

MINUTES of the MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL held on MONDAY 17th March 2025 in The Registrar's Office, Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4LD at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Brown, Bull, Clemo, Cohen, Double, Fox, French, Gray, Hamilton, Kimber, Lanxon, Pearce, Pears, Preece, Rowse, Stephens, Styles, Thompson and Young.

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

C/24/133) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Guest.

C/24/134) Declarations of interests and gifts or hospitality received

Councillor Hamilton declared an interest in agenda item 19 as the minutes include a recommendation for a grant to the Sea Cadets for which he is president.

C/24/135) Dispensations

There were no requests for a dispensation.

C/24/136) Minutes of Meeting held on 27th January 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 27th January 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/24/137) Matters to Note

Rob Bosworth, Chief Executive of the Cornwall College Group, has confirmed that the College will take on as many of the Adult Education courses as it can and that the logistics of accommodating an Adult Education Service within the campus is being considered. Rob Sweetzer-Sturt from Cornwall Council has asked to speak to the Town Council about the Adult Education Service after the election.

C/24/138) Mayor's announcements

The Mayor advised that he had attended the following events:

1st March 2025

St Piran's Day Event in the Town Centre. The Mayor congratulated Councillor Fox for her hard work organising the excellent event.

7th March 2025

Met the "Student's Parliament" at Penrice School and gave a presentation on the work of the Town Council and answered lots of questions.

8th March 2025

Soroptomists book giveaway at the Library.

9th March 2025

Soroptomists Unsung Heroine at the Carlyon Golf Club and gave a presentation on the work of the Town Council.

The Mayor took the opportunity to thank all Councillors for their efforts and extended his best wishes to those not seeking re-election and good luck to those standing again.

C/24/139) Public Participation

None.

C/24/140) Members' questions

There were no questions from Members.

C/24/141) Changing Places Toilet

The Clerk outlined the works required and the quotation received to upgrade the Changing Places toilet at Priory Car Park. Members agreed that the provision of a Changing Places Toilet in St Austell is essential, and that the refurbishment/upgrade work should proceed as soon as possible.

It was **RESOLVED** that the proposed upgrade for the Changing Places Toilets at Priory Car Park be approved in line with the quotation received.

C/24/142) Civility and Respect Pledge

The Clerk advised that NALC, CALC and SLCC are encouraging Town and Parish Councils to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge as a complementary document to the Code of Conduct. The Clerk added that in conjunction with this pledge, it is recommended by NALC, CALC and SLCC to adopt the Dignity at Work Policy referred to in the report.

It was **RESOLVED** to sign up to the Civility and Respect pledge and approve the Dignity at Work Policy.

C/24/143) Health and Safety Audit

It was **RESOLVED** to note the independent Health and Safety Audit carried out in October 2024 and the recommendations contained therein.

C/24/144) Beat the Street

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that the Town Council has been approached by Active Cornwall for funding of approximately £1,000 towards a Beat the Street project that they are hoping to roll out after Easter. Active Cornwall is hoping to place 40-50 boxes across the St Austell parish and surrounding parishes and players score points by tapping 2 boxes within an hour timeframe and accumulate points. The game lasts for 4 weeks.

During discussion, Members raised the following queries/issues:

- Concern at the total cost of the project
- The need for the surrounding parishes to contribute towards the initiative
- What the difference is between "Beat the Street" and "Geocaching" and "Pokemon Go"
- Concern that the proposal is to roll the initiative out after Easter which is on the run up to the Election

Although supportive in principle, it was **RESOLVED** that Active Cornwall should be asked to attend a future Council meeting to explain the "Beat the Street" project, its funding, the geographical area proposed, the desired outcomes and the expectations of the Town Council.

C/24/145) Street Parties

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that the provision of funding for Street Parties for the Jubilee celebrations a few years ago was extremely successful and suggested that a similar approach be taken for the VE Day/VJ Day commemorations. She suggested that a budget of £2,000 be earmarked for community groups or individuals representing a street to apply for a grant with a maximum of £150 per application. The Deputy Clerk stressed that this budget would not affect the Small Grants Scheme budget.

During discussion, Members expressed their support for a Street Party fund.

It was **RESOLVED** to allocate a budget of £2,000 for a VE Day/VJ Day Street Party Fund with delegation for the approval of grants to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and/or Vice-Chair of the Community Committee.

C/24/146) Local Plan

The Clerk advised that the Local Plan could involve a lot of work for the Town Council and, at times, will probably need the input from a planning expert and suggested that £10,000 is set aside for this purpose should it be needed.

During discussion, Members generally agreed that the Town Council needs to be prepared to respond to local plan consultations and possibly contentious planning applications and that it would be helpful to be able to have the input of an expert if required.

It was **RESOLVED** to earmark the sum of £10,000 for the procurement of Planning advice relating to major planning applications and the development of the local plan as required.

C/24/147) Members appointed to outside bodies update reports

Councillor Gray advised that there is a White River Project Community Launch event on 2nd April at the Arts Centre.

Councillor Brown expressed a view that although the group was formed to deal with Government funding, the Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership still has a role to play and is a useful forum for Town Councillors, Cornwall Councillors, the business sector, voluntary sector and the MP to meet on a regular basis.

Councillor Lanxon advised that due to a lack of funding, the football club is having to scale back their plans. A further meeting is planned for next week.

Councillor Thompson advised that the hydrotherapy pool discussions are going well and the working group will meet again after the Elections.

Councillor French advised that the Town Council and BID are working together on a number of initiatives. He added that there are a number of struggling businesses in the town centre which may, in due course, reflect in a downturn in income received by the BID.

C/24/148) Cornwall Councillor update reports

The written reports from Councillors Double and Rowse were noted.

Councillor Pears advised the following:

- The A391 will be closed after the Bank Holiday for major repair works
- There is now a Transport For Cornwall App for people using the busses
- The drains in the Asda underpass have been repaired and should now be fit for purpose.

Councillor Rowse expressed his disappointment with the Bethel bin fire and advised that the Number 27 Truro to St Austell bus route has been reviewed and should provide better timings and connectivity to St Austell.

C/24/149) Planning and Regeneration Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Planning and Regeneration Committee dated 3rd February 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Planning and Regeneration Committee dated 3rd March 2025 and **APPROVE** the **RECOMMENDATION** contained therein.

C/24/150) Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee dated 17th February 2025 and **APPROVE** the **RECOMMENDATION** contained therein.

C/24/151) Community Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Community Committee dated 24th February 2025 and **APPROVE** the **RECOMMENDATIONS** contained therein.

C/24/152) Schedule of Payments

It was **RESOLVED** that the Schedule of Payments for the period 18th January 2025 to 7th March 2025 totalling £267,076.94 and transfers between accounts amounting to £156,164.34 be approved.

C/24/153) St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Project

Roof Top Garden

The report has been finalised and reviewed by the Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership and Town Council.

Duke Street

The feedback from the Duke Street consultation was overall positive. Concern/issues raised:

- The need to keep the road wide enough to allow delivery vehicles through;
- The need to keep the landscaping/planting at a low level so it does not obscure the shops;
- The potential for two 20-minute parking spaces to be incorporated into the design.

The Regeneration Officer will review these comments with Mei Loci.

High Cross Street

It is increasingly likely that student accommodation on this site is not viable. It is hoped that the feasibility work will be useful when looking at other opportunities on the site.

Poundland Banners

To minimise disruption to the businesses, the start date for the dismantling of the old banners and erection of the new Poundland Banners is scheduled for the week after Easter.

Piazza

The faculty has been received and a meeting has been set up with the consultant, contractor and Holy Trinity Church on Monday to determine a start date.

Highways

A feasibility report outlining the feasibility of highways schemes around the town centre is expected to be available from Cornwall Council at the end of March.

General Wolfe

Cornwall Council is investigating the listed status of the building.

C/24/154) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next Town Council meetings are due to take place on 8th May 2025 (Annual Town Council Meeting) and 12th May 2025 (Annual Parish Meeting).

The meeting closed at 7.15pm.