MINUTES of the MEETING of ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL held on MONDAY 13th APRIL 2026 in Chi Austel, White River Place, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5AZ at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Brown, Cohen, Gray, Hamilton, Hawken, Kimber, Lanxon, Lingham, Marshall, Nott, Preece, Stephens, Taylor and Young.

In attendance: David Pooley (Town Clerk), Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Town Clerk) and Mark Mitchley (Senior Projects Officer).

Also in attendance: Annie Etheridge (Interpreter).

C/25/164) Apologies for Absence

Councillor Bull, Clemo, Pearce, Thompson and Whitehouse.

C/25/165) Declarations of interests and gifts or hospitality received

The Clerk advised that an urgent premises licence application had been received from Cornwall Council in relation to the Royal British Legion, Duke Street, St Austell and that the Deputy Mayor and Chair of the Planning and Regeneration Committee had agreed that it could be considered under Agenda Item 16 - Planning and Regeneration Committee.

The Mayor advised that when this item is considered, he will declare an interest in the application by virtue of being the President of the Royal British Legion and leave the room.

C/25/166) Dispensations

There were no requests for a dispensation.

C/25/167) Minutes of Meeting held on 16th March 2026

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 16th March 2026 be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/25/168) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that he had nothing to add.

C/25/169) Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

C/25/170) Budget Monitoring Report

The Clerk explained the budget variance report for March 2026 and the financial year to 31st March 2026 and raised no concerns. He advised that the Town Council will consider the draft final accounts at the Council meeting on Monday 11th May 2026 and these are likely to show a small surplus.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the budget monitoring report for March 2026 and the financial year to 31st March 2026.

C/25/171) Asset Register

The Clerk advised that as part of the year end process, the Town Council is required to have an up-to-date Asset Register. He explained the valuation differences within the register and assured Members that each item had been physically checked and that nothing is missing.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Reconciliation of Assets and Asset Register as at 31st March 2026.

C/25/172) Safeguarding Policy - **Child Projection and Vulnerable Adults**

The Senior Projects Officer advised that the draft Safeguarding Policy has been updated to reflect latest guidance and is one of the policies that NALC is required to see as part of the Silver accreditation award.

During discussion the following was suggested:

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First bullet point to read:

- Not to play **close** contact games

Add the following bullet point:

- No Council member, member of staff or other adult should be alone with one child in a place where they are out of sight.

It was **RESOLVED**, subject to the above amendments, to approve the Safeguarding Policy - Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults.

C/25/173) Complaints Procedure

Members considered a draft complaints procedure and suggested the following amendments:

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4. Resolving the Complaint

Last paragraph should read:

Where the complaint is successfully dealt with through direct action with the complainant, the Town Clerk, **may** report this to the next meeting of the Council.

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Paragraph 5.3 to read:

As general policy, the public and press are not permitted attendance at such complaints panel meetings (although the **Chair of the Panel** will report on the outcome of the panel meeting at the following full Council meeting).

It was **RESOLVED**, subject to the above amendments, to approve the Complaints Procedure.

C/25/174) Model Publication Scheme

The Senior Projects Officer advised that the Model Publication Scheme is a national and statutory policy and has been produced by the Information Commissioner. The policy has been updated to reflect up to date legislation.

Arising from a question, the Clerk advised that the Data Protection Policy details the charges for photocopying, postage etc and are set and approved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Model Publication Scheme.

C/25/175) Staff Appraisal Policy

The Senior Projects Officer advised that the draft Staff Appraisal Policy codifies existing practice within the Town Council and is an essential policy for the NALC silver award.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Staff Appraisal Policy.

C/25/176) Absence Management Policy

The Senior Projects Officer advised that the draft Absence Management Policy reflects legislative changes and provides sound guidance for dealing with persistent sickness absence.

During discussion, it was agreed that "working from home" might be a reasonable adjustment for an individual who could not attend the office for work due to a medical condition and it would be left to the discretion of the Town Clerk to consider such adjustments on a case-by-case basis.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Absence Management Policy.

C/25/177) Code of Conduct

The Senior Projects Officer advised that it is good practice to review the Code of Conduct from time to time. He added that it is a statutory document, produced by Cornwall Council utilising national legislation and that all Councillors have signed to confirm that they have read and understand their obligations under the Code of Conduct.

Arising from a question, the Clerk advised that he had heard nothing further following a Government consultation outlining the potential to strengthen sanctions.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Cornwall Code of Conduct approved by the Town Council on Monday 12th November 2012.

C/25/178) Community Committee

Councillor Preece advised that he had provided an update on the formation of a Youth Council at the meeting, but it had not appeared in the minutes.

It was **RESOLVED**, subject to the addition of an update on the Youth Council, to note the minutes of the meeting dated 23rd March 2026.

C/25/179) Planning and Regeneration Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting dated 7th April 2026.

***Councillor Hamilton, declared an interest in the following licence application and left the meeting"*

Councillor Stephens assumed the Chair

Royal British Legion Club Ltd – Premises Licence

The Clerk advised that the Royal British Legion in Duke Street, St Austell has applied for a change to its licence to permit a later closing time to be in line with other venues in the town.

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection.

Councillor Hamilton returned to the meeting and re-assumed the Chair

C/25/180) Staffing Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting dated 30th March 2026 and approve the **RECOMMENDATIONS** contained therein.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Town Council believes that it meets the criteria for the NALC silver award and that the Town Clerk be authorised to submit the required evidence and apply for the NALC silver award.

C/25/181) Dates of Meetings

It was noted that the next Town Council meetings are due to take place on Monday 27th April 2027 (Annual Parish Meeting) and Monday 11th May 2026 (Annual Town Council Meeting).

The meeting closed at 6.52pm.