

MINUTES of the MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL held on MONDAY 3rd FEBRUARY 2020 in the Council Chamber, St Austell Information Centre, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5DR at 6.05pm.

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

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

C/19/125) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bull, Colwill, Jones, Leonard and Pears.

Councillors King and Palmer advised that they had to leave at 7.30pm.

C/19/126) Declarations of interests and gifts or hospitality received

There were no declarations of interest.

C/19/127) Dispensations

There were no requests for a dispensation.

C/19/128) Minutes of Meeting held on 16th December 2019

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 16th December 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/19/129) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that further to minute number C/19/116 regarding the Community Governance Review, Councillors Styles and King were due to meet with Treverbyn Parish Council on the 4th February 2020 to discuss the land in the Boscoppa/Carclaze area. He also advised that Cornwall Council had arranged a drop-in session for members of the public to meet officers at 6pm on Wednesday 26th February 2020 which would be followed by a public meeting at 7pm in the Council Chamber at Cornwall Council's St Austell Office.

C/19/130) Mayor's announcements

The Mayor advised that he had undertaken a number of care home visits since the last meeting and attended the Liskeard Civic Service. He had engagements coming up shortly at Launceston and Saltash Town Councils.

C/19/131) Public Participation

Mrs Earl advised that she thought that the trees proposed in the Trewiddle development were disappointing and felt that there should be more trees within the scheme. She suggested that it was important for community groups to be involved with SABEF projects and that it would be nice if they were featured in the garden town festival.

The Mayor advised Mrs Anne Double that he would allow her to speak under agenda item 10 when this item was considered.

C/19/132) Members' questions

None.

Councillor Brown arrived during this item

C/19/133) Darren Hawkes, St Austell Bay Economic Forum

The Mayor welcomed Darren Hawkes from St Austell Bay Economic Forum (SABEF) to the meeting.

Mr Hawkes explained that work had started on planting the grass verge next to Mount Charles roundabout and the Porthpean Road junction. Powder coated steel benches were proposed for the site on the junction to Charlestown and it was hoped to move the anchor currently on the roundabout to a place near the monkey puzzle tree and install an information board.

He explained the design proposed for the Mount Charles roundabout and showed images to illustrate what the roundabout would look like. It was anticipated that the design would be implemented in the summer.

Mr Hawkes advised that traffic management arrangements have been made for the week commencing 2nd March 2020 for the wildflower turf and seeding of the grass verge on the A391. Work would commence at about the same time on the five roundabouts from Carludon to Trethurgy junction and the Brit roundabout. Each roundabout would have a different design but would incorporate silver birch trees.

Mr Hawke showed proposals for the design of land adjacent to Pinetum Lodge, known originally as "donkey field" but now being re-named "Porthloor Gardens". It was anticipated that this would incorporate 13 magnolias and be completed by September in time for the Tour of Britain cycle race.

Additional projects being considered were:

- Wildflower meadow at Holmbush opposite Lidl;
- Land outside the Council offices in Penwinnick Road;
- Cosgarne Triangle;
- Working with Cosgarne residents to design and build a new garden within the grounds of Cosgarne House;
- Working with Young People Cornwall to create a garden at The House Youth Centre.

Designs have also been created for the north platform of the railway station which require the support of Cornwall Council and GWR.

Mr Hawkes explained that the Garden Festival would be bigger this year than ever and that a number of mature trees would be brought into White River Place which could be utilised in St Austell after the event.

Members asked a number of questions and commented on a number of issues including:

- The number of silver birch to be planted;
- The use of pesticides/herbicides;
- The importance of Stenalees roundabout and the proposals for changing this roundabout when completing the A30 link road;
- The importance of good communications;
- The types of wildflower seed and turf to be used;
- The experience of Restormel Borough Council with wildflower planting;
- The maintenance requirements for each of the schemes;
- The ability to involve community groups in planting schemes.

C/19/134) Anti-social behaviour

The Clerk provided an update on the work undertaken by staff in relation to anti-social behaviour since the last Council meeting and referred to a report and correspondence circulated previously. He explained that officers and Cornwall Councillors had met with Cornwall Council Directors to discuss the issues relating to the support for individuals with complex needs and homelessness and the increase in begging, anti-social behaviour, rough sleeping and drug related crimes which were being experienced in St Austell as a result of changes to contracts let by Cornwall Council. He explained that the night shelter in High Cross Street should close in early March and that a daytime shelter should open shortly. It was hoped that this would reduce the number of homeless people sitting in shop doorways during the daytime.

The Clerk explained concerns with regard to the safety of the Council's toilet block at Priory Car Park. He advised that the toilet had been closed on five occasions recently due to needles being discarded in the toilets and down the drains. He explained that the Council's independent Health and Safety advisor had suggested that the toilets should be closed for a period of time and that he believed that this would be appropriate given the potential risk to members of the public.

Mrs Double, representing the MP, advised that he was supporting the Town Council and Councillor Heyward with their campaign to reduce anti-social behaviour in the town. She explained some of the complaints that the MP's office had received and some of the measures undertaken by the MP to try to persuade Cornwall Council to review the contracts let in St Austell.

Members raised a number of issues including:

- The effect of national funding decisions;
- The need for a better spread of homelessness and support services across the county;
- The availability of alternative public conveniences in the town centre;
- The complexity of the issues and contracts required and the need to provide appropriate levels of support;
- The poor quality of accommodation and support provided at the cold weather shelter;
- The need to close the public conveniences for a period of time;
- The need for more police in the town centre.

Councillor King left the meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to endorse and support the actions being taken by the Town Clerk and authorise the closure of the toilets with immediate effect for a short period of time to be determined by the Town Clerk.

C/19/135) Members appointed to outside bodies update reports

Councillor Palmer provided an update on the work of the St Austell BID. He advised that their finances were solid and that the BID was undertaking a review of the late night shopping arrangements. He advised that BID members were concerned about ASB and the BID as a result had funded a number of security patrols.

Councillor Palmer advised that he had attended the CALC AGM and that Councillor Brown had provided an excellent presentation on the Community Governance Review. Councillor Palmer advised that the CALC fees were going to increase by 8% and that the Finance and General Purposes Committee would have to consider this in due course.

Councillor Brown advised that St Austell Bay Economic Forum (SABEF) had not met since the last Town Council meeting.

Councillor Lanxon provided an update on the work of the Safer St Austell Group and explained that collection boxes had been placed in a number of shops to encourage individuals to make donations to approved charities rather than give money to beggars. She advised that a number of agencies were now undertaking patrols around the town centre.

Councillor Palmer left the meeting

C/19/136) Cornwall Councillor update reports

Councillor French provided an update on parking matters relating to Merrifield Close.

Councillor Brown provided an update on the recent consultation in relation to dogs on beaches and advised that Cornwall Council's Scrutiny Committee had agreed to some relaxation of the current rules. He advised that the refuse contract had been re-issued following some difficulties in the tender exercise and that modified working arrangements had been agreed. It was hoped that that this would result in higher levels of re-cycling. Councillor Brown advised that the Stadium for Cornwall had received approval by Cornwall Council and that negotiations were continuing with developers and sports clubs. Cornwall Council will shortly be considering its budget options and that there had been a bid made by Councillors for funding for town centres which could benefit St Austell if approved in due course. Councillor Brown advised that the next round of consultation on the Community Governance Review had started and that a number of public meetings were proposed.

Councillor Pearce left the meeting

C/19/137) Schedule of Payments

It was **RESOLVED** that the Schedule of Payments for the period 10th December 2019 to 24th January 2020 totalling £146,318.04 be approved.

C/19/138) Climate and Environment Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Climate and Environment Committee meeting dated 20th January 2020 be noted.

C/19/139) Planning and Regeneration Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning and Regeneration Committee meeting dated 6th January 2020 be noted.

C/19/140) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next Town Council meeting is due to take place on Monday 23rd March 2020.

The meeting closed at 7.54pm.