

**MINUTES of a MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> MARCH 2025 in The Stable Block, Pondhu House, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5DP at 6pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Brown, Cohen, Fox, Gray, Hamilton, Kimber, Lanxon, Preece, Stephens and Thompson

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

**P/24/141) Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bull, Double, Styles and Young.

Councillor Stephens advised that he needed to leave the meeting at 7.30pm

**P/24/142) Declarations of Interest**

None.

**P/24/143) Dispensations**

None.

**P/24/144) Minutes from the Meeting dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025**

Councillor Brown suggested that the following amendments be made:

*Page 4.*

**Minute Number: P/24/138)** Insert the word "new" before Government

*Page 6.*

Amend the Resolution to read:

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should draft a letter in consultation with Planning and Regeneration Committee Members **who are able** to attend an **informal meeting** on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** that subject to the above amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**P/24/145) Matters to note**

*P/24/138) Local Plan.*

The Clerk advised that following the informal meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February the draft letter was finalised and sent off to Cornwall Council and a copy circulated to all Members via the weekly brief.

The Chair advised that in order to be helpful to the Members of the public present he would allow Mr Kneller and Mrs Yelland to speak under Public Participation and then bring agenda item 7 (vii) to be considered first followed by item 7 (iv).

### **P/24/146) Public participation**

The Chair welcomed Mrs Yelland – Clerk, St Mewan Parish Council and Mr Kneller, a member of the public to the meeting.

Mr Kneller explained that he was Chair of St Mewan Parish Council for 10 years and during that time was involved in the St Austell Town Framework discussions. He advised that one of his proudest achievements was the St Mewan Neighbourhood Plan which was produced through extensive community consultation and a referendum. Mr Kneller advised that the Neighbourhood Plan was signed off in 2018 but unfortunately under the new planning guidelines it is no longer a valid planning document as it is over 7 years old.

Mr Kneller advised that St Mewan Parish Council has discussed the Call for Sites document and have agreed that they would like the villages of Trewoon and Polgooth to retain a green buffer between them and St Austell.

Mr Kneller concluded that St Mewan Parish Council would welcome joint discussions about the sites identified.

### **P/24/147) Planning Applications**

- vii. **PA25/00947:** Factory Unit Rear Of 75 Treverbyn Road St Austell Cornwall. Proposed new site access/egress to existing E(g)/B8 industrial/warehouse building and formation of new vehicular turning area.

The Chair welcomed Mr Roger Skinner to the meeting.

Mr Skinner advised that the previous application for the site was refused due to the loss of a Cornish hedgerow and that the new hedgerow proposed in this application should overcome that objection. Mr Skinner advised that the proposed access to the site complies with Department of Transport guidelines and that the Highways Officer had raised no objections previously. Mr Skinner advised that a flood risk assessment has been carried out which concludes that the development will not adversely impact on the flood risk within the St Austell critical drainage area.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- The flooding on the nearby footpath
- The non requirement for a contamination report
- Concern with regard to speeding on Treverbyn Road

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to this application subject to the Highways Officer being satisfied with the proposal.

- iv. **PA25/00646:** Pentreva Bungalow The Blantyre Centre Truro Road St Austell. Outline Planning Permission with some matters reserved

(access) for a proposed development of up to 77 extra care apartments (C3) and associated works.

The Chair welcomed Ms Sarah Keast, Cornwall Council Commissioning Manager, to the meeting and invited her to outline the purpose of the proposed development. She explained that this proposal was part of a project to increase the supply of extra care housing in Cornwall. The accommodation would be outside of the Home Choice system and target older people over 55 and younger people with care needs and/or learning disabilities. It was hoped that the facility will encourage longer independent living and reduce admissions into residential care.

Members welcomed the provision of extra care housing provided it was not for individuals with complex needs but raised concerns about the loss of scrub land/habitat, testing for contaminated land, surface water drainage, the height and massing of the buildings and the access for the site. Ms Keast undertook to obtain answers to some of the technical questions raised.

It was **RESOLVED** to support the principle of development of extra care housing on the site but object to the height, design and access arrangements proposed in this application.

- i. **PA25/00027:** 20-22 Fore Street St Austell Cornwall PL25 5EP. Alterations to first, second and third floors to create five, one bedroom apartments and external staircase from first to second floor.

It was **RESOLVED** to support this application subject to the Heritage Officer being satisfied with the external staircase proposed.

- ii. **PA25/00141:** Salema Bownder Vean St Austell Cornwall. Proposed extension and alterations.

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to this application.

- iii. **PA25/00184:** Co-Operative Retail Services Ltd West Hill St Austell Cornwall. Application for Consent to Display an Advertisement, namely the siting of one internally illuminated digital display screen.

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to this application.

- iv. **PA25/00662:** Coleraine Higher Tremena St Austell Cornwall. Works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), works include Atlas Cedar T3 crown reduction approximately 1000mm - 1500mm to reduce overall crown of tree.

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to this application subject to the extent of the works stated being to the satisfaction of the Tree Officer.

- v. **PA25/00692:** 22 Westbourne Drive St Austell Cornwall PL25 5EA. Proposed domestic extension plus associated works.

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to this application subject to compliance with South West Water's requirements.

- vi. **PA25/01240:** 25 Whieldon Road St Austell Cornwall PL25 3JD.  
Proposed extension, garage and alterations.

A proposal to object to the application on the grounds of overlooking was lost 2 votes for, 4 against.

A proposal to make no objection to the application was carried.

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to this application.

#### **P/24/148) Premises Licence Applications**

None.

#### **P/24/149) Planning Decisions**

Members noted the planning decisions report.

Arising from the above, the Clerk advised that the Planning Application for 80 houses at Pentewan Road (PA21/12707) has been approved with conditions.

#### **P/24/150) Cornwall Council – Urgent Delegated Planning Decisions**

The Clerk advised that a revised planning application for a proposed solar farm on land off Menear Road (PA23/09532) is out for consultation with a deadline of the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025 but the Town Council has not been formally consulted. The Clerk further advised that when last consulted the Town Council made no objection.

Members expressed their concern with regard to the loss of good quality agricultural land and the visual impact the development would have on St Austell and the surrounding area.

It was **RESOLVED** to object to the application on the grounds of:

- The loss of good quality agricultural land;
- The visual impact on St Austell and the surrounding area.

*\*\*Councillor Stephens left the meeting\*\**

#### **P/24/151) Shared Prosperity Funding**

The Clerk advised that an application had been submitted to Cornwall Council's Community Levelling Up Programme for funding to create a Pump Track at The Meadows. He added that a condition of the funding is that the applicant has to provide 10% of the costs involved which based on the quotations received so far would be between £8,000 and £10,000 for the project. The Clerk advised that the community is extremely supportive of a Pump Track at The Meadows and a number of letters of support have been received including letters from The Cornwall Bicycle Project, Cornwall Council Social Care, CELT and St Austell Healthcare.

Members unanimously expressed their support for a Pump Track at The Meadows and thanked the Clerk, Operations Manager and the Regeneration Officer for their

hard work in gathering all the required information and submitting the application within the very tight timescales.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that a maximum of £10,000 be approved by way of match funding for a Pump Track at The Meadows.

### **P/24/152) Local Plan**

The Clerk advised that Cornwall Council has invited comments on sites identified as having potential for development through a "call for sites" exercise and has set a deadline for responses of 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

He explained that there would be further opportunities for comment and that at this stage local housing targets were not known and members were not being asked to support or oppose sites or to choose preferred sites but instead were asked to comment on the deliverability of each site. It was accepted that a number of sites would be required to deliver the housing numbers required by the new Government and that most new development for the St Austell area would be in neighbouring parishes.

Members agreed that it was important to respond to the consultation and to engage with neighbouring parish councils before doing so. It was suggested that an informal meeting of members of the Planning Committee, should take place at 5.00pm on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and representatives of other parishes should be invited to agree responses as felt appropriate in relation to the sites suggested.

Councillor Brown expressed concern with regard to a recent Cornwall Council Growth Board Meeting where an agenda item on Housing Policy was not considered in the public domain.

It was **RESOLVED** to delegate the drafting of a response to the consultation exercise to the Town Clerk in consultation with the attendees of the informal meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

*\*\*Councillor Kimber left the meeting\*\**

### **P/24/153) St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership**

#### *Banner and Church Piazza*

The Clerk advised that the erection of the new banner has been delayed until April and the final approval for the church piazza is still awaited.

#### *General Wolfe Building*

Cornwall Council is costing up various options for the General Wolfe building which includes demolition. It has been stressed to Cornwall Council that whatever option is taken forward an improved road scheme to improve the safety for both drivers and pedestrians needs to be incorporated into the plans.

### *High Cross Street*

The Clerk advised that he is meeting with Rob Bosworth, CEO of Cornwall College, within the next few weeks to discuss the demand for student accommodation in St Austell.

### *Gateways Project*

The Duke Street improvement scheme has been finalised and is due to go to public consultation on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at Studio 4 Dance Studio.

### *Highways Project*

The Highways Officers are finalising their report on the feasibility of a reversal of the traffic through Fore Street. Initial findings suggest that this is possible and would help to improve the Bodmin Road corner outside the General Wolfe.

### *Roof Top Garden*

The Clerk advised that the Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership has accepted and approved the final roof top garden report and agreed that it should be reviewed in the future should large scale Government funding become available.

During discussion, Members raised the following:

- A new survey commissioned by Linden Allen (local historian) indicates public resistance to the demolition of the General Wolfe building;
- The need for de-listing of the building before demolition;
- The extension of funding to enable the church piazza to be completed after the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 deadline.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council should accept and approve the final roof top garden report and that it should be re-visited should large scale Government funding become available.

### **P/24/154) Dates of Meetings**

It was noted that the dates of the next meetings of the Planning and Regeneration Committee are Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

The meeting closed at 8.29pm.