

Minutes of the Extra-ordinary Meeting of St Ives Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Guildhall on Thursday 1st July 2021 at 6pm

PRESENT

Chairman – Councillor K Arthur (Town Mayor)

Vice-Chairman – Councillor S Tanner (Deputy Town Mayor)

COUNCILLORS

Arthur L

Harris T

Rogers L

Beveridge J

Messenger K

Ryall J

Bradford R

Mitchell A

Taylor L

Dale A

Hodson C

Wells J

Gaunt R

OFFICERS

Town Clerk

Administration Assistant

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - were received from Councillors Hynes

43. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBER/ OFFICER INTERESTS

None

44. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

None

45. MINUTES

It was requested that the following amendments be made to the minutes of the 10th June 2021 meeting:

- Councillor Messenger gave a report on St Ives BID
- Councillor Rogers was in attendance

RESOLVED – that, subject to the above amendments, the Chairman signs as a true and correct record the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 10th June 2021.

46. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP FOR NEW COUNCILLORS

Council considered requests from the two, newly co-opted Councillors to be nominated onto Council committees:

Councillor Gaunt was appointed to the Facilities Committee and Devolution Panel.

Councillor L Arthur was appointed to the Planning Committee.

Councillor Arthur also wished to be appointed to the Community & Environment Committee but it was noted that, under the scheme of delegation, the committee's membership was limited to 8 and no sitting councillor wished to stand down. Council considered a proposal that the scheme of delegation be amended to increase the committee membership to a maximum of 9, which was carried.

RESOLVED – that

- i) Councillor Gaunt be appointed to the Facilities Committee and Devolution Panel
- ii) Councillor L Arthur be appointed to the Planning and Community & Environment Committees and;
- iii) The Scheme of Delegation be amended to increase the membership of the Community & Environment Committee to 9.

47. TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF PHYSICAL MEETINGS AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Town Clerk introduced the report, which addressed the significant spike in Covid-19 cases, which was currently affecting St Ives. The spike had already impacted the Council with three councillors self isolating (two with family members having a positive test) and two staff members with long COVID. The same spike in infection was occurring in Falmouth and Newquay. As a result of the surge in cases, officers had taken advice from Cornwall Association of Local Councils about appropriate action, the key issue being the inability to return to remote meetings due to the ending of the COVID regulations.

The Clerk explained that the advice was that the Council consider suspending physical meetings during the surge and introducing emergency delegated powers. She explained that, although decision making was delegated to officers, there would be regular and comprehensive consultation with councillors and committee chairmen. In addition, as this was happening in the Summer months, there were in fact, very few meetings affected – the majority were planning committee meetings and a meeting of Council. Dependent upon their size, informal panels and working groups could take place on line or as a last resort in person. All delegated decisions would be recorded and ratified at the next meeting of the Council.

Members debated the recommendations, and a number of opinions were expressed including:

- Concern that the approach would be at odds with Government advice and the need to hold physical planning committee meetings in public.
- The need to support local businesses, show leadership and act responsibly by suspending meetings
- That the town had higher than average number of cases and members should decide to physically meet only when it is absolutely necessary.
- The need to understand the decision making procedure, should senior officers be unwell. (the Clerk confirmed that the RFO & Corporate Services Manager was deputy Clerk and able to make decisions in her absence).

The Clerk also confirmed that the Finance & General Purposes and Staffing Committees would take place in order to appoint Chairmen. In addition, the detailed planning procedure would ensure that there was widespread consultation. The procedure had been drawn up by CALC as best practice. It was hoped that if the number of cases subsided, business would resume in September.

RESOLVED - that

- i) In the light of the current health pandemic, the Council suspend physical meetings until the 1st of September
- ii) An emergency scheme of delegation, with consultation arrangements as set out in the report, be adopted with all delegated decisions reported to the next meeting of Council.

48. **URGENT REQUEST FOR A CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON BT PHONE BOX CLOSURES**

The Town Clerk explained that this consultation would usually be discussed at the Community & Environment Committee but as it was urgent it has been brought to this extra Council. The Council was being consulted by BT on the proposed closure of the following three phone boxes:

- Treloyan
- Dove Street
- Porthmeor Hill

Members discussed the consultation. Dove Street had 11 calls in the last 12 months – although, concern was expressed that the usage report didn't indicate the number of emergency calls. Members were divided on whether to support the removal of the call box, expressing the need to have a public land line in the town for emergency services, especially as many holiday homes didn't have a landline. Members also queried how many phone boxes would be left in the town. This was not known, and the Clerk confirmed she would follow this up. Two motions were put to the Council, either to keep Dove Street but accept the other two closures or request keeping three. Council resolved to request that Dove Street be retained (on the basis of poor 3G network in town and the need for emergency cover).

Councillor Mitchell asked that his name be recorded s having voted against this proposal.

RESOLVED – that the Council respond to the consultation, requesting that Dove Street telephone box be retained but would not object to the removal of the other two.

49. **LETTER FROM BID REGARDING NEW YEARS EVE**

The Town Clerk introduced the report. She explained that for some years, Cornwall's emergency planning service had required formal event management arrangements to be in place for the New Year's eve celebration. Due to the scale of numbers - and the potential risks associated with the night – it was clear that it was an event which couldn't be left to run itself. It has therefore been run as a partnership agreement, between St Ives BID and Cornwall Council, with the agreement being reviewed annually. The Town Council also supported the event by arranging the road closures and notices and providing a £2,000 annual grant. As a result of the exponential increase in costs and the reluctance of Cornwall Council to be directly involved long term in event planning, St Ives BID had approached the Council, requesting a meeting with key councillors, to discuss planning this year's event and its future role as a partner.

Councillor Taylor declared an interest in future discussions, due to being the Leader of Cornwall Council and Councillor Messenger declared an interest as the Town Council's representative on the BID board.

Members discussed the issue with some expressing concerns that becoming a partner would come at a greater cost, long term. Others recognised that the event was world renowned, benefiting the town, community and businesses and it was, therefore, important that the Town Council played a role.

It was proposed that a small group of councillors met with BID in the first instance to consider issues and options, with a report being brought back to Council for further consideration.

Councillors Tanner, Mitchell, Dale, Arthur, Rogers were nominated to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED – that officers be asked to convene a meeting between the Council and representatives of the BID board to discuss New Year’s Eve and the future role of the Town Council. Councillors Tanner, Mitchell, Dale Arthur and Rogers to be invited to attend with a report being brought back to a future meeting of the Council for debate.

50. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The Council received and considered the following committee minutes:

- 1) Community & Environment Committee 27th May 2021
- 2) Facilities Committee 3rd June 2021
- 3) Staffing Committee 10th June 2021
- 4) Committee Recommendations

There were no recommendations from Committees to be considered.

51. **RESOLVED** – that it was not necessary to pass the resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting as there were no confidential matters to address.

Meeting closed at 18.34 pm

Chairman