

Minutes of the Meeting of St Ives Town Council held in The Guildhall, St Ives on Tuesday 3 November 2015 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT

Chairman – Councillor L Taylor (Town Mayor)

Vice-Chairman – Councillor M Armstrong (Deputy Town Mayor)

COUNCILLORS

Andrewes T

Garrood H

Glanville R

Lait R

Mitchell A

Parsons A

Nicholls C

Symons J (from 7.37pm)

Tanner J

Tanner S

Tulley R

Williams T

OFFICERS

Town Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE

Chris Rolley, Chris Rolley Associates

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - were received from Councillors Chard and Prior.

109. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBER / OFFICER INTERESTS

None

110. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None.

111. MINUTES

The Clerk advised that the following amendments needed to be made to correct the draft version of the Minutes circulated:

Minute 93 – Community Health Services

Add (after bullet points, before Resolution):

Members considered Councillor Prior's resolution as circulated before the meeting. An amendment was proposed in which the second to fifth paragraphs inclusive be replaced with the wording: "*This Council notes the decision of the Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group to put these services out to tender and hopes that the outcome of this tendering process will ensure the continued operation of the Edward Hain Hospital, a valued community facility*". This amendment was seconded and put to the vote, with Councillor Prior requesting that his name be recorded as voting against this amendment.

The result of the vote was in favour of the amendment, at which point a further amendment was proposed and seconded: the addition of the phrase '*with concern*' after '*This Council ...*' The result of the vote was in favour of the further amendment and so this became the

substantive motion.

Upon this substantive motion being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED – that (as printed in the draft Minutes)

Minute 99 – Grants – St Ives in December

Add (after the resolution on the St Ives in December grant application):

Councillors Mitchell and Taylor requested that their names be recorded as voting against the resolution.

Minute 106 – Proposed Facilities Manager Post

Add (after the resolution):

Councillors Garrod, Glanville, Mitchell and Prior each requested that their name be recorded as voting against the resolution.

RESOLVED – that the Chairman signs as a true and correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 22 October 2015 (as amended above).

112. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – “That in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meeting) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the press and the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following matter on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.”

113. REPORT ON THE ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY CHRIS ROLLEY ASSOCIATES (Paragraph 3)

The Mayor welcomed Chris Rolley to the meeting.

Chris Rolley introduced his report by first setting the scene, citing the changes in local government since 1974 and the challenges faced by local councils. He advised that the issues faced by St Ives Town Council were shared by many local councils across the country with a need to fully review infrastructure in the face of taking on additional services.

Members were advised of the findings of the review, with strengths being governance and finance. The council achieved a lot from the resources available. Looking forward, the recommendations in the review would help the council to a more collegiate approach with a focus on standards and performance. It was noted that with the numerous roles fulfilled by local council officers, there was a benefit in buying in expertise when needed, particularly for personnel and legal matters.

The review identified the need for timely information for decision making and included a

recommendation for a reduction in the number of committees. The review recommendations were careful to maintain officer accountability and primacy of decision making by elected members.

A small number of errors had been identified in some of the points of reference in the report and the council was advised that a final (corrected) version would be supplied.

Chris Rolley then presented his report, setting out his findings and recommendations which were considered in turn.

Councillor Symons arrived at the meeting at this point.

The recommendations were considered and the following decisions made:

Recommendation 1: That prior to any future decisions on service devolution from Cornwall Council the full staffing ramifications relating to these must be fully evaluated with evidence-based recommendations, ensuring effective and sound policy decision-making.

RESOLVED (1): That this recommendation be approved and adopted, as set out in the report.

Recommendation 2: That the council should give positive consideration to engaging with a specialist company / consultancy to undertake independent salary / grading evaluations of all or some of the council's staff having regard to the recommendation contained in paragraph 3.13.

Considerations:

- The need to consider the recommendation alongside the proposed staff structure
- The potential financial implications to the council
- The schemes used for salary / grade evaluations
- Considered that senior posts should be externally evaluated, with remaining posts to be evaluated by the council
- Noted the decision already made to advertise for a Facilities Manager and questioned whether the post as advertised had been evaluated
- Questioned whether the Facilities Manager post should be evaluated, having been agreed so recently
- Noted the range of schemes that could be utilised to carry out salary / grade evaluation

RESOLVED (2): That the posts of the Clerk and the three service managers be independently evaluated and for pay protection to be applied.

Councillor Glanville requested that his name be recorded as voting against the resolution.

Recommendation 3: That council should reduce the advertised office opening hours of the reception office to 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday to Friday, or some other equally achievable period; thereby balancing the need to provide an effective public service with the limited availability of staff resources.

Consideration:

- Suggested that this should be referred to committee for further consideration

- Strength of the town council that it is very accessible to the public
- Need access in office hours for hall bookings, weddings bookings etc – many people walk in off the street and these visits have resulted in bookings
- There was support for the principle of limiting office hours to enable staff to dedicate more time on other core duties
- Part of improving the council's reputation in the community was giving sufficient opening times to meet people's needs.
- The current opening times of 9 to 5 were sometimes not fully manned. Publicised opening times could give certainty of core hours for reception duties.

RESOLVED (3): that this recommendation be referred to the Resources Committee for further consideration, with the aim of finding an effective way to ensure the town council reception is open from 9am to 5pm.

Recommendation 4: The council needs to dedicate some additional staff resource to the development of IT and communication systems, approximately four hours weekly, and that responsibility for this should rest with the Visit St Ives Visitor and Information Centre Manager.

Consideration:

- What happens if the person with expertise moves on?
- Professional IT support is recommended by officers and was likely to be part of the proposals for the upgrade of the IT and phone systems.
- The need to improve the councils communications with the wider public

RESOLVED (4): that the council needs to dedicate some additional staff resource to the development of IT and communication systems, approximately four hours weekly.

Recommendation 5: The council should, by April 2016, receive an officer report with evidence-based recommendations regarding future workload of the Facilities Manager based upon the first few months' practical operational experience of this new post.

Consideration:

- It was stated that it should be good practice to review a post in this way following the creation of a new post
- It was noted that this recommendation had been made when the post had been advertised as part time

RESOLVED (5): that the recommendation be approved and adopted, as set out in the report.

Recommendation 6: That the council should approve the establishment tree arrangement proposed in Appendix C.

Consideration:

- The Clerk was asked whether there had been staff consultation on the proposed structure, with the view that staff should have been consulted on the proposed structure. Members were advised that staff who had job roles likely to be affected had been advised of the

recommended structure and that as there were no significant changes, there had not been a more significant amount of consultation.

- A suggestion that corporate lines of management should be followed, and that the recommendation could be modified to better suit the council
- An expectation was expressed by a councillor that staff, or at least staff representatives, should be consulted upon when bringing in a new staff structure
- Chris Rolley advised that if significant changes were proposed to posts then there should be full consultation with staff. The recommendation aimed to give structure to the staff lines of responsibility and line management, without greatly affecting individual roles.
- In response to a question about the number of jobs with caretaking as part of their job description, it was noted that this was quite common and gave flexibility. Sufficient cover needed to be ensured, especially as the town council would be taking on the Island Centre.

RESOLVED (6): that the principle of a staff structure with a Clerk and three service managers be agreed and then for a committee recommendation to Council on the reporting / lines of management of staff within the three proposed services. Salary scales to be determined as part of recommendation 2 and job titles to be further considered at committee stage.

Recommendation 7: Council should review current arrangements for undertaking the payroll function either by outsourcing or by transferring direct responsibility for this to the new Finance and Administration team with an appropriate additional staffing allowance of not more than two hours weekly.

Considerations:

- The Clerk corrected an assertion by a councillor that 4 members of staff carried out the payroll function
- The Clerk advised that up to a day per month was allocated to payroll related duties, primarily carried out by the Clerk. She recommended that the payroll function continue in-house and for duties to be shared with the Clerical Officer in the first instance.

RESOLVED (7): that the recommendation as set out above be approved and adopted.

Recommendation 8: That the post titles of Assistant Town Clerk, Clerical Officer and Clerical Assistant are re-designated to titles more accurately representing the spheres of duties being undertaken.

Consideration:

- The combined caretaker job titles could also be reviewed and simplified

RESOLVED (8): that the recommendation as set out be approved and adopted, with the re-designation of titles to be deferred to Staffing Committee for recommendation to Council.

Recommendation 9: That a new post of Office Apprentice be created at a salary to be determined by St Ives Town Council being mindful of national minimum pay rates.

Consideration:

- Opportunity to offer an apprenticeship to benefit a young person
- Would hope to aspire to be a good employer, offering above the minimum apprentice rate.
- Start of multi-skilled training within the council

RESOLVED (9): that the recommendation as set out be approved and adopted.

Recommendation 10: That council should approve the service responsibilities of the Town Clerk, Administration and Finance team (Support Services), Visit St Ives Visitor and Information Centre team and of Facilities all as set out in paragraphs 3.20 to 3.33 inclusive.

RESOLVED (10): that the recommendation be approved as printed, with the amendment that the IT and Communication lead officer reference be removed (as per Resolution 4)

Recommendation 11: That meetings of the Management team should be held once in each committee cycle for a sharing of policy information and performance management, and resolution of corporate issues with team meetings and meetings of all staff to be held on a less regular basis, but roughly quarterly and annually respectively.

RESOLVED (11): that the recommendation be approved and adopted, with the addition of ‘at least’ before ‘once in each committee cycle’.

Recommendation 12: That with effect from commencement of 2016/2017 civic year the Council should introduce a timetable of meetings providing for two-monthly meetings of Council, Finance and General Purposes Committee, Environment and Community Committee, and Facilities Committee and four-weekly meetings of Planning Committee.

RESOLVED (12): that the recommendation as printed be approved and adopted.

Recommendation 13: That with effect from 2016/2017 civic year the council should approve a structure of Council and four programme committees with terms of reference, membership numbers and quorums all as set out in paragraphs 4.14 to 4.23 inclusive.

RESOLVED (13): that the recommendation as printed be approved and adopted.

Recommendation 14: That council should give consideration to establishing a Chairman’s Group to meet periodically, not less frequently than three meetings annually.

RESOLVED (14): that the recommendation as printed be approved and adopted.

Recommendation 15: That the Council should, once staffing commitments allow but not later than the commencement of 2016/2017 civic year, introduce a structured performance management system across the Council's sphere of activities with regular reporting on key performance indicators, and these should be agreed in advance with elected members for each committee.

RESOLVED (15): that the recommendation as printed be approved and adopted.

Recommendation 16: That the Council should affirm its commitment to continued professional training and development, increase its budget commitment to a more appropriate level, and ensure that through Finance and General Purposes Committee there is regular feedback on training undertaken and how that is benefitting the Council.

RESOLVED (16): that the recommendation as printed be approved and adopted.

Recommendation 17: That the Council should agree a Training and Development policy, either Appendix D attached or some other equally robust statement of intent.

Consideration:

- Training for staff and for councillors
- Training for new councillors – and to allocate a mentor to new councillors
- Planning training is important for all councillors
- In-house training / acclimatisation for new councillors could be organised
- (mentoring scheme – Cornwall Council – could they train mentors?)

RESOLVED (17): that the recommendation as printed be approved and adopted, with the addition of the need also of provision of robust training for councillors (especially when newly elected).

Recommendation 18: That the Council should review its HR needs and test the market for a new contractual arrangement with a specialist HR company, such as Peninsula or Ellis Whittam for example, for a period of not less than three years, in order to ensure the Council properly addresses the risks associated with employment based issues, not having the requisite experience within its own establishment.

Consideration:

- It was noted that with the benefit of CALC and South West Councils, the existing arrangements and guarantees of service delivery could be reviewed. (SWC could possibly be utilised more than they have been)
- A benefit of professional HR advice was the underwriting of the advice given – a strong level of guarantee for local councils.
- Need to ensure that there is the best possible advice and guarantees, especially with regard to HR advice on procedures and to give protection to the council.

RESOLVED (18): that the recommendation as printed be approved and adopted.

Recommendation 19: That an amended staff appraisal system should be agreed and implemented.

RESOLVED (19): that the recommendation as printed be approved and adopted (with the adoption of the appraisal process set out in Appendix D of the report.

Recommendation 20: That the council should utilise the current ground floor office utilised by the local roller hockey club as an office for the new Facilities Manager and the current first floor general office be extended into the adjacent store room in order to provide dedicated work unit space for each member of the office staff.

Consideration:

- Reception and admin base could be downstairs to cover reception duties.

RESOLVED (20): that the recommendation as printed be approved, with the allocation of the office space to appropriate staff to be agreed at a later time.

Recommendation 21: That the Council should request an annual report confirming details of all Annual Leave and TOIL arrangements agreed through the previous year and that this report should be presented in confidential session to the first meeting in each financial year of the appropriate Council Committee.

Consideration:

- The Council has staff who accrue time off in lieu (TOIL) but has no TOIL policy – not an ideal situation
- Need monitoring arrangement

RESOLVED (21): that the recommendation as printed be approved and adopted.

The Mayor thanked Chris Rolley and welcomed the review document which she stated would start the council on the right path for improvements.

Meeting closed at 8.47 pm

Chairman