in Sandy Hill Park.

Beryl Bikes

Due to a lack of use, Cornwall Council are proposing to remove the Beryl Bikes from St Austell. There is however a slight delay as Homes England provided 8 of the bikes installed, so their agreement to their removal is being sought.

Arising from the above, Members expressed their disappointment that the bikes are being removed and suggested that they could be better used if they were located around the clay trails.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should write to Cornwall Council expressing disappointment with the planned removal of the beryl bikes and to request that consideration be given to a partial removal of the bikes and their use being extended to the clay trails.

CC/24/27) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next meeting of the Community Committee is scheduled for Monday 25th November 2024.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.