

Minutes of the Meeting of the Facilities Committee, St Ives Town Council, held in the Committee Room, The Guildhall, St Ives on Thursday 7th September 2017 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Chairman - Councillor T Andrewes
Vice-Chairman – Councillor R Glanville

COUNCILLORS

Henry R	Tanner J
Lait R	Tanner S
Nicholls C	Williams T
Symons J	

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor R Tulley

OFFICERS

Town Clerk	Facilities Manager
Support Services Manager	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – were received from Councillor A Harris.

F.17 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Chairman signs as true and correct record the Minutes of the Facilities Committee meeting held on 14 June 2017.

F.18 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised the meeting that one of the members of the public would be recording for at least part of the meeting.

F.19 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBER/OFFICER INTERESTS

None.

F.20 OFFICERS' UPDATE

In noting the officers' update, the committee:

- requested an update on the footfall figures showing the usage of the public convenience at Longstone Cemetery; and
- asked the Facilities Manager to action a previous committee decision to investigate the potential for renewable energy generation at the Guildhall.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

F.21 **LIBRARY DEVOLUTION UPDATE**

Members considered an update report on actions taken since the last meeting, including informal engagement events with staff from the Library & Information Service and the staff and volunteers from the Visit St Ives Information Centre. Work on the legal agreements was progressing. It was noted that a response is awaited from Cornwall Council on building works the town council has requested should be carried out prior to the transfer. Once a response has been received, an application would be made to the Transition Fund.

Members were pleased to note that the staff engagement had commenced, with the importance of involving the staff being acknowledged.

Further discussion on this matter that involved the disclosure of sensitive information was deferred to the confidential session of the meeting.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted, and officers thanked for its clear presentation.

Double Taxation

The Cornwall Council briefing paper on the question of double taxation had been circulated and a draft response from the town council was considered. The inequity of differing levels of service being offered by Cornwall Council in different areas was noted, although it was acknowledged that the additional elements that the proposed enhanced service would bring a benefit to the local community. There was discussion around the merits of seeking to negotiate directly with the Cornwall Councillor who would make the final decision on this question.

Fundamentally, members felt it unfair that communities which had stepped forward and been proactive in accepting the devolution of the library and information service were being penalised.

RESOLVED - that

1. St Ives Town Council calls upon Cornwall Council to cover the annual cost of the business rates for the floorspace of the library building associated with providing the core library and information service that Cornwall Council would otherwise still be providing in St Ives; and
2. Cornwall Council should be asked to carry out works on the building regarded as necessary by the town council prior to transfer.

F.22 **GUILDHALL UPDATE ON FIRE SAFETY REGARDING BINS IN THE ALLEY WAY**

The Support Services Manager reported on discussions held recently with Cornwall Council's Waste & Recycling Officer. In addition, further fire safety advice received from the Council's fire safety consultant included a strong recommendation that bins should not be stored in the road alongside the Guildhall.

During discussion, it was noted that

- lockable bins had failed to prevent illegal dumping, as people had forced the locks;
- both trade bins and residential bins are posing a problem in the alleyway.

RESOLVED – that the following action be taken to require the unauthorised bins currently stored in the lane alongside the Guildhall to be removed from this location;

- 1) The businesses and residents/letting agents responsible for the bins be contacted and given notice to remove the bins
- 2) The Fire and Waste services at Cornwall Council be asked to support this action and to issue notices, as possible and as appropriate, to help ensure compliance with the requirement for the removal of the bins.

F.23 STEP FREE ACCESS TO GUILDHALL

The Facilities Manager had reported on the options available to enable step-free access to the first floor of the Guildhall.

In addition to the information set out in the report, during discussion it was noted that:

- a chairlift would enable more people to more readily access the first floor of the Guildhall
- there was the potential to further explore the options for a lift
- if installed, a lift would need to be capable of raising both a disabled person and his/her mobility aid
- concerns about the aesthetics of a stairlift were secondary to the need to help people to the first floor
- the Facilities Manager advised that a platform stairlift lift would likely cost in the region of £11,000 to £15,000.

RESOLVED – that the Facilities Manager be instructed to:

- 1) further investigate the option to install a lift, including costs and possible grant funding; and
- 2) to seek firm quotes for the provision of a platform stairlift, accepting that this would require the blocking of the current door to the VIC offices, and the re-opening of the adjacent door currently blocked off.

F.24 GUILDHALL – REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS

The Facilities Manager had provided an overview of the repair and maintenance works needed. The committee welcomed the proposed works to be carried out, stating the aim of the council to bring the building to a high standard of repair and to be a facility and venue that the town could be proud of.

RESOLVED – that the committee

- 1) notes the contents of this report;
- 2) approves the list of works to be carried out, as listed at Appendix A to the report;
- 3) agrees that the wood veneer and curtains be retained as they are, to be reviewed if necessary after the painting is complete.

F.25 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES – ALLOCATION OF REFURBISHMENT BUDGET

Members considered the report which set out the ability for there to be additional refurbishment works to the public conveniences in addition to the works scheduled to be carried out at Dove Street in the autumn. The views of the committee were invited on the sites and type of refurbishment

works required across the public conveniences buildings run by the town council.

Priorities identified by Councillors were:

- the flooring at West Pier (Ladies and Gents) – including skirtings
- Smeaton’s Ladies needs general improvement
- paintwork at West Pier

The Facilities Manager suggested that slate flooring (as used in Smeaton’s Gents) would work well in West Pier. He also said that the flooring in Porthminster toilets and the urinals in the Sloop toilets were in need of replacement, and improvements to ventilation in most toilets (especially West Pier) would be beneficial.

Councillors debated whether charging for the use of West Pier toilets would be feasible. The Chairman noted that the design of the building mitigated against it. It was noted that Dove Street and then the men’s and women’s toilets at Smeaton’s Pier may be considered for charging in future.

Councillor Tulley stated that he felt that the money ear-marked for the Dove Street refurbishment could be better spent in other ways across all the toilets. He felt that that toilet was now better than in the past. Few other councillors had been able to visit Dove Street. Councillors felt that, in that toilet and elsewhere, the major issue was the quality of the cleaning.

RESOLVED – that the Facilities Manager should:

- i. commission new flooring at West Pier
- ii. the wall at Smeaton’s Ladies should be made good (funded by an insurance claim, if possible)
- iii. commission new flooring at Porthminster
- iv. commission improved ventilation where it is needed, especially West Pier
- v. cancel the refurbishment works at Dove Street and invest instead in improvements in other toilets, particularly West Pier
- vi. commission the works needed to raise Dove Street to an acceptable standard.

F.26 ISLAND CENTRE – REPAIRS/IMPROVEMENTS

The Town Clerk reported that this report had been withdrawn as there was no decision required.

F.27 REVIEW OF SCALE OF CHARGES FOR WEDDINGS

The Town Clerk presented a report setting out the need to review the charges for the hire of the Guildhall function rooms for wedding ceremonies, with immediate effect. Officers had prepared a draft scale of charges based on the information which had been built up through experience of offering wedding packages over the past year. Costs of similar packages offered by comparative venues locally had also been taken into account. By adopting the figures proposed, the committee would be ensuring that all costs were covered and that there would be a surplus generated to contribute to the running costs of the Guildhall.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED – that the charges as set out in the report be approved to be implemented with immediate effect and for the remainder of this financial year, with further review to be carried out at the next meeting to inform a decision on wedding charges 2018/2019.

F.28 INCREASING THE USE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S BUILDINGS

The Support Services Manager presented figures showing the usage of the Guildhall and the Island Centre. It was noted that while market hires continued to be healthy, there was a need to do more to market the Guildhall as a live performance venue and to promote the first floor rooms as meeting rooms.

Councillors agreed that the use of and income from the Island Centre should be increased. Charges would be considered at the next scheduled meeting of this committee.

RESOLVED – that the following steps be taken to better promote the Guildhall and the Island Centre as function, meeting and performance venues:

1. more information to be published on the town council website and for this to be a priority area of work for officers
2. council properties to be marketed via venue-finder websites
3. brochures and a price list to be readily available to potential hirers
4. local organisations in the community to be sent marketing information, ideally linked to an open day to encourage people to visit and see what the hall has to offer
5. social media be better used to promote the spaces as venues
6. ways of increasing live performances to be explored, including the potential for the town council to promote performances.
7. local noticeboards should include space hire information
8. the Friends of the Guildhall and town council to collaborate on increasing activity
9. the Support Services Manager be tasked to lead on the implementation of a plan to promote the venues
10. Squash Box Theatre to be commissioned to hold a children's show in the Christmas holiday period, as the first performance to be booked by the town council.

F.29 FINANCE REPORT

The Town Clerk reported that due to workload and time constraints, there would be no finance report to this meeting, but that report to the Finance & General Purposes Committee would encompass all committees and would be circulated to all Councillors.

F.30 VIC – REFUND POLICY

After a brief discussion on the report submitted by the Visit St Ives Information Centre Manager, it was

RESOLVED – that the matter of refunds be delegated to the discretion of the Visit St Ives Information Centre Manager.

F.31 EXCLUSION OF 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 public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following matters on the grounds that they involve 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.”

F.32 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES CLEANING CONTRACT (Paragraph 3)

The Facilities Manager presented the report setting out the draft contract for the incoming contractor commissioned to carry out the cleaning of public conveniences in St Ives from 30 October 2017. The contract was based on the specifications set out in the tender documentation and incorporated elements raised either through the tendering process, or during subsequent discussions with the contractor.

Members were advised that further amendments had been made:

- i. The addition of a penalty clause for poor performance
- ii. Additional detail relating to opening times for the public toilet at the Sloop car park
- iii. An adjustment to bring the timing of the afternoon clean to earlier in the day, on days when there are two cleans per day.

The Committee requested the following amendments be made:

Clause 5.1 – (period of notice) – add “unless earlier, with the agreement of both parties”

The value of the contract to be stated as the net value plus VAT

RESOLVED – that

- 1) The report be noted
- 2) The draft contract be completed by the Facilities Manager in consultation with the Chairman of the Facilities Committee; and
- 3) The Facilities Maintenance Officer and Facilities Manager be commended for their work in improving the condition of the toilets and reducing the number of complaints.

Further to the discussion relating to the general cleaning contract, a question was raised about the works specification to ensure high cleaning standards at the Porthminster Beach public toilets. It was noted that a meeting was due to be held with the Porthminster Beach managers in the near future.

F.33 LIBRARY DEVOLUION – STAFFING MATTERS (Paragraphs 1, 2 & 3)

This matter was deferred from the public section of the meeting. Members asked what assurances had been given to staff at this stage in the devolution process, and stated that the council should give as much reassurance as possible. It was recognised that this was a matter which would fall within the remit of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

RESOLVED – that an agenda item about assurances that could be given to staff would be an agenda item at the next scheduled meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

F.34 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 2 November 2017.