

MINUTES of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 2nd MARCH 2020 at the Stable Block, Pondhu House, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, PL25 5DP at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Brown, Bull, Cohen, Hanlon, Heyward, Jones, Leonard, Pearce, Pears, Rees, Styles and Thompson.

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

CC/19/50) Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

Councillor Brown advised that he needed to leave the meeting at 6.45pm and Councillor Pears advised that he needed to leave the meeting at 7pm.

CC/19/51) Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jones declared an interest in agenda item 12 (Small Grants Scheme – Cornwall Air Ambulance) by virtue of knowing the grant applicant.

The Town Clerk declared an interest in agenda item 12 (Small Grants Scheme – Cornwall Air Ambulance) by virtue of knowing the Chairman of the organisation.

CC/19/52) Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations received.

CC/19/53) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 2nd December 2019

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd December 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

CC/19/54) Matters to note

The Clerk advised that further to minute number CC/19/43, two additional community groups, ABC Residents Association and Gover Valley Residents Association had entered this year's Its Your Neighbourhoods Competition.

Councillor Heyward advised that the Gover Valley Residents Association had withdrawn their application.

It was **AGREED** that the Deputy Town Clerk would contact the lead Member of the Association to confirm that they had withdrawn their application.

Further to minute number CC/19/48 a foam and hot water treatment weed killing trial is due to take place in Poltair Park, Truro Road Park, Priory Car Park and the Library grounds during the 2020/21 weedspraying season.

CC/19/55) Public Participation

It was agreed that the members of the public present could speak when their agenda item was being discussed.

CC/19/56) Dave Monk, Liaise Officer – National Trading Standards Illegal Money Lending Team

The Chairman welcomed Mr Monk from the National Trading Standards, Illegal Money Lending Team to the meeting.

Mr Monk advised that for the period 1st January to 30th June 2019, Devon and Cornwall had the highest number of loan sharks arrested for any region of England and clarified that a loan shark is someone who lends money in the course of a trade or business without having the correct permission from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). He added that it has nothing to do with a high APR or interest rate, bullying or harassment. It is simply not having the correct permission.

It is estimated that 310,000 UK households are using illegal money lenders with loan sharks targeting 10 to 20 year olds and the over 65's (especially homeowners). 62% of victims are on benefits and 70% in rented accommodation. The average loan is £3,500, with an average repayment of £11,000. One victim borrowed £75 and repaid £13,000. 51% of victims have a total income of less than £20,000 and 85% have a total income of less than £30,000. He added that loan sharks rarely advertise as they find clients by word of mouth and 90% of victims know that the loan shark is a loan shark.

Mr Monk advised that his presentation, included the contact details for the National Hotline, website and his e-mail address which he would e-mail to the Town Clerk. He thanked Members for listening and urged everybody to be vigilant and spread the word.

The Chairman and Members thanked Mr Monk for his very interesting and thought provoking presentation.

CC/19/57) Small Grants Scheme

In order to assist the members of public present, the Chairman agreed to consider the Small Grant Applications next in the following order:

- St Austell Amateur Operatic Society
- SALSA
- St Austell Swimming Club
- Studio 4 – Home of 4fs youth dance

- Air Ambulance

St Austell Amateur Operatic Society

Steph Houseman advised that St Austell Amateur Operatic Society is 110 years old and that this year's amateur dramatic production is Shrek. She advised that they had won the Cornwall Drama Association top awards for Best Show, Best Ensemble and Best Director for the Adams Family and confirmed that the ticket sales are up on this time last year. Ms Houseman explained that hiring the costumes is the most cost effective way of putting on a show as the cast can perform in high quality costumes and they are not left with clothing that may never be used again.

Members expressed their overwhelming support for St Austell Amateur Operatic Society and expressed a wish to grant them £750 as in previous years.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £750 to St Austell Amateur Operatic Society for funding towards their 2020 production of 'Shrek'.

St Austell Library Support Association (SALSA)

Ms Barden explained that as part of the Library's 60th Birthday celebrations in June, SALSA would like to organise a "What your Library Means to you" Project. She explained that it would be opened up to the community and schools invited to design a picture of what the library means to them. There will be 4 age groups, resulting in 12 winners and 12 designs. Once this has been achieved it is hoped that a calendar of the winning designs can be produced and sold for charity. The winning designs will be reproduced on the wall in the library garden.

Members expressed their support for the project and Councillor Leonard offered to be one of the judges.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to St Austell Library Support Association (SALSA) for funding towards the "What Your Library means to you" project.

St Austell Swimming Club

Ms Setchell advised that St Austell Swimming Club are looking to purchase new diving blocks as they have become severely damaged and almost not fit for purpose. She stressed the importance of having good diving blocks to allow the swimmers to continue competing with other competitive clubs and provide them with the best opportunity to achieve success out of county.

Arising from a question, Ms Setchell advised that the Swimming Club is separate from the Leisure Centre and that they receive no funding from this source.

Councillor Brown added that he would be willing to support the Swimming Club through his Cornwall Councillor Community Chest Funding.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £500 to St Austell Swimming Club for funding towards new diving blocks.

Studio 4 – Home of 4fs youth dance

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to Studio 4 – Home of 4fs youth dance for funding towards their “The Platform 2020” community dance event.

Councillor Jones and the Town Clerk left the meeting

Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant in the sum of £250 to Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust for funding towards their “7 more hours, 2 more lives” project.

Councillor Jones and the Town Clerk returned to the meeting

CC/19/58) Bethel Park

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Community Project Officer has submitted a pre-application form to the National Lottery for potential funding for Bethel Park. She outlined the following draft proposals which were formulated after consultation with Bishop Bronscombe School and the ABC Residents Association:

- New play equipment
- Adventure trail
- Sensory path
- Improvements to the football pitch

If successful, a full application to the National Lottery will be submitted in the Springtime after further consultation with Bethel Ward Councillors. She explained that a previous application had failed due to a lack of consultation, but it is hoped that the recent Parks and Open Spaces survey and consultation with the school and ABC Residents Association will be viewed favourably.

Members were generally supportive of the proposed improvements but stressed the need to make the park as inclusive as possible.

Councillor Brown outlined a traffic improvement scheme for the junction of Bethel Road and Trenowah Road that he is working on with Cornwall Council and suggested that the Town Council should bear this in mind when submitting the funding application.

It was **RESOLVED** to support in principle the proposed Bethel Park improvement scheme.

Councillor Pears left the meeting

Councillor Brown left during the next item

CC/19/59) Landrew Road – vacant allotment

The Town Clerk advised that there is one vacant allotment at Landrew Road with two further allotments possibly becoming vacant in the near future and suggested that Members might like to consider signing them over to a community group to run as a community garden. He advised that there is no parking or water at the site but that Duana Pearson, currently working with SABEF, had visited the site and had expressed an interest in setting up a community garden. Councillor Bull offered her assistance to help set up and co-ordinate a community gardening group at the Landrew Road allotments.

It was **RESOLVED** in principle to explore the potential to set up a community garden at the Landrew Road allotments.

CC/19/60) Tree Planting Policy

The Clerk advised that the Working Group had approved the draft Tree Planting Policy in principle which once formally approved, would be an Appendix within the Green Open Spaces Strategy.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:

- The potential to plant silver birch trees to compliment the work of SABEF
- To consider a ratio of 5 new trees for every 1 tree felled
- Make reference to the management of trees within the document
- Consider planting sweet chestnut trees instead of horse chestnut or sycamore trees

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Tree Planting Policy subject to the following:

1. A paragraph being inserted to advise how the Town Council will manage the trees;
2. Paragraph 6 to be amended to read "where trees are removed from land that is owned or managed by the Town Council, replacement planting will be carried out at a ratio of **5** new trees for every 1 tree felled, where possible;
3. Where possible, sweet chestnut trees to be planted instead of horse chestnut or sycamore trees.

CC/19/61) Tour of Britain – Sunday 6th September 2020

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that so far, the following events have been planned in the Town Council's parks and open spaces:

1. Family Fun Day in Truro Road Park (Councillor Heyward)
2. Family Fun Day in Poltair Park (Stepping Stones Nursery)
3. Family Fun Day in Sandy Hill Park (South Coast Church)
4. A cycling/food and drink event on the front lawn of the library

It is hoped that the St Austell BID/White River Place will organise some events for the town centre including, possibly, the co-ordination of a bike decorating competition for the businesses in the town centre.

Young People Cornwall and Restormel Arts have both expressed an interest in organising something that can be seen from the air.

The Community Link officer is in the process of setting up a forum for networking to allow community groups to link up and help each other during the organisation process.

CC/19/62) Projects Update

The Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk updated Members on the following projects:

CCTV

19 out of the 20 CCTV cameras in the town centre are operational. SSE is working on the one that isn't working properly.

Environmental Projects

- Weather permitting, the grass cutting will start at the beginning of April;
- The wildflower planting, in partnership with SABEF and Cornwall Council starts across the town over the next few months;
- A number of trees have been planted in Woodland Close, Thornpark Road, Sandy Hill, Penmere Road and The Meadows since December 2019;
- 7,500 bulbs have been planted across the town (roundabouts and verges) since September 2019;
- Lostwood and Thornpark Road have both received pocket parks funding with both projects just about complete;

- The Cornwall Council “We’re Watching You” initiative, trialled in Lostwood Gardens has been so successful, the Operations Manager has asked Cornwall Council for additional signage so that he can roll it out to other parks and gardens;
- A temporary member of staff has been recruited to carry out waste management with effect from 1st April 2020. Once the contract has settled down and the exact staff hours to fulfil the duties is known, the post will be reviewed and made permanent;
- The High Street Heroes Funding for wildflower planting on the piece of land outside Poundstretcher was successful and the land will be prepared and seeded over the coming months;
- Weedspray foam trials are due to start in April in Truro Road Park, Poltair Park, Library and Priory Car Park.

Poltair Park

- Safety surfacing work in Poltair Park is due to be carried out in April which when complete will include the installation of a wheelchair friendly roundabout;
- The bridge over the muddy path in Poltair Park has now been completed;
- Poltair Café is nearing completion and tender documentation is on the Government’s contract finder website with a tender return deadline of 12th April 2020. All being well, an operator should be up and running by mid-May.

Truro Road Park

- The bandstand is still being opened and closed each day by Councillors Heyward and Thompson and the broken seat has been repaired.

Toilets

The toilets have re-opened after being closed for a couple of weeks due to anti-social behaviour. Whilst closed, the opportunity was taken to paint the mens toilets. Since re-opening, no anti-social behaviour issues have been reported.

Car Park

- A further section of the car park has been re-surfaced with very little disruption to the users of the car park.

Events

Sunday 7th March 2020

South Coast Church, Family Fun Day, Sandy Hill Park (11am to 4pm)

Saturday 16th May 2020

Stepping Stones, Poltair Park Fun Day

CC/19/63) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next meeting of the Community Committee is scheduled for Monday 30th March 2020.

The meeting closed at 7.46pm.