

MINUTES of the ANNUAL MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL held on MONDAY 13th MAY 2019 in the Stable Block, Pondhu House, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5DP at 6.05pm.

Present: Councillors: Bishop, Brown, Bull, Cohen, Colwill, French, Hanlon, Heyward, King, Lanxon, Palmer, Pearce, Pears, Rees, Styles, Thompson and Walker.

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

C/19/01) Election of Mayor

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Styles be elected Mayor of St Austell for the 2019/20 civic year.

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

C/19/02) Election of Deputy Mayor

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Pears be elected Deputy Mayor of St Austell for the 2019/20 civic year.

C/19/03) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jones, Leonard and Oxenham.

C/19/04) Declarations of interests and gifts or hospitality received

There were no declarations of interest.

C/19/05) Dispensations

There were no requests for a dispensation.

C/19/06) Minutes of Meeting held on 25th March 2019

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 25th March 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/19/07) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that further to minute C/18/135, St Austell Bay Economic Forum (SABEF) was planning trial wildflower areas at Holmbush Road and Trenowah Road and had plans to plant magnolia trees at Porthpean Road junction. It was anticipated that these works would be carried out in the near future.

The Clerk advised that further to minute C/18/140, he hoped to arrange one more meeting of the Community Governance Review working group to approve the wording of the Council's draft submission before considering it at a Council meeting on the 24th June 2019 to which other parishes and interested parties would be invited.

C/19/08) Mayor's/Retiring Mayor's announcements

Councillor Styles thanked the outgoing Mayor Councillor King on behalf of members for his hard work and the way in which he had represented the Council over the last year and advised that it had been an honour to work as Councillor King's deputy.

Councillor King advised that he had attended over 100 events, 6 Mayor Making Ceremonies, 2 visits by members of the Royal Family, a visit by a Government Minister and all day events such as the Garden Festival, Whitegold and the WW1 events. At Christmas he had attended carol services and visited 10 care homes. He advised that he was very pleased that the plastic free initiative had progressed and that St Austell should soon be recognised formally by Surfers Against Sewage. He was also pleased that the climate emergency motion that he had produced jointly with Councillor Jones had been approved. He thanked Members for their support and in particular thanked Councillor Styles and offered his best wishes to Councillors Styles and Pears for the year ahead.

C/19/09) Public Participation

Mrs Wendy Earl expressed concern with regard to the governance arrangements and the lack of public accountability of SABEF and her disappointment that camelias, rhododendrons and hydrangeas were not a greater part of the proposals. She enquired about the involvement of the five main gardens locally and expressed a view that in light of recent developments with Extinguish Rebellion and climate change emergencies being declared that young people should be more involved in the proposals. She expressed the need for more trees and advised that she supported the development of mini orchards and community orchards. She felt strongly that the elected leaders of the town should have a greater say in the SABEF project.

Councillor King advised that he felt that SABEF would in due course have more engagement with communities and would be encouraging individuals to plant trees etc in their own gardens.

Councillor Brown, as the current Town Council's SABEF representative, advised that if Mrs Earl were to write to him setting out her concerns with regard to the governance arrangements, he would raise them with SABEF. He explained that SABEF had a wider geographical coverage than just St Austell Town and that as a private sector led organisation its governance arrangements were very different than in local government bodies. It was noted that many of the projects proposed would be on the Town Council's land or on land maintained by the Town Council and that this would allow the Town Council to influence at least some of the projects.

C/19/10) PCSO Graham Wade – St Austell Sector

The Mayor welcomed PCSO Graham Wade to the meeting. PCSO Wade advised that he had been a PCSO for 16 years and outlined the changing nature of policing locally and the reduction in manpower experienced. He advised that there are currently 8 PCSO's and that there would possibly be a reduction of 1 in order to meet budgetary targets. He explained that there had been a reduction of 50% in staff numbers across the neighbourhood team and that PCSO's were not now dedicated to local areas but were now expected to cover the whole of the sector. He advised that the working arrangements were becoming more responsive and less proactive.

He praised the work of the Cornwall Council ASB Officer, Helen Toms and thanked the Town Council for their investment in extra CCTV cameras which were invaluable. Members asked a number of questions relating to the opening of the police station, the geographical area of the sector, the arrangement for additional hours with St Austell BID and the success of the tri service officer at St Dennis.

C/19/11) Members' questions

There were no questions from Members.

C/19/12) Internal Audit Report for year ending 31st March 2019

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 2018/19 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 made no recommendations for improvement.

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

C/19/13) 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 PKF Littlejohn LLP, the Council's External Auditors, by the 1st July 2019.

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:

- the Mayor and the Clerk should be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement in the Annual Return on behalf of the Town Council;
- The Town Clerk should advertise the electors' rights after the accounting statements have been approved in accordance with the External Audit guidance (with a period for the exercise of public rights from the 17th June to the 26th July 2019);
- The annual meetings of the trustees for Truro Road and Poltair Parks should be held prior to the next Council meeting in July.

C/19/14) Annual Return and Accounting Statements 2018/19

The Clerk referred Members to the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet for the Town Council. He advised that a small deficit of £15,000 had been made after transferring £40,160.04 to reserves. 2018/19 had been another very busy year and the accounts reflected the full year effect of the library devolution and the recruitment of additional grounds maintenance staff in the previous year. He advised that due to delays in the recruitment of the Community/Projects Officer and the next play ground upgrade scheme significant savings had been made against budget which had permitted capital investment in CCTV cameras and vehicles. He advised that the Town Council were in a healthy financial position with reasonable levels of reserves which were not deemed excessive by either the Internal or External Auditor. Members noted the accounting statements and the proposed contributions to and from reserves. The Clerk explained that the Council's earmarked reserves were now as follows:

Elections Reserve	£25,000
Devolution Reserve	£30,000
Service Improvement Reserve	£50,000
Repairs and Renewals Reserve	£30,000
Projects Reserve	£71,560.04

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 2018/19; and
- iii. Authorise the Clerk and Mayor to sign the Accounting Statement on the Annual Return on behalf of the Town Council.

C/19/15) 2018/19 – Annual Report

The Clerk advised that a draft of the annual report had been circulated previously. He explained that if Members were supportive, he would utilise the draft to create a colourful annual report similar to previous years for the 2018/19 year.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should produce an Annual Report for 2018/19 as in previous years.

C/19/16) Standing Committees

Members considered a previously circulated report setting out the latest terms of reference for the standing committees and a suggested committee membership for the 2019/20 civic year.

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:

- Councillor Colwill being deleted from the Community Committee and added to the Finance and General Purposes Committee;
- Councillor Bishop being deleted from the Community Committee and added to the Planning & Regeneration Committee.

Councillor Lanxon left the meeting

C/19/17) Election of Representatives to outside bodies

It was **RESOLVED** that the following appointments to outside bodies be made for the 2019/20 civic year:

St Austell Carnival Committee

Councillor Heyward

St Austell Bay Chamber of Commerce

Councillor Pears

CALC - Larger Councils Liaison Group

Councillor Palmer

Cornwall Council – Town Framework Steering Group

Councillors Oxenham, Palmer and King

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Flood Forum

Councillor Cohen

St Austell Bay Economic Forum (SABEF)

Councillor Brown

SABEF Green/Whitegold Working Group

Councillors King and Styles

St Austell Business Improvement District (BID)

Councillor Palmer

South East Cornwall LAG/CLLD

Councillor Oxenham

The House Steering Committee

Councillors King and Bishop

St Austell Youth Council

Councillors Bishop, Cohen, Colwill and Styles

St Austell Healthcare Patient Participation Group

Councillors Bull and Hanlon were both proposed and seconded for the position of Town Council representative on the Patient Participation Group.

It was **RESOLVED** to hold a ballot to determine the Council's appointment.

After a ballot process, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Bull as the Town Council's representative.

Anti-Social Behaviour Summit

Councillors Cohen, King, Oxenham and Palmer

Safer St Austell

It was **RESOLVED** to defer consideration of this item until later in the meeting.

St Austell and Mevagissey Community Network Panel

Councillors Jones and Colwill.

It was noted that all Councillors were entitled to attend Community Network Panel meetings.

Townscape Heritage Scheme

Councillors Hanlon and Rees were both proposed and seconded for the position of Town Council representative on the Townscape Heritage Scheme.

It was **RESOLVED** to hold a ballot to determine the Council's appointment.

After a ballot process, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Rees as the Town Council's representative.

C/19/18) Schedule of Payments

It was **RESOLVED** that the Schedule of Payments for the period 19th March 2019 to 2nd May 2019 totalling £186,743.26 be approved.

C/19/19) Community Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Community Committee meeting held on the 1st April 2019.

C/19/20) Planning and Regeneration Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Planning and Regeneration Committee meetings held on the 15th April 2019 and 29th April 2019.

C/19/21) Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 8th April 2019.

C/19/22) Safer St Austell

In the absence of Councillor Lanxon, it was **RESOLVED** to consider this item at the next Council meeting and allow Councillor Lanxon to continue in this role for the time being.

C/19/23) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next Town Council meetings were due to take place on the 24th June 2019 (Extraordinary Meeting) and the 15th July 2019.

The meeting closed at 7.43pm.