

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ST IVES TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE GUILDHALL, ST IVES ON MONDAY 15 JULY 2019 AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT

Chairman – Councillor T Harris (Mayor)
Vice-Chairman – Councillor K Arthur (Deputy Mayor)

COUNCILLORS

Andrewes T	Lait R	Nicholls C
Burton P	Messenger K	Williams T
Henry R	Mitchell A	

OFFICERS

Town Clerk
Support Services Manager

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Councillors R Glanville, J Griffin, J Symons, J Tanner, S Tanner, R Tulley.

33. PUBLIC SPEAKING

None

34. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

35. DECLARATION OF MEMBER/OFFICER INTERESTS

None

36. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None

37. MINUTES

The Mayor requested that the minutes of the planning committee meeting on the 23rd of May be amended to record his and Councillor Burton's attendance.

RESOLVED – that, subject to the above amendment, the Chairman signs as a true and correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 13 June 2019.

38. CORNWALL COUNCIL CONSULTATION – COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Town Clerk introduced the report. She explained that the Council had previously been advised of the community governance review and consultation process being carried out by Cornwall Council. The Council were being asked by Cornwall Council to indicate any interest in being part of a review of wards and ward boundaries.

A meeting of the community governance review working group met last week and was attended by Councillor Harris, with officer support from the Town Clerk. On the basis of the meeting, a draft response to the review had been prepared and tabled for discussion at this meeting. She advised that the deadline for responses meant that the Council would need to reach a decision at the meeting about how to proceed.

The Council debated the draft proposal and a variety of views were expressed. Some Councillors saw the merits of extending the parish boundary, given that the town was providing a number of services accessed by rural areas which was not reflected in the precept. In addition, in an era of devolved services, smaller councils were struggling to run services which were being devolved.

However, concerns were expressed that the proposed area of expansion included parishes which would not necessarily identify with St Ives. In addition, a proposal to amend the boundaries and bring in outlying rural areas could not be put forward without discussion with these smaller parishes to seek their views.

Some Councillors questioned the benefits of increasing the number of Councillors on the Town Council.

It was noted that a community governance review request could give the Town Council the opportunity to correct the names of the wards which had been proposed through the Boundary Commission report alongside the LGBCE review of Cornwall Council divisions in 2018. The Town Clerk advised that the consultation template enabled the Council to indicate specific changes to be considered.

In terms of the wider aspects of the review, Councillors were of the view that they could do little more at this stage than express an interest in exploring changes to the parish boundary, provided that neighbouring parishes also wished to do so. It was, therefore, proposed that this should be set out in an accompanying letter rather than in the template itself.

RESOLVED: that the Council submit a response to the review, requesting a review of the parish ward names for the St Ives parish in order to achieve representative and readily identifiable ward names for the new parish wards. In addition, to set out in a covering letter that the Town Council would be open to exploring the potential to extend the parish boundary if consultation were to demonstrate that this could be justified in terms of representation and how residents from neighbouring parishes identify with the St Ives area.

39. **REPLACEMENT OF A SECTION OF PLAY EQUIPMENT AT PALEMON BEST RECREATION GROUND**

The Town Clerk explained that a corner section of the play equipment at Palemon Best recreation ground was in very poor repair. Given the health and safety concerns, it was important to repair this urgently. A reputable equipment provider had provided two quotes, either for a limited repair which would replace but reduce the play value of the equipment or an upgraded tubular climbing net. The two quotes were approximately £1,100 and £2,500, plus VAT.

The Town Clerk asked for members' views about the level of repair and / or replacement to be carried out. In addition, funds for the works could either come from earmarked reserves (the Palemon Best play equipment and Improvement reserves) or from the revenue budget for improvements and operational costs. To reflect the urgency, it was proposed that standing orders be waived to enable her to accept the quote and proceed with the replacement as soon as possible.

RESOLVED – that

- i). Standing orders be waived and the Town Clerk be authorised to accept a single quotation for the replacement and upgrade of the scramble net at a cost of not more than £2,500 plus VAT
- ii). The repair to be funded from earmarked reserves (Palemon Best Play Equipment and Palemon Best Improvement) with the remainder to be drawn from the revenue budget (Palemon Best Improvements/Operational)

40. **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 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."

41. PROVISION FOR STAFF COVER IN RESPONSE TO LONG-TERM SICKNESS ABSENCES (PARAGRAPHS 1, 2 & 3)

The Town Clerk introduced the report by giving an update on a number of Council staff currently absent due to illness. She advised that two members of Facilities staff were on long term sick leave with no certain date for their return currently. Another member of staff who assisted with maintenance was also currently off sick. This meant that the staff resources available for repair and maintenance were significantly depleted.

In recognition of this - and a potentially growing number of backlog repair and maintenance tasks - Councillors had requested that a report be brought to the meeting so the Council could discuss a way forward.

The Council debated the issues and the following points were made

- When staff returned to work after long term sickness, there was often a need for a phased return and they would be returning to a backlog of work, so capacity in the team would continue to be limited in the short to medium term
- Footpath and amenities work being carried out by a temporary employee was essential. There was scope for his contract to be extended until the end of September and this should be actioned.
- In addition to responding to repairs, the weekly proactive maintenance checks being carried out were very effective and needed to continue
- There was scope to outsource more work and use local tradespeople as necessary
- There was a significant amount of work required for the library. This needed to be planned and contracts let soon so that, as soon as the highways embargo ended, they were ready to go. A temporary project officer could assist in co-ordinating the work, arranging for quotes etc and prepare contracts.
- Even when staff returned from sick leave, there was enough work for the Town Council to consider hiring an additional maintenance officer for the longer term

Members expressed concern at the level of staff sickness and the Clerk advised that it was a matter to be taken seriously and for the council to address where it could. She referred to the potential for the council to embark on a 'healthy workplace' initiative, to help address absence and wellbeing issues in the future.

RESOLVED – that

- i) Delegation is given to the Town Clerk to extend the contract of the temporary Amenities Officer for three days a week, until the end of September 2019, to cover amenities and maintenance duties; and
- ii) The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor and Chairman of Facilities Committee, investigate options and estimated costs for providing capacity in the Facilities team including
 - The recruitment of a temporary project manager on a short-term contract, primarily to progress backlog maintenance and refurbishment works
 - The recruitment of an additional maintenance officerTo be brought back to the next meeting of the Council for decision.

Meeting closed at 7.36 pm

Chairman