

**MINUTES of the ANNUAL MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL held on MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MAY 2025 in The Registrar's Office, Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4LD at 6pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Brown, Bull, Clemo, Cohen, Gray, Hamilton, Kimber, Lanxon, Lingham, Marshall, Pearce, Preece, Stephens, Taylor, Thompson and Young.

**In attendance:** David Pooley (Town Clerk), Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Town Clerk), Bill McCardle (Regeneration Officer).

**C/25/01) Election of Mayor**

The Mayor, Councillor Julian Young, invited nominations for Mayor for the 2025/26 civic year.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Hamilton be elected Mayor of St Austell for the 2025/26 civic year.

Councillor Hamilton signed a declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Town Clerk and took the Chair.

Councillor Hamilton thanked Members for electing him as Mayor, thanked the outgoing Mayor and advised that he will work hard and is looking forward to the year ahead.

**C/25/02) Election of Deputy Mayor**

The Mayor, Councillor Hamilton, invited nominations for Deputy Mayor for the 2025/26 civic year.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Stephens be elected Deputy Mayor of St Austell for the 2025/26 civic year.

**C/25/03) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Hawken, Rowse, Whitehouse and Williams-Pears.

The Clerk advised that all 20 Councillors have signed the "Acceptance of Office" form following the election.

**C/25/04) Declarations of interests and gifts or hospitality received**

The Clerk advised that the Regeneration Officer would declare an interest and leave the meeting for agenda item 25 (Regeneration Officer).

**C/25/05) Dispensations**

There were no requests for a dispensation.

**C/25/06) Minutes of Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

## **C/25/07) Matters to Note**

The Clerk advised that:

- the refurbishment of the changing places toilet at Priory Car Park is almost finished;
- A provision of £10,000 has been put in reserves for planning advice/consultancy support.

## **C/25/08) Mayor's/Retiring Mayor's announcements**

The retiring Mayor advised that he had attended the following events:

*27<sup>th</sup> March 2025*

Hosted a fund-raising dinner at Edies' where £870 was raised for the Mayoral charities

*2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025*

Attended Penrice Academy's rock of ages show

*22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025*

Supported Carclaze school with their breakfast club

*24<sup>th</sup> April 2025*

Attended a St Austell Chamber of Commerce meeting and spoke about the good work that the Town Council is doing for St Austell

*25<sup>th</sup> April 2025*

Attended the ground breaking event at Cornwall College where it was announced that there are plans for A levels to be brought back to the college.

*28<sup>th</sup> April 2025*

Sat on the interview panel to appoint two Library and Information Assistants.

*5<sup>th</sup> May 2025*

Attended a VE 80<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Event at Ranelagh Road

*8<sup>th</sup> May 2025*

Laid a wreath on behalf of the Town Council at the VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> commemoration event at St Austell Library.

The Mayor advised that he was also present at the VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> commemoration event and gave a speech on behalf of the Royal British Legion. On the same day he advised that he had attended a VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> event organised by "Bright Hour" at Mount Charles Church which he thoroughly enjoyed.

The Mayor advised that future events include a visit to the Air Cadets' open evening in South Street, Hayle Town Council Mayor Making, Stepping Stones Nursery "Party in the Park", the Killyvarder Way Street Party and Bodmin Town Council Mayor Choosing Ceremony.

The Mayor took the opportunity to advise Members that St Austell Town Council's Mayor Making Ceremony is on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 6.30pm at Holy Trinity Church.

#### **C/25/09) Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present.

#### **C/25/10) Members' questions**

There were no questions from Members.

#### **C/25/11) General Power of Competence**

The Clerk explained the General Power of Competence and advised that the Town Council meets the conditions of eligibility for the exercise of the Power as set out in the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012.

Arising from a question, the Clerk clarified that that Members elected unopposed were still deemed to be elected for the purpose of the criteria laid down by the General Power of Competence legislation.

The Town Council **RESOLVED** that it met the conditions prescribed by the Secretary of State in the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 and that it should re-adopt the General Power of Competence.

#### **C/25/12) Internal Audit Report for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

The Clerk referred Members to the report of the Internal Auditor and explained that as the Auditors' findings were relevant to the Annual Return which the Council had to submit for the 2024/25 financial year, the details were reported to the full Council for consideration prior to agreeing the Annual Governance Statement. He explained that the Internal Auditor had found no issues and had given the Town Council a clean bill of financial health.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the Internal Auditor be noted.

#### **C/25/13) Annual Governance Statement**

The Town Clerk introduced a report setting out the details of the Annual Return and Governance Statement which is required to be completed and sent to BDO LLP, the Council's External Auditors, by the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025.

The Clerk asked Members if any Member had an interest in BDO LLP and no interests were declared.

Members considered each of the questions in Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement in detail before agreeing the following responses.

It was **RESOLVED** that the answer to each question should be as follows:

Question 1 Yes  
Question 2 Yes  
Question 3 Yes  
Question 4 Yes  
Question 5 Yes  
Question 6 Yes  
Question 7 Yes  
Question 8 Yes  
Question 9 Yes

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. the Mayor and the Clerk should be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement in the Annual Return on behalf of the Town Council;
2. There were no conflict of interest relating to the appointment of BDO LLP;
3. The Clerk should advertise the electors' rights after the accounting statements have been approved in accordance with the External Audit guidance;
4. The annual meetings of the trustees for Truro Road and Poltair Parks should be held on the same day as the Council meeting in July.

#### **C/25/14) Annual Return and Accounting Statements 2024/25**

The Clerk advised that the Town Council's turnover for the 2024/25 financial year was £1.7 million. The main sources of income were the Council Tax precept and car park income and the biggest expenditure items were staff costs and the purchase/maintenance of play equipment. The surplus for the year, after transferring £80,000 to the projects reserve, was £38,675 which will accrue to the General Fund balance. The Town Council has no borrowing and has healthy reserves.

The Clerk stressed the need to keep a healthy Repairs and Renewals Reserve to help smooth out the expenditure on aging play equipment much of which had been installed by Restormel Borough Council in 2007/2008. Many of the items are nearing their end of life and will need to be replaced within the next few years.

In answer to a question, the Clerk confirmed that the increase in miscellaneous expenses related to town centre revitalisation projects for which there is grant income to cover the costs.

In answer to a further question, the Clerk confirmed that the Town Council has invested in accessible play equipment for a number of parks across the town.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised Councillor Taylor that she would ask the Operations Manager to provide her with a list of accessible play equipment in each of the Town Council's parks.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- i. Approve the detailed accounting statements and transfers to and from reserves as shown;

- ii. Approve the accounting statement in Section 2 of the Annual Return for 2024/25;
- iii. Authorise the Clerk and Mayor to sign the Accounting Statement on the Annual Return on behalf of the Town Council; and
- iv. Instruct the Town Clerk to publish the accounts and advertise the electors' rights in accordance with the External Audit guidance.

### **C/25/15) Standing Committees**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Terms of Reference for each Committee had been discussed at a recent Chair and Vice-Chairs meeting and the amendments suggested had been incorporated into the Terms of Reference put forward for approval.

The composition of each Committee was discussed, and it was agreed that the Standing Committees should be approved as outlined with the addition of Councillors Kimber and Preece to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and Councillor Bull to the Climate and Environment Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Terms of Reference of each committee as set out be approved;
2. The Committee Membership list as set out be approved subject to:
  - Councillors Kimber and Preece being added to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and;
  - Councillor Bull being added to the Climate and Environment Committee.

### **C/25/16) Election of Representatives to outside bodies**

It was **RESOLVED** that the following appointments to outside bodies be made for the 2025/26 civic year:

#### **AFC St Austell Project**

*(Councillor Lanxon)*

#### **CALC - Larger Councils Liaison Group**

*(Councillor M Brown)*

#### **Climate Action St Austell (CASA)**

*(Councillor A Cohen)*

#### **Carlyon Road Masterplanning Group**

*(Councillors Bull and Lanxon and the Chair of the Planning Committee)*

#### **Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Flood Forum**

*(Councillor A Cohen)*

#### **Cornwall Council Planning Partnership**

*(Councillor O Kimber)*

**Holy Trinity Church Grounds Steering Group**

*(Councillor C Hamilton)*

**Rural Services Network**

*(Councillor J Preece)*

**Rural Service Network – Young Person’s Panel**

*(Councillor E Stephens)*

**Rural Service Network – Older Person’s Panel**

*(Councillor E Stephens)*

**Safer St Austell**

*(Councillor J Lingham)*

**St Austell Business Improvement District (BID)**

*(Councillor O Kimber)*

**St Austell Bay Chamber of Commerce**

*(Councillor O Kimber)*

**St Austell Revitalisation Partnership**

*(Councillors M Gray, C Hamilton and the Chair of the Planning & Regeneration Committee)*

**St Austell, Mevagissey, St Blazey, Fowey and Lostwithiel  
Community Area Partnership**

*(Councillors Lanxon (voting member) and Lingham (substitute))*

**The House Steering Group**

*(Councillors M Gray and O Kimber)*

**Treveth – Penwinnick Road Steering Group**

*(Councillors M Gray and C Hamilton)*

**White River Steering Group**

*(Councillor M Gray)*

Councillor Brown stressed the need for regular reports to be given to the Town Council by the representative(s) of each outside body.

**C/25/17) Schedule of Payments**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Schedule of Payments for the period 8<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 totalling £330,786.32 and transfers between Bank Accounts amounting to £517,376.40.

**C/25/18) Schedule of meetings**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Schedule of Meetings for the 2025/26 Civic Year as outlined.

### **C/25/19) Community Committee**

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Community Committee meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

### **C/25/20) Finance and General Purposes Committee**

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

### **C/25/21) Planning and Regeneration Committee**

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Planning and Regeneration Committee meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

### **C/25/22) A391 Closure**

During discussion, Members raised the following:

- Speeding in Slades Road and the cut through roads
- Congestion in Trelawney Road and side roads nearby
- Lack of enforcement on the clearways
- Motor bikes and cyclists still accessing the A391 despite the signage that it is closed
- Gratitude expressed that safety measures and improvements to the A391 are being undertaken;
- Additional infrastructure improvements utilising funding from the developers of the Garden Village.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should write to Cornwall Council expressing Members' views on the impact of the closure of the A391.

### **C/25/23) Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership**

Members reviewed the report and the following comments were raised.

- Evidence that the "Inclusive Report" produced by Inclusive St Austell has informed town centre revitalisation projects;
- The need for funding to enable the Arts Centre and Market Houses to be made fully accessible;
- The outcome of the Market Street/Fore Street Highways Report.

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

### **C/25/24) To consider excluding the press and public**

It was **RESOLVED** that under Section 1 (ii) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the business of the meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

The Mayor advised that in order to allow the Regeneration Officer to be present for agenda item 26 (Poundland Banners), he would bring that item forward.

#### **C/25/25) Poundland Banners**

The Clerk outlined the latest position with regard to the banner project and the difficulties that the current contractor is experiencing.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk be given authority to seek an alternative contractor to complete the Poundland Banner project within existing budgets.

*\*\*Mr Bill McCardle, Regeneration Officer left the meeting\*\**

#### **C/25/26) Regeneration Officer**

The Clerk advised that additional resource is required to assist with the completion of the banner and piazza projects, both of which should be finished by the end of the summer.

It was **RESOLVED** to extend the temporary contract for the Regeneration Officer until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to re-admit the press and public.

#### **C/25/27) Dates of Meetings**

It was noted that the next Town Council meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025 (Annual Parish Meeting) and Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

The meeting closed at 7.46pm.