

MINUTES of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 25th NOVEMBER 2024 at The Registrar's Office, Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4LD at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Double, Fox, Kimber, Pearce, Preece, Stephens, Thompson and Young

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

Also in attendance: Councillor Hamilton

CC/24/28) Apologies for absence

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

CC/24/29) Declarations of Interest

Councillor Fox declared an interest in Agenda Item 8 (Small Grants Scheme) as follows:

- St Austell Market House CIC – by virtue of knowing Mr Netherton and other Board Members;
- St Austell Amateur Operatic Society – by virtue of the production taking place at Cornwall College (Keay Theatre) where she is employed;
- Young People Cornwall – by virtue of being a Town Council representative on The House Steering Group.

CC/24/30) Dispensations

None.

CC/24/31) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 9th September 2024

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 9th September 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

CC/24/32) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that a representative from Action for Children will attend the full Council meeting in January and a response has been received from Beryl Bikes confirming that they will not extend the trial in St Austell.

CC/24/33) Public Participation

There were two members of the public present. Mr Netherton (Market House CIC) and Mr Lewis (Pegasus Men's Wellbeing Centre CIC).

CC/24/34) Adult Education

The Chair welcomed Rob Sweetzer-Sturt, Head of Adult Education and Stacey Sleeman, Head of Skills (Cornwall Council) to the meeting.

Ms Sleeman advised that in August 2025 the Government's Adult Education budget will be devolved to Cornwall Council giving the Council complete control of the delivery of adult education in Cornwall. Through this deal, Cornwall Council will commission adult education across many service providers including Cornwall College.

Ms Sleeman advised that due to financial pressures and a drop in adult learners there is a need to rationalise the service which has resulted in a number of centres being earmarked for closure, including St Austell. Ms Sleeman advised that the affected learners have been contacted and arrangements are being put in place for them to complete their course. The options that have been offered to learners to complete their course are online learning, attending a learning centre in either Bodmin or St Dennis or attending Cornwall College. Funding is being offered for travel costs or loan of equipment or connectivity to learn online.

Mr Sweetzer-Sturt advised that they are gathering data to help them review and re-set adult education across Cornwall.

During discussion, Members raised the following:

- Disappointment that the Adult Education Team will not move into the new White River Place offices;
- The importance of Adult Education, particularly in St Austell where academic achievement is low;
- Concern that Cornwall College might not be able to provide an adult education ICT course;
- The need for face-to-face courses rather than on-line.

The Chair thanked Ms Sleeman and Mr Sweezer-Sturt for their presentation.

CC/24/35) Small Grants Scheme

Pegasus Men's Wellbeing Centre CIC

Mr Lewis explained that the CIC has been in existence for 10 years and was set up to provide mental health support to men. Since Covid the referrals to the service have increased considerably and support is now provided to both men and women. Each referral receives 6 free counselling sessions after which time there is a sliding scale of cost depending on individual circumstances. The service in St Austell operates from the CN4C building in High Cross Street. Referrals come from the NHS, Mental Health Services, Social Prescribing and GP services.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to Pegasus Men's Wellbeing Centre CIC for funding towards mental health support services in St Austell.

Councillor Fox left during the next item

St Austell Market House CIC

Mr Netherton explained that they had the opportunity to take possession of a Trudgeon Pipe Organ from Nanstallon Church, but they do not have the funds to re-build and re-furbish it. The Trustees are very hopeful that the organ once refurbished can be used for a regular programme of live events and concerts which would generate footfall into the town centre and boost the night-time economy.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that a grant in the sum of £1,000 be awarded to St Austell Market House CIC for funding towards the re-building and refurbishment of the Trudgeon Pipe Organ which has been re-located from Nanstallon Church to the Market House.

Councillor Fox returned to the meeting

Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to Cornwall Air Ambulance for funding towards their HELi2 Appeal.

Councillor Kimber left the meeting

SALSA

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to St Austell Library Support Association (SALSA) for funding towards a new television/monitor screen.

St Austell Amateur Operatic Society

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £500 to St Austell Amateur Operatic Society for funding towards their 2025 production "Legally Blonde".

White River Community Church

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £78.89 to White River Community Church and Family Centre for funding towards childrens' face painting in the Market House over the festive period.

Young People Cornwall

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to Young People Cornwall for funding towards the installation of a bike rack outside The House.

CC/24/36) White River Project

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that Councillor Clemo is currently the Town Council's representative on the White River Project Steering Group and that it would be helpful to have another representative if Councillor Clemo is unable to attend. She added that the meetings are during the day, usually in the morning.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that a second Town Council representative on the White River Project Steering Group is nominated at the next full Council meeting.

CC/24/37) Projects update

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk provided an update as follows:

Town Centre Regeneration

- **Roof Top Garden.** Hayhurst Consultants are finalising the report which should be available by the end of December.

- **Poundland Banner.** The public voted for Banner B and this design along with the top 16 photographs, chosen by the public have been sent to the designer for a final draft to be produced.
- **Holy Trinity Church.** Two tenders were received and evaluated by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Mei Loci, Heather Batho (Holy Trinity Church) and the Town Clerk. The preferred tenderer is local and is due to meet with Mei Loci and the Clerk later this week to discuss timescales and the materials specified.
- **Student Accommodation.** This project is progressing well, and initial feedback suggests that there is enough demand for student accommodation to justify further feasibility work.
- **Highways Improvements.** The terms of reference have been agreed with Cornwall Council with work on the project due to start shortly.

CCTV

5 additional cameras, approved by the Council have been ordered and should be installed shortly. The mobile camera is currently in the Bethel area.

Priory Car Park

The income is better than budgeted and the machines are working well. The Operations Manager has obtained planters for the lamp posts to increase the floral display in the car park and it is hoped to re-tarmac another section of the car park before the year end.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The Police and Crime Commissioner hotspot funding for additional security patrols has been well received but the funding is due to run out in January. Gatherings on the Market House steps are still a frustration to the public and Market House tenants. As with other towns, shop lifting is fairly prevalent, but on the whole the levels of reported ASB are low.

Allotments

The grounds staff will clear a vacant plot over the winter in time for the spring.

Grounds Maintenance

The Town Council's Grounds Maintenance Apprentice is progressing well, he has passed all mandatory qualifications and attends college on a Monday. The summer grass cutting round has finished and a programme of winter maintenance has started. The Regeneration Officer has submitted a CIL application for playground improvements at Landrew Road and the Meadows and the grounds staff have pressure washed all of the play equipment in the Council's parks. The safety surface at Prince Charles Park and Poltair Park has been repaired.

Public conveniences

The mens' toilets have had new urinals installed, and the disabled toilets are closed until the hoist has passed a stress test. This should take place tomorrow.

CC/24/38) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next meetings of the Community Committee are scheduled for Monday 24th February 2025 and Monday 24th March 2025.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.