

St Austell Town Council



Town Council to take on Cornwall Council Services

St Austell Town Councillors agreed on Monday evening to grasp the nettle and take responsibility for a range of services including allotments, public toilets, parks and open spaces, car parks and the St Austell library from Cornwall Council to safeguard those services in the Town.

Members considered the impact of the proposal on local taxpayers and the risk of services being cut or removed altogether if the Town Council did not step in. Cornwall Council has severe budget pressures and has large savings targets which it must meet over the next few years and has advised that a number of services, such as public toilets, will no longer be run and other services, including parks and open spaces and libraries, will be cut if the Town Council does nothing.

Cornwall Council has offered the Town Council the car parks in the town in return for running the other functions. This will place a burden on the Town Council and local tax payers but is seen by Town Councillors as an opportunity to safeguard and improve services at least cost to local taxpayers.

Councillor Palmer, Mayor of St Austell, said:

"This is a once in a life time opportunity for the town to take control of some of these services and to run them in the best interests of local residents. Many services are best run locally rather than centrally from Truro. It is a big undertaking for the Town Council to take on all of the services proposed but we are confident we can rise to the challenge to not only safeguard the future of those services but provide an improved service which is more responsive to the needs of local people. By supporting our services with car parking income, we can keep our Council tax down below the average for Parish and Town Councils."

Councillor Jeremy Rowe, Portfolio Holder for Localism at Cornwall Council said:

"Cornwall Council is committed to devolving services to local Town and Parish Councils and helping them to run those services locally. We are faced with the need to make huge savings in our budget and proposals such as the one at St Austell will help us to deliver these savings and allow the people of St Austell to take control of their town".

Details of the transfer arrangements for services are being worked on, but it is anticipated that St Austell Town Council will take responsibility for services as follows:

Allotments from - April 2016

Public toilets in Priory Car Park - April 2016

Large parks and open spaces - Autumn 2016

Car parks – April 2017

St Austell Library – April 2017

Minor amenity areas and verges – Autumn 2016 to Autumn 2017