

Minutes of the Meeting of the Community & Environment Committee, St Ives Town Council held virtually via Zoom on Thursday 26 August 2021 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Vice Chairman – Councillor Hodson

COUNCILLORS

Arthur L

Harris T

Rogers L

Beveridge J

Messenger K

Ryall J

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Mitchell attended for the first two items

OFFICERS

Town Clerk

C&E.22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors K Arthur and A Dale, R Bradford

C&E.23 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Vice-Chairman advised that, unfortunately the Chairman was unable to attend, due to a family emergency.

C&E.24 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Chairman signs as a true and correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 May 2021.

C&E.25 PUBLIC SPEAKING

None

C&E.26 UPDATE FROM THE COMMUNITY LINK OFFICER (CORNWALL COUNCIL)

None

C&E.27 UPDATE FROM COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

A representative from the St Ives Community Land Trust provided an update to the meeting. They advised that they would come to full Council to present more detailed information about projects they were working on. However, the focus of this update was the old vicarage flats. The news was positive and the project had secured all the necessary planning consents and had also received an in principle town fund allocation, subject to detailed business case. They would also shortly be consulting on the proposed allocations policy on who would be eligible to apply. They confirmed that the Town Council would be consulted on the policy. In response to questions from the Committee, it was confirmed that they were hoping to start on site in the Spring. Members thanked the representative and welcomed the positive news about progress.

C&E.28 DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLOR/ OFFICER INTERESTS

None

C&E.29 OFFICER'S UPDATE REPORT

The Town Clerk presented the update report. The following comments were made:
C&E .12 this item was with Cornwall Council but the business would be asked about Lelant.

C&E.17 The date of the Pride bus tour was the 24th of July

C&E.60 Members agreed that the Knill ceremony had gone very well and special thanks to all those involved

C&E.46 A number of committee members commented on the new website, which was agreed to be a great improvement and a modern attractive design. Thanks were extended to the staff who had worked on it with content and Meor design.

RESOLVED - that subject to the above, the update report be noted.

C&E.30 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO SUPPORT THE ST IVES PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER

The Town Clerk introduced an update on the PSPO. She explained that the proposal was moving forward but had been delayed in part because of negotiations with the boatmen and also confirmation from Cornwall Council that an acceptable level of enforcement resources could be agreed. It was hoped that now that the terms of a code of practice had been agreed, together with enforcement, the order could be signed and moved forward.

The Committee welcomed progress and the news that agreement was in place with the boatmen. It was very positive to hear that they had now formed one representative association. The Committee agreed that the proposed level of enforcement was adequate for this year. However, it was essential that adequate resources would be available going forward. Enforcement was key.

RESOLVED – that the Committee note the report and support the proposed level of enforcement resources for 2021 and the licencing arrangements and

RECOMMEND to Council that it adopt the Boatmen's code of practice and ensure that adequate financial provision for enforcement resources for 2022-23 is included in the budget setting process.

C&E.31 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL ALLOTMENTS POLICY

The Town Clerk introduced the report. She explained that management of the allotments was a partnership with the allotments association and that there were twice yearly inspections. Unfortunately, there were a number of plots which were now subject to warning letters and notices to quit. Through recent engagement with allotment holders, it emerged that the policy (and their rights and responsibilities) was not clear. Terms were only in the allotment agreement and not written down and disseminated. In addition, there was no explanation of the three key stages of action for plots in poor condition. The new policy made clear the terms of the tenancy agreement and the three stages. Once adopted, it would also be put into a simple easy to read leaflet.

The Committee discussed the policy. It welcomed the clarity provided and discussed ideas about how management arrangements could better improve the maintenance of plots. One proposal was to review the annual rent. It was agreed this could be

discussed at the next meeting when the budget was reviewed.

RESOLVED – that the Committee support the draft policy, noting the implications of the restrictive covenant and RECOMMEND the revised policy to Council for adoption.

C&E.32 MEMORIAL BENCHES – PROPOSED TOWN COUNCIL POLICY

The Town Clerk introduced the report. She gave an update on the progress on bench repair and explained that Cornwall Council had not, as yet agreed a formal hand over of the benches. The intention was to do so, once the new policy was agreed. The benches officer would come to the Town Council and arrange for training and a handover.

The Committee discussed the policy. Some members were concerned to understand the status of historic plaques. In response to questions, the Clerk confirmed that the majority of plaques were issued by Penwith Council and were therefore at least 13 years old but some much older. One member who had previous knowledge of the Penwith policy was sure that there had always been a time limit imposed on the erection of plaques and that sponsors were aware. In response to a question, the Clerk confirmed that there were two possible locations for the installation of plaques, the wall of Trewyn Gardens and possibly Barnoon.

Some Councillors were also keen to ensure that the chosen designs would be of the right style and quality. It was confirmed that a number of recycled plastic designs were of a high quality and the maintenance benefit was clear. Members asked that there be wider consultation on the proposed designs, and it was confirmed that this would take place.

RESOLVED - that the Committee RECOMMEND to Council that it

- i) Continue with a memorial benches scheme and
- ii) Adopt the benches policy, together with a business sponsorship scheme

It also resolved that the design of the new benches be selected in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman, following feedback from all Councillors, and the costs of new plaques and sponsorship be agreed as part of the annual review of fees and charges.

C&E.33 FREQUENCY OF ORGANISED FIREWORK DISPLAYS

Councillor Rogers introduced his motion to the Committee which related to the launch of firework displays by local hotels. Although intended to celebrate events, such as weddings, their frequency every week and late into the evenings, was causing increasing distress to local families, including those with small children and pets and wildlife. Committee debated the motion and agreed the frequency was becoming a nuisance and source of upset for local residents. The Committee considered possible actions. The Town Clerk advised that there was scope for some intervention from Environmental Services under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Fire Service could check compliance with the firework regulations. It was also suggested that silent fireworks were introduced. Whilst there were possible enforcement routes, it was proposed that in the first instance, a letter be sent to all the hotels, setting out the issues and asking for solutions.

RESOLVED – that the Committee write to the relevant hotels asking that they review their policies including only using silent fireworks with less frequency.

C&E.34 A SINGLE COMMERCIAL WASTE CONTRACT FOR ST IVES

The Town Clerk introduced the report explaining that this was an update of the exploratory work being done to look at solutions to the commercial waste issue in the town. It was now critical, given the concerns expressed by the fire service. Initial discussions with a waste provider had indicated that individual businesses would still need a contract but could be part of a buying club at favourable rates and with an overarching agreement.

The Committee welcomed the initiative and the work which BID had done in seeking to find solutions.

RESOLVED - that the Committee note the progress to date and support the concept of a single commercial waste contract in principle and to inform future decision making, agree to the commission of a legal and procurement advice note to be funded from within existing professional fees budgets.

C&E.35 THE CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY BILL

The Town Clerk explained that the Committee Chairman had asked for this to be debated. She explained that it had been introduced as a private members bill in the last session but had growing support from community groups and others, including councils. She summarised the key provisions in the bill as set out in the report. The aim was to set measurable targets for reducing global temperatures alongside addressing the loss of biodiversity and the consequences for ecology.

The Committee debated the report. It agreed that, given the climate emergency there was little to criticise in the aims of the bill, seeking to hold governments to account in order to make progress.

RESOLVED - that the Committee RECOMMEND to Council that it endorse the measures contained in the bill and give it the Council's endorsement as a supporter.

C&E.36 POLICY STATEMENT ON HELICOPTER FLIGHTS

The Town Clerk introduced the item, explained that it was in response to the resolution of a previous meeting that the Council set out a policy statement on efforts it had made over the years to seek to resolve this issue but, unfortunately, nothing had been successful.

The Committee discussed the report. It was agreed that, other than urging residents to record any activity which might breach CAA rules, little appeared to be possible. Some members felt that the statement should say more about what the Council thought should happen, that is the only realistic solution was a revision to the General Permitted Development Orders. The Clerk confirmed she was happy to write again. In addition, the Chairman of the Planning Committee was due to be in contact with the Secretary of State and was preparing a letter on planning issues. He was happy to include this matter.

RESOLVED – that the policy statement should be amended to include the Council's recommended course of course and then be adopted and published and that the

Council write, once again to the Secretary of State in relation to the Permitted Development Orders through correspondence with the Planning Committee Chairman. Local residents were to be urged to compile information on any breaches of safety rules and forward them to the CAA.

C&E.37 RE-INTRODUCTION OF A TOWN CRIER

Councillor Ryall presented his report on proposals to re-introduce a town crier. He advised that he had undertaken research and 144 towns continued to have a crier and valued its benefits. He had canvassed BID and proposed that the scheme could be self financing if it could also promote businesses and commercial events. The Committee discussed the scheme. Members expressed concern about the sponsorship element and felt it should either be voluntary or funded by the Council so it could focus on town events. There was a suggestion that it could be piloted first. It was proposed that, as a way forward, the views of the community were sought, through the website, press and social media.

RESOLVED – to carry out community consultation to ascertain support for the re-introduction of a Town Crier.

C&E.38 REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIP FROM AN ARTIST EXHIBITION AT THE VENICE BIENNALE

A request for sponsorship had been received from a local artist, exhibiting at the Venice Biennale. The Clerk confirmed that the Committee had the power and the budget to make a donation and in doing so would need to assess the benefit to the town.

RESOLVED – to write to the artist congratulating them on their invitation and offer a sum of £200 towards their costs.

C&E.39 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY IN ST IVES

The Town Clerk introduced the item explaining that this was a pressing issue for Cornwall and for the town, both in terms of the availability of accommodation and affordability with almost 400 households on the housing register. Previous planning contributions (s106 funds) had been collected for the Town and, with funds due would total over £600,000. In addition, Cornwall Council was committed to bringing forward its own sites. Given the urgency, it was considering a high quality modular building solution. They were keen to work in partnership. A possible way forward was for the Town to request that s106 funds be granted to the Town Council in order to commission work on possible Cornwall Council sites to assist in bringing them forward and to support local needs affordable housing sites through the planning process. Members of the affordable housing service were due to attend the next meeting.

RESOLVED – RECOMMEND that the Council:

1. Restate its commitment to the delivery of local needs affordable housing, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan
2. Consider possible Cornwall Council sites (and those of willing landowners) and support them in principle for delivery
3. Write to the Head of Economy at Cornwall Council, requesting grant support to fund the Town's project officer and technical support to develop briefs for the site, based on local need, in order that Cornwall Council officers can be commissioned to prioritise these for delivery.

C&E.40 FINANCE REPORT

The Committee considered the monthly update report. In response to a query, the Town Clerk confirmed that it had not been possible to deliver street weeding, due to the pandemic. Alternative options to glyphosates were being considered with other towns for future years. Members expressed concern that this would not be done. The Clerk agreed to contact the usual supplier to explore a late Summer application.

RESOLVED – that subject to the above, the Committee note the report

C&E. 41 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

None

C&E. 42 CORRESPONDENCE

None

C&E. 43 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

If necessary, to consider passing the following resolution:

“That in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meeting) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following matters on the grounds that they involve information of a confidential nature.

C&E. 44 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY IN ST IVES

The Committee considered a number of Cornwall Council sites.

RESOLVED - to support the principle of Cornwall Council sites for the development of local needs affordable housing.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:

21 October 2021

Meeting ended at 9.10 pm

Chairman