

MINUTES of the MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL held on MONDAY 1st SEPTEMBER 2025 in The Registrar's Office, Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4LD at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Brown, Bull, Clemo, Gray, Hamilton, Hawken, Kimber, Lanxon, Lingham, Preece, Rowse, Stephens, Taylor, Thompson, Whitehouse and Young.

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

C/25/54) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Cohen, Marshall, Pearce and Williams-Pears.

C/25/55) Declarations of interests and gifts or hospitality received

The Mayor advised that he had received tickets and attended the Tunes at the Coliseum event in July.

C/25/56) Dispensations

There were no requests for a dispensation.

C/25/57) Minutes of Meeting held on 14th July 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th July 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/25/58) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that the creation of a Pump Track at The Meadows is due to start at the beginning of October and all being well will take approximately 5 weeks to complete. An information event for the public will be held on Thursday 11th September 2025, 3.30pm to 6pm at The Meadows. The contractor will be on site to answer any questions and the Town Council's trailer of games will be there for childrens' activities.

Arising from the above, the Clerk confirmed that a policy on the disposal of Town Council land has been drafted and will be put before the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration.

C/25/59) Mayor's announcements

The Mayor provided an update on his activities since the last Council meeting as follows:

- An interview on CHAOS radio
- Attended the CAP meeting at the Table Tennis Club
- Awarded certificates to the fire cadets at the Fire Station with the Deputy Mayor
- Accepted an invitation to the Tunes at the Coliseum Event at Carlyon Beach
- Attended a Scouts jamboree at Stithians
- Attended a TEAMS meeting on 20mph proposals
- Accepted an invitation to a VJ Day service at St Johns Methodist Church
- Attended Line dancing lessons for the VJ Day event

- Attended the VJ Day Event in the town centre on the 14th August 2025
- Accepted an invitation to the VJ Day commemoration event at Nansledan on the 15th August 2025
- Judged two cake baking competitions for Jakes Bakes at the Market House with the Deputy Mayor
- Went to Bill Holland's farewell in White River Place
- Along with the Deputy Town Mayor, attended the Truro Road Park fun day and judged the Teddy Bear competition.

Councillor Hawken arrived to the meeting

C/25/60) Public Participation

None

C/25/61) Members' questions

There were no questions from Members.

*** To assist the Cornwall Councillors present, it was agreed to bring agenda item 13 forward to the next agenda item ***

C/25/62) Cornwall Councillor update reports

Councillor Paul Ashton

Councillor Paul Ashton, Cornwall Councillor for Poltair and Mount Charles, advised that he is putting a lot of effort into casework and liaising with Councillor Yelland on a lot of issues. He thanked those involved with the Fun Day on the 14th August and expressed his pleasure at the town being busy and the opportunity to meet lots of people.

Councillor Ashton advised that the Fire and Rescue Service consultation has been issued and asked the Town Council to encourage the public to complete the survey. He added that the fire station has an open day on Saturday 13th September 10am to 2pm. He explained that he is a member of the Devon and Cornwall Crime Panel and attended his first meeting in July and is happy to report any issues Councillors may have to this forum. Councillor Ashton also advised that he is the shadow portfolio holder for housing.

Cornwall Councillors have been asked for their views on car parking and Councillor Ashton advised that he is happy to report any comments from the Town Council to Cornwall Council's parking team. Councillor Ashton acknowledged that highways closures/repairs that are being carried out across the town are causing issues for local residents, particularly in the Mount Stamper, Menacuddle and North Street areas of the town.

Councillor Ashton concluded that disappointingly the Community Chest budget for each Cornwall Councillor has been reduced from £3,000 to £1,400 and he is looking at how best to support local organisations with the limited budget there is.

Councillor Jack Yelland

Councillor Jack Yelland advised that he is looking at various planning matters including a contentious matter at the Pensylva Estate and traffic issues associated with the Home Bargains planning application off Pentewan Road.

Councillor Yelland advised that the Truro Road emergency works are due to be concluded on Tuesday afternoon and that the St Austell Fire Station community bonfire event is not going ahead. Councillor Yelland added that he is working closely with the St Austell BID with regard to empty shops and how landlords might be encouraged to bring them back into use. He also advised that he is involved in the potential to create a community garden scheme close to the White River and that the bulk of his casework relates to trees, street cleaning, speeding and temporary accommodation.

Councillor Jordan Rowse

Councillor Rowse advised that he has had a busy August and is very pleased that the funding bid has been approved for The Meadows pump track. Councillor Rowse stressed the importance of reporting crimes to the Police and made reference to a successful prosecution in Bethel. He also advised that following successful lobbying the macular service is to remain in St Austell.

With regard to highways issues, the final schemes from last year's CAP highway schemes are being implemented and concern has been raised to him about the speed and noise of cars on the A391. He advised that he has had a number of queries relating to trees and that he has advised the public on a number of occasions that if a tree is healthy and not causing a direct impact on a property, he will not request its removal.

Councillor Rowse advised that the CAP priorities have been set as:

1. Community, health and wellbeing
2. Economic growth and the identification of funding to support community groups
3. Protecting the White River and our Environment

Councillor Rowse concluded that the new Cabinet has endorsed a new set of priorities focussing on creating stronger communities, affordable homes, a resilient economy, better transport and a cleaner, greener Cornwall which is refreshing to see.

Arising from the above, Members raised the following questions:

- The need for Town and Parish Councils to be involved in the development of the new Local Plan;
- The congestion at the Mevagissey roundabout;

Councillor Paul Ashton confirmed that following the last Town Council meeting, he had met with Dave Halton, Chair of the Chamber of Commerce who has confirmed that the group is still active with 25 members and that he is looking at ways to re-energise the organisation.

Town Councillors thanked the Cornwall Councillors for their updates.

C/25/63) Motion from Councillor Brown

Reformation of a Youth Council for St Austell

Councillor Brown advised that approximately 10 years ago, the Town Council had an active Youth Council which was constituted and campaigned on issues such as bus fares, participated in Town Council meetings, organised events and had a small budget. Councillor Brown added that one of the conclusions of the St Austell Revitalisation Partnership work on education provision was to create a young person's forum under the auspices of St Austell Town Council. He also advised that at a recent meeting of CALC, a presentation was received about the benefits of Youth Councils. There are currently Youth Councils operating in Saltash, Redruth and Camborne.

Councillor Brown concluded that the Town Council should seek to re-establish a Youth Council, as a high priority and suggested that the Town Clerk should draft a report for the next Finance and General Purposes Committee on the process of creating one.

During discussion, Members supported the motion put forward and the proposal that a report should be drafted for the Finance and General Purposes Committee to consider.

The Clerk advised that Members should not underestimate the resource required to set up and run a Youth Council and that if the project was taken forward other projects or priorities of the Town Council might not proceed as a result. He also advised that DBS checks would be required for the Members involved in the Youth Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note that the most recent meeting of the CALC Larger Councils group in July was devoted mainly to discussing the benefits of youth councils run by local councils;
2. Note that there was an active Youth Council in St Austell a decade ago and that there have been ambitions to restore one here;
3. Endorse one of the conclusions of the St Austell revitalisation partnership on educational provision in St Austell town published in 2022 to "create a young persons forum under the auspices of St Austell Town Council to enable ongoing input into the revitalisation of St Austell town centre, possibly through a virtual forum"
4. Seek, as a high priority, the establishment of a new youth council for St Austell and to ask for support from St Austell College, Penrice and Poltair Academies and Young People Cornwall towards achieving that.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should produce a report for a future meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee setting out:

- i. A process for setting up a Youth Council for the Town Council
- ii. A draft Terms of Reference;
- iii. A process for holding elections.

C/25/64) Community Emergency Plan

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that she had been working on the draft Community Emergency Plan for a number of months and that the latest draft had received the approval of the Councillors, officers and organisations outlined in the document. She advised that the Community Plan is not a substitute for the Emergency Plans of Cornwall Council and the Police but a document which seeks to assist the public who have been displaced from their homes as a result of an emergency. The Deputy Clerk advised that she has been in contact with a number key organisations who could provide potential temporary community accommodation in the event of an emergency and those who had confirmed their willingness to assist were highlighted in green.

During discussions, Members expressed their support for the draft plan and made the following suggestions:

- The three Cornwall Councillors contact details should be added to the document;
- The Cornwall Council out of hours telephone number should be added to the document.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft Community Emergency Plan subject to the three Cornwall Councillors contact details and the Cornwall Council out of hours telephone number being added to the document.

C/25/65) Conclusion of Audit

The Clerk advised that the conclusion of audit for the financial year ended 31st March 2025 has been received and auditors have given the Town Council a clean bill of health. The audited accounts are now available for inspection by the public.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Conclusion of Audit.

C/25/66) Members appointed to outside bodies update reports

Councillor Brown advised that he had attended a CALC meeting where a summary was provided of a recent meeting with Cornwall Council portfolio holder, Sarah Preece, but disappointingly no mention was made of local Council involvement in the development of the new local plan.

Councillor Brown advised that he had suggested two topics for a future larger councils' CALC meeting; Strategic Planning and Bus Companies.

Councillor Brown suggested that a letter should be sent to Sarah Mason from the Town Council thanking her for her hard work over the years and wishing her well for the future.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should draft a letter to Sarah Mason thanking her for her hard work and support to Town and Parish Councils over the years.

Councillor Gray advised that the White River Project is progressing with a number of projects identified to enhance the White River area.

South West Water has agreed to improve the sewage treatment works at Menagwins within the next 3-5 years and a small group are meeting in the town shortly to look at some projects in the Pondhu Road area.

Councillor Lanxon advised that the AFC St Austell football pitch and club house improvement project has stalled due to a lack of investment from the college. The wider steering group has not been called to meet for a while, but Sarah Scoltock has advised that a smaller group of people has been meeting to talk about the project. It is hoped that the pitch improvements will still proceed.

C/25/67) Planning and Regeneration Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Planning and Regeneration Committee meetings held on 21st July 2025 and 18th August 2025.

Councillors Lingham and Young left the meeting

C/25/68) Schedule of Payments

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Schedule of Payments for the period 5th July 2025 to 15th August 2025 totalling £176,036.25 (net of refunds) and the transfer between bank accounts amounting to £101,874.97.

C/25/69) St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership

Poundland Banners

The Clerk advised that following a few logistical issues, both banners are now up and are looking really good.

Piazza

The gas pipe and electrical wire have been moved and the granite has been received. All being well, weather permitting, the project should be complete by the end of September/early October.

Town Regeneration and Investment Programme (TRIP)

The Town Clerk advised that he had that afternoon received a grant offer letter in relation to the Town Council's bid to the TRIP fund which is acceptable apart from a condition with regard to the shop front improvement scheme. Unfortunately, the guidelines laid down by the Government do not permit delegated grant schemes which means that the works to the shop fronts must be managed by and suppliers paid direct by St Austell Town Council. The Clerk advised that this condition is too high a risk for the Town Council to bear and following a conversation with a Senior Grants Officer at Cornwall Council, it has been agreed that the offer letter will be reissued removing the £7,500 for the shop front improvement project. The deadline for completion of the projects is 31st December 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should accept the revised grant offer excluding £7,500 for the shop front improvement scheme and be authorised to progress the remaining projects.

Regeneration Officer

The Clerk advised that the Regeneration Officer's contract is due to expire on the 30th September 2025 and suggested that the contract should be extended to the 31st December 2025 to provide staff resource to progress the TRIP projects.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Regeneration Officer's contract be extended to 31st December 2025.

C/25/70) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next Town Council meetings are due to take place on the 13th October 2025 and 8th December 2025.

The meeting closed at 7.26pm.