

**MINUTES of the MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL held on MONDAY 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019 in the Council Chamber at the St Austell Information Service, 39 Penwinnick Road, St Austell at 6.05pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Bishop, Brown, Bull, Cohen, French, Hanlon, Heyward, Jones, King (Mayor), Lanxon, Leonard, Oxenham, Palmer, Pearce, Pears, Rees, Styles, Thompson and Walker.

**In attendance:** David Pooley (Town Clerk), Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Town Clerk) and Steve Skinner (Operations Manager).

**C/18/127) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Colwill.

**C/18/128) Declarations of interests and gifts or hospitality received**

Councillor Brown declared an interest in agenda item 9 by virtue of being a Director of SABEF and agenda item 14 by virtue of being Chairman of Cornwall Council's Electoral Review Panel.

Councillor French declared an interest in agenda item 9 by virtue of being a Director of SABEF.

*\*\*Councillor Oxenham arrived\*\**

**C/18/129) Dispensations**

There were no requests for a dispensation.

**C/18/130) Minutes of Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

It was noted that within minute number **C/18/114** the word "Bridge" should read "Road".

It was **RESOLVED** that, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**C/18/131) Matters to Note**

The Clerk advised that Councillor Walker has kindly agreed to assist the staff in getting the Public Open Spaces survey on-line. It is hoped that once the results are collated, the Working Groups should have a good base of information to be able to start work. It was noted that the Town Council's Facebook page is receiving good feedback, particularly with regard to a recent posting about Bethel Park.

**C/18/132) Mayor's announcements**

The Mayor announced that Councillor Colwill has been admitted to hospital and outlined an event he had attended recently in the north of England.

Arising from the above, it was agreed that a "Get Well Card" should be sent to Councillor Colwill along with the Town Council's best wishes.

### **C/18/133) Public Participation**

Mr Jonathan Aberdeen advised that the Arts Centre's Coastal Revival Grant Application submitted in July of last year had been re-assessed and funding in the sum of £49,300 has now been approved which will enable a significant refurbishment of the Arts Centre to take place. He advised that the financial details of the successful bid are due to be considered at the Town Council's Community Committee meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> April.

### **C/18/134) Members' Questions**

None.

### **C/18/135) Michael Hawes - MeiLoc Landscape Architects**

The Mayor welcomed Mike Hawes, Darren Hawkes and Alex Murdin to the meeting.

Mr Hawes explained that he is part of the SABEF master planning team who are looking at areas across St Austell to enhance and connect people with culture, art and heritage.

Mr Murdin explained that the ceramics master planning is centred around three areas, Clay Town, Clay Gardens and Clay Connectivity. Priority projects are being worked up which include ceramic shop signs, benches, pots and bus stops. He also referred to the dark honeybee project which is due to be finished in time for the Whitegold Festival in September.

Mr Hawkes advised that he is a landscape designer and has been contracted to look at the greening of St Austell. He showed Members some concept designs for the various verges and roundabouts in the town which include ribbons of china clay down the A391, wildflower areas, silver birch trees and underplanting. Areas of focus at the moment are:

- A390/A391
- Mount Charles roundabout
- Britannia roundabout
- "Scilly Isles" roundabouts
- Edgcumbe Triangle
- Lidl junction
- St Austell railway station

Members raised the following issues/concerns:

- Whether accessibility has been assessed as part of the masterplanning
- Whether there are any good examples of wildflower planting
- The potential for graffiti on bridges
- How plants/ceramics inter-relate
- When carried out by former Councils, wildflower planting in the town was generally not well liked
- The need for formal planting as well as wildflower planting

Members thanked the SABEF master planning team for their presentation and expressed their general support for the proposals.

### **C/18/136) SABEF Garden Town Initiative**

The Town Clerk advised that there is a need for the Town Council to have an approvals process in place to allow the Town Council to consider the maintenance, resource and financial implications of any proposed installations by SABEF on Town Council land. He drew Members' attention to the draft Memorandum of Understanding and highlighted a desire for local contractors to be used and the need for significant tranches of approvals to come forward to help with budgeting.

Members felt that the document was extremely helpful and re-emphasised that local contractors should be used. They also felt that the Town Council's staff should be offered work where felt appropriate.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Memorandum of Understanding be approved subject to:

1. Under the first bullet point of "Delivery Considerations" the words "by the Operations Manager" be replaced with the words "**in consultation with** the Operations Manager"
2. Final bullet point be re-worded to read "**The Town Council would strongly encourage the use of local contractors or the Town Council's staff and local suppliers**"

### **C/18/137) Nominations for Mayor and Deputy Mayor - 2019/20**

Members considered the nominations received for Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the 2019/20 Civic Year.

There were two nominations for Mayor:

- Councillor King proposed by Councillor Walker and seconded by Councillor Leonard.
- Councillor Styles proposed by Councillor Pearce and seconded by Councillor Colwill.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. A secret ballot should be held to determine the Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor Elect;
2. Each candidate should declare an interest and leave the meeting;
3. Each candidate should return to the meeting when asked and outline why they consider they should be nominated as Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the 2019/20 civic year;
4. Councillor French should assume the Chair for the determination of the Mayor Elect.

*\*\*Councillors King and Styles declared an interest and left the meeting\*\**

At the request of Members, Councillor Styles returned to the meeting and outlined to Members why he considered he should be Mayor for the 2019/20 Civic Year.

*\*\*Councillor Styles left the meeting\*\**

At the request of Members, Councillor King returned to the meeting and outlined to Members why he considered he should be Mayor for the 2019/20 Civic Year.

*\*\*Councillor King left the meeting\*\**

Councillor French assumed the Chair and supervised a secret ballot.

Councillor French announced that Councillor Styles had 12 votes and that Councillor King had 4 votes with 1 abstention.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Styles be Mayor Elect for the 2019/20 Civic Year.

*\*\*Councillors King and Styles returned to the meeting\*\**

*\*\*Councillor King resumed the Chair\*\**

There were two nominations for Deputy Mayor:

- Councillor Lanxon proposed by Councillor Leonard and seconded by Councillor Jones;
- Councillor Pears proposed by Councillor Palmer and seconded by Councillor Heyward.

*\*\*Councillors Lanxon and Pears declared an interest and left the meeting\*\**

At the request of Members, Councillor Lanxon returned to the meeting and outlined to Members why she considered she should be Deputy Mayor for the 2019/20 Civic Year.

*\*\*Councillor Lanxon left the meeting\*\**

At the request of Members, Councillor Pears returned to the meeting and outlined to Members why he considered he should be Deputy Mayor for the 2019/20 Civic Year.

*\*\*Councillor Pears left the meeting\*\**

Following a secret ballot, the Mayor advised that Councillor Pears was the successful candidate.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Pears be Deputy Mayor Elect for the 2019/20 Civic Year.

*\*\*Councillors Lanxon and Pears returned to the meeting\*\**

*\*\*Councillor Cohen left the meeting during the next item\*\**

### **C/18/138) Climate Emergency – At the request of Councillor King, Mayor of St Austell**

Councillor King expressed his concern about climate change and the need for the Town Council to follow other Town and Parish Councils and declare a climate emergency. He referred to his motion and his desire to form a working group to start looking at carbon output and assess and recommend measures to reduce the Council's negative impact on the local environment and planet.

He advised that if Members agreed to set up a Climate Emergency Working Group he would ensure that their work would not impact on the Town Council's staff.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues/concerns:

- The need to consider the Town Council's impact on the environment in a controlled and measured way;
- The lack of staffing and financial resource at the present time to carry out meaningful carbon accounting and reduction measures;
- How local residents would become involved in the initiative;
- The carbon off-setting work that the Town Council is already doing in re-wilding areas and the continuous planting of trees.

Members noted that Cornwall Council is currently writing a report and action plan which should be available in August. It was suggested that the Town Council should wait until this work has been completed with a view to the Town Council then looking at ways in which it can complement what Cornwall Council is trying to achieve.

An amendment was proposed to replace paragraph 2 of the motion with:

*Following publication of Cornwall Council's report and action plan this Council should review the contribution it can make to the climate emergency agenda.*

This proposal was supported 11 votes for, 6 against.

*\*\*Councillor King asked that his vote against this amendment be recorded\*\**

Councillor King explained that the amendment was now the substantive motion. Members voted 16 in favour with 2 abstentions to support the amended motion.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following motion be approved:

*St Austell Town Council joins other councils in declaring a Climate Emergency\*.*

*Further the council commits to the following:*

- 1. Take actions to measure, understand and report our own carbon emissions, in order to develop a meaningful reduction strategy, recognising the regulatory restrictions we work within. We will institute a process of learning to ensure carbon accounting is appropriately embedded in our activities.*
- 2. Following publication of Cornwall Council's report and action plan this Council should review the contribution it can make to the climate emergency agenda.*
- 3. Engage with residents and others to learn and strive to reduce our carbon emissions (noting the IPCC's target cuts in emissions of 45% from 2010 levels no later than 2030).*

*\*'Climate Emergency' is an internationally recognised declaration being used by Councils and other Local Authorities, predominantly in the UK, Australia and the USA, to publicly declare concern over the IPCC's findings which recognise the adverse global impact of the changing climate. The declaration also serves as a commitment to take urgent action and aspire towards carbon neutrality.*

### **C/18/139) Mayor Making and Citizens' Awards events**

The Clerk explained that these two events had been brought to full Council at the request of Members following their consideration at the Finance and General Purposes and Community Committees respectively.

During discussion, Members felt that the Mayor Making Ceremony and buffet should continue and that an annual budget of £1,000 should be earmarked to cover the cost of food but not alcohol. It was suggested the provision of alcohol at the event should be at the discretion of the incoming Mayor at his or her own expense.

There was general support for a Citizen's Award Event with the majority of Members in agreement that it should take place as part of the Annual Mayor Making Ceremony with the outgoing Mayor presenting the awards.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Continue with the Mayor Making Ceremony and buffet and that an annual budget of £1,000 be provided to cover the costs involved, excluding alcohol;
2. Organise a Citizens Award event, at the beginning of the Mayor Making Ceremony, with the outgoing Mayor presenting the awards.

*\*\*Councillor Oxenham left the meeting\*\**

*\*\*Councillor Palmer left the meeting\*\**

### **C/18/140) Community Governance Review – Working Group**

The Clerk advised that the Working Group has met three times and that he is in discussions with the neighbouring Parish Councils about the proposals so far. He advised that Cornwall Council has announced a later deadline for submissions but that he is keen to drive the project forward so that Cornwall Council has the Town Council's submission in good time. He advised that there will probably be times when the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman of the Working Group will be required to attend Community Governance Review meetings outside of St Austell and that it would be helpful to have these journeys considered as an approved duty.

It was **RESOLVED** to make the attendance of the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman of the Community Governance Review Working Group at meetings in respect of the Community Governance Review outside of St Austell an approved duty.

*\*\*Councillor Brown abstained from voting on this item\*\**

### **C/18/141) Grounds Maintenance update**

The Operations Manager updated Members on the winter maintenance activities of the grounds maintenance staff which included the planting of 350 pollinator friendly shrubs (fuchsia, lavender and agapanthus) and 4,000 primrose, bluebells, snowdrops and daffodils. He advised that the ornamental shrubs have been put in to the embankment at Truro Road Park and the plug plants have been spread across the other parks and open spaces.

Re-wilding areas have been implemented at Sandy Hill Park, The Meadows, Penmere Open Space and Linear Park which the Operations Manager explained as areas that have been "given back" to nature and left to grow helping to increase the biodiversity of the sites.

#### **C/18/142) Members appointed to outside bodies update reports**

Members agreed that due to the lateness of the evening, these update reports would be noted at the next Council meeting.

#### **C/18/143) Cornwall Councillor update reports**

Members agreed that due to the lateness of the evening, these update reports would be noted at the next Council meeting.

#### **C/18/144) Schedule of Payments**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Schedule of Payments for the period 26<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019 totalling £111,956.97 be approved.

#### **C/18/145) Finance and General Purposes Committee**

The Clerk referred to minute number **F/18/65** and the recommendation to trade in the Town Council's vans and purchase a new tipper truck and a second-hand large van. He explained that the grounds maintenance staff have been struggling to get equipment in to the small electric van and that the slightly bigger van is now nearing the end of its life.

Members expressed disappointment that there are no suitable large electric tipper trucks or large vans available on the market but agreed that the grounds maintenance staff should be provided with the correct vehicles to carry out their work, particularly with the extra work that will be generated with the SABEF greening initiative.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting dated 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be noted and the **RECOMMENDATION** therein be approved.

#### **C/18/146) Community Committee**

Arising from a discussion, Councillor Heyward advised that the carnival accounts are not yet available and would probably not be provided to the Town Council until a further grant application is submitted to the Town Council for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Community Committee meeting dated 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019 be noted.

#### **C/18/147) Planning and Regeneration Committee**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning and Regeneration Committee meetings dated 11<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 be noted.

**C/18/148) Dates of Meetings**

It was noted that the dates of the next Town Council meetings are 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019 (Annual Parish Meeting) and 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019 (Annual Town Council Meeting).

The meeting closed at 9.02pm.