

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HELSTON TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE GUILDHALL, HELSTON
ON THURSDAY 19TH JULY 2012 AT 7.15 PM

Councillors: J P Radford-Gaby (Town Mayor) in the Chair

R Williams
Mrs S M E Swift
R J L Boase
N J C Devenish

K Reynolds
D C Swift
Mrs F N E Boase
R R Pryor

M H Thomas
Miss J A Hornsby
J Martin

Officers: Mr C Dawson (Town Clerk)
Miss P J Lavelle (Assistant to the Town Clerk)
Mr J Birkett (Town Centre Manager)

130. Declarations of Interest

Councillors R J L Boase and Mrs Boase declared an interest in the Town Centre Manager's Report (Agenda item 12) as Members of the Helston Business Improvement Partnership. The Mayor and Councillor Mrs Swift declared an interest in the Town Centre Manager's Report (Agenda item 12) as Directors on the Helston Business Improvement Partnership Board.

Councillor Williams entered the meeting at 7.17pm.

131. Police Matters

The Mayor extended a welcome to WPC Butcher who presented a detailed report which included recent crime figures.

132. Reports from Local Cornwall Councillors and the Community Network Manager

a) Local Cornwall Councillors

Councillor Robertson gave a detailed report during which he made particular mention to a proposed partnership with a private sector organisation for back office services, the Funding Outlook for Councils document and grass cutting issues. He further advised that he had two highway consultations which had just closed, advising that he was waiting for the results for the proposed work in Water-Ma-Trout but the response appeared to have been mixed. He confirmed that the response to the consultation for improvements near Helston Community College had been positive and the work had been scheduled during the summer holidays. Councillor Robertson then advised that no funding was available from Central Government for the rebuild of 'C block' at Helston Community College and the issue would be considered at an Extraordinary Cabinet meeting at the end of the month where he hoped an 'in principle' decision would be made.

Councillor Mrs Haycock advised that traffic calming measures in Tenderah Road, at the point where the footpath crossed the road, would be completed in the near future. Councillor Mrs Haycock then spoke on problems regarding refuse to advise that she had highlighted two particular areas and had requested that letters be sent to the residents. She advised that the last time problems had been experienced with refuse she had produced a leaflet which she hoped to do again. She confirmed that she had received pictures of spilt refuse outside a premises in Meneage Street and confirmed that she had spoken with the business owner who had explained the situation and advised that it would not happen again. Councillor Mrs Haycock then confirmed that she still had Community Chest funding available for community groups.

The Mayor circulated photographs of refuse issues in the town centre and asked the Cornwall Councillors if everyone could work together and requested their assurance that something would be done. Councillor Mrs Haycock advised that she had spoken to officers throughout May & June regarding the refuse and explained the procedure for cleaning up dropped waste. Councillor Robertson advised that the owner of the refuse was responsible until it was collected. He advised that everybody, including the community, needed to work together confirming that he understood that early collections were a problem for businesses but solutions to the issues could be found. A detailed debate ensued during which Members discussed how different areas were affected by spilt refuse, potential enforcement action and the benefits and disadvantages of possible solutions to the problem.

Councillor Reynolds queried if Councillor Mrs Haycock could use some of her Community Chest money to purchase one hundred seagull-proof bags for the businesses to use. Councillor Mrs Haycock advised that she would prefer the funding to be used by Community Groups.

Councillor Thomas expressed concern with the change of opening hours at the Gays Hill Recycling Centre to 4pm year round and enquired if it was a permanent change. Councillor Mrs Haycock advised that the hours had been reduced to meet necessary savings and the usage had been lowest after this time which had influenced the decision. Councillor Mrs Haycock suggested that people contact her if they were not happy with the opening hours and they could possibly be changed.

Councillor Mrs Swift congratulated Mr Riding on his litter-picking and advised that it was very public spirited. The Mayor endorsed Councillor Mrs Swift's comments.

Councillor Martin advised that he had been contacted by residents of St John's who were concerned by the response to the recent flood warning when Cornwall Council operatives had only distributed sandbags to Council properties. He then asked if this was Cornwall Council policy and requested that, if that was the case, that the policy be amended at the earliest opportunity so all Council Tax payers benefited without discrimination in an emergency situation. Councillor Mrs Haycock advised that she would investigate the issue.

Councillor Devenish expressed concern that the Community Network Manager no longer had administrative support which he believed would put more pressure on her personally and would have a detrimental effect on the Helston and Lizard Community Network. Councillor Robertson advised that that the problem was not limited to Helston and, whilst ideally there would be more Community Network Managers, Cornwall Council were working with a very tight budget.

The Town Clerk read a report on behalf of Councillor Wallis in which he thanked Members for the grant towards the Coronation Park Centenary Event and, for clarification, confirmed that the event was not organised by Cornwall Council but by a small informal group and the meetings were open to Members of the Town Council. He outlined the funding received and the assistance given by members of the public and businesses and expressed disappointment with the attitude of some Members of the Council. Councillor Wallis then advised that the condition of the town after refuse collection was a concern of his but he believed the problem could be solved if people did not put their rubbish out too early.

Councillor Reynolds advised that he had specifically asked Mrs Chadwick at the previous month's meeting if the Centenary Event was a Cornwall Council Event and she had confirmed that it was.

b) Community Network Manager

Mrs Chadwick gave a brief update on her report (circulated prior to the meeting) to advise that she was assisting with the organisation of the Hellysardh Event in conjunction with the Harvest Fair Association and advised that the next meeting was being held at 5pm on 13th August 2012.

Councillor Thomas queried the item regarding the Helston Food Bank advising that he believed one of the supermarkets supported the food bank and asked if support was going to be sought from the other supermarkets or if funding could be obtained from the Community Chest. He then expressed the opinion that all supermarkets should support the food banks which were assisting with a nationwide problem. Mrs Chadwick advised that she had not yet met with Helston Food Bank to see how they could be supported, but she would give a full report at the following month's meeting.

133. Public Participation

A member of the public spoke to advise that she was a representative of a group who did not wish to see 3 Penrose Road turned into housing and wanted it retained for the community.

Councillor Mrs Swift left the meeting at 8.15pm.

The member of the public continued to outline a formal offer for the property and the proposed use of the building. She then asked Helston Town Council and the Town Centre Manager if they supported the proposed use of the building. The Mayor confirmed that the question could not be answered but advised that the offer letter had been received.

On the proposition of the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Devenish, it was

RESOLVED – that the meeting stood adjourned at 8.16pm.

Councillor Mrs Swift returned to the meeting at 8.19pm.

The meeting resumed at 8.19pm.

A member of the public advised that he had written to the Council through the Town Clerk (circulated in Members' folders) to seek funding for a conference being held by Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Alliance of Neural-Domain Organisations (Can-Do). He advised that when he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's he had received a lot of support and had since worked to assist Can-Do outlining the work carried out by the group. He advised that they were holding a conference in Porthleven on 12th October and asked Members for their support confirming that he would also be asking Cornwall Councillors for their assistance. The Mayor confirmed that Members would consider the request at their grants meeting in September.

A member of the public queried when the current contract for 3 Penrose Road was being rescinded as two dates had been quoted in Council Minutes. The Mayor confirmed that the issue was being discussed later in the meeting and advised that further details could be provided if he wished to make contact the following day.

A member of the public requested Councillor Robertson's comments on Community Care and asked if the new White Paper was having an effect. The Mayor advised that this was a Parliamentary issue. Councillor Robertson confirmed that the welfare reform included the cost of social care and did not make cuts but put more onus onto Cornwall Council.

A member of the public supported Councillor Robertson's comment that refuse was the responsibility of the householder and asked if a timetable could be published so residents knew the time of collection. He then advised that he understood the Youth Centre had been returned to the Community College and asked what was the contingency for the Youth Club. Councillor Mrs Swift advised that she had met with the Leader of Cornwall Council and they were working to resolve the problem.

The Town Clerk read an email from a member of the public in which she congratulated the Town Centre Manager and the Helston Business Improvement Partnership for their hard work and enthusiasm in getting projects up and running to raise the profile of Helston. She then raised her concerns with the Council's decision to continue discussing 3 Penrose Road in private and expressed the opinion that it should be considered in an open and transparent manner.

Councillor Reynolds asked the Town Clerk to thank the member of the public for their comments and confirm that the e-mail had been read. Councillor Devenish queried the protocol for reading correspondence from members of the public who were not present at the meeting. The Mayor advised that he had discussed the matter with the Town Clerk and had agreed the correspondence from a member of public who was not at the meeting could be read out on this occasion only.

134. Minutes

On the proposition of Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Mrs Boase, it was

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on the 21st July 2012 be approved and signed as a true record.

Councillors Pryor and Miss Hornsby requested that their abstention from the vote be recorded as they had not been present.

It was further proposed by Councillor Pryor, seconded by Councillor D C Swift, and unanimously

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Special Town Council meeting held on the 5th July 2012 be approved and signed as a true record.

135. Minutes of the Planning Committee

On the proposition of Councillor Martin, seconded by Councillor D C Swift, it was

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on the 21st June and 5th July 2012, be received.

136. Minutes of the Policy, Finance & Resources Committee

On the proposition of Councillor D C Swift, seconded by Councillor Reynolds, it was

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Policy, Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on the 10th July 2012, be received and the recommendations accepted.

Councillor Devenish requested that his vote against the Motion be recorded.

Councillor Mrs Swift requested that her abstention from the vote be recorded.

137. Consideration of Planning Applications

Councillor Devenish advised that he was of the opinion that his proposal was a positive housekeeping issue. He advised that the Planning Committee had two issues in the past few weeks with a tied vote and the Committee being inquorate due to prejudicial interests. One of the applications had to wait for a Full Council meeting and the other had required a Special Full Council meeting which had resulted in additional officer time. He advised that his proposal would enable applications to be considered promptly when an issue arose. Following a detailed debate it was proposed by Councillor Devenish, seconded by the Mayor, and

RESOLVED – that the following Agenda item be added to Full Council meeting Agendas and that Standing Orders and Council policies be amended accordingly to facilitate it:-

‘To consider any planning applications referred from the Planning Committee by reason of a tied vote or the Committee becoming inquorate due to Members’ declaration of interest.’

Councillors Mrs Swift, D C Swift and Pryor requested that their vote against the Motion be recorded.

It was agreed that the Agenda item would be included on the Full Council Agenda after public participation.

The Mayor and Councillors Mrs Swift, R J L Boase and Mrs Boase declared an interest in the following item and left the meeting at 8.52pm.

Councillor Thomas took the Chair at 8.52pm.

138. Report of the Town Centre Manager

The Town Centre Manager thanked Members and the Town Clerk for their attendance at the Focus Group meeting and the Breakfast meeting and thanked the Mayor for speaking at the Breakfast meeting. He advised that the next Breakfast meeting was to be held on Tuesday 14th August 2012 and advised that Town Councillors and Cornwall Councillors who had not previously attended the last meeting would be welcome to come to the event. He then updated Members on his report (circulated prior to the meeting) to advise that the road closure had been obtained for the Summer Market and plans were moving swiftly with 16 traders booked from the local area with the make up being approximately 80 percent craft and 20 percent food which would not compete with local traders. He advised that as the markets had been reduced down from eight markets to four, he would prefer to hire the stalls so the event could be evaluated and if the original budget was retained and ringfenced for stalls they could be purchased at a later date. The Town Centre Manager further advised that the hanging baskets were being erected and should all be installed by the middle of the following week confirming that there had been a delay in getting the brackets manufactured locally.

Councillor Thomas queried the timings and format of the breakfast meetings. The Town Centre Manager advised that the Breakfast meeting commenced at 7.30am and concluded by 8.45am although people could leave earlier if required. He confirmed that it was an informal sit down event with two speakers and was intended to provide a networking opportunity.

Councillor Devenish referred to the empty shop units advising that the Town Centre Manager’s predecessor had said the town was below national average and queried if this was still the case. The Town Centre Manager advised that the National vacancy rate was rising and whilst he did not feel it was appropriate to compare towns as they were all different, he informed Members that the town was still below the national average although he did not feel this was enough. He advised there was a natural churn rate and whilst the town had seen two large stores

potentially going there were three new business opening with potentially two more to follow. He advised that he had been speaking to the Leader of Cornwall Council regarding assistance for new businesses.

The Town Centre Manager confirmed that he supported Members' suggestion of Seagull proof bags for businesses to assist with refuse problems and advised that this was something the Helston Business Improvement Partnership could facilitate if funding was obtained.

Members considered the requests for decisions included in the Town Centre Manager's report and following a detailed debate it was proposed by Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Miss Hornsby, and

RESOLVED – that the budget for office stationery for letterheads, business cards and compliment slips be increased by £150.00 to a total of £450.00.

On the proposition of Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Martin, it was

RESOLVED – that an additional £200.00 be approved for expenses for filming of the second Portas Pilot video.

It was further proposed by Councillor Miss Hornsby, seconded by Councillor Martin, and

RESOLVED – that Members approved the installation of a banner across Coinagehall Street from 1st August to the 1st September 2012 to advertise the Midsummer Markets.

On the proposition of Councillor Pryor, seconded by Councillor Williams, it was

RESOLVED – that stalls be hired for the Midsummer Market in the first instance.

The Mayor and Councillors Mrs Swift, R J L Boase and Mrs Boase returned to the meeting at 9.13pm.

The Mayor resumed the Chair at 9.13pm.

139. Report of the Town Clerk

(1) Amendments to the Licensing Act 2003

On the proposition of Councillor Devenish, seconded by Councillor Reynolds, it was unanimously

RESOLVED – that this item be passed to the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee for consideration.

(2) Conferences

It was proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Miss Hornsby, and

RESOLVED – that the Town Clerk and any Member who wished to attend the CALC Larger Councils Conference on Friday 7th September 2012 and/ or the SLCC Cornwall Branch Conference on Tuesday 18th September 2012 be authorised to do so.

Councillor D C Swift advised that he wished to attend the CALC Larger Councils Conference.

(3) Register of Interests and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Following a detailed debate it was proposed by Councillor Mrs Swift, seconded by Councillor Thomas, and unanimously

RESOLVED – that a letter be sent to the Monitoring Officer to request confirmation of why spouses/ partners were required to submit details of employment and assets when Cornwall Councillors did not and it was not required by regulations.

(4) Sale of Assets

This item was noted.

Councillor Mrs Boase declared an interest in the following item and left the meeting at 9.43pm.

(5) Olympic Flag

During a brief debate it was queried if permission was required from the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games for the use of an Olympic flag. This item was deferred to allow the Town Clerk to make appropriate enquiries.

Councillor Mrs Boase returned to the meeting at 9.53pm.

Councillors Williams, Mrs Swift and D C Swift declared an interest in the following item and left the meeting at 9.53pm.

140. Schedule of Accounts for Payment

On the proposition of Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Mrs Boase, it was

RESOLVED – that Account Nos. 143-185 inclusive as listed and set out as an Appendix to these Minutes, be certified for payment in the total sum of £25,404.71.

(Councillor Williams had declared an interest in Account No. 153. Councillors Mrs Swift and D C Swift had declared an interest in Account No. 181.)

Councillors Williams, Mrs Swift and D C Swift returned to the meeting at 9.56pm

It was agreed that the cheques would be signed by Councillor Williams and Councillor Devenish.

141. Attendance at Meetings

Councillor Reynolds queried the quotations required in the Park update which were mentioned in Councillor Mrs Boase's report. Councillor Mrs Boase apologised for the error and advised that the quotations referred to the Bulwark Play Area.

On the proposition of Councillor Thomas, seconded by the Mayor, it was

RESOLVED – that the written reports submitted by Councillors Mrs Swift and Mrs Boase be received.

142. Items for the next Agenda

The Mayor requested that Members contact the Town Clerk's office a minimum of ten days prior to the meeting to place items on the following Full Council Agenda.

143. Exclusion of the Press and Public

On the proposition of the Mayor, seconded by Councillor D C Swift, it was

RESOLVED – that pursuant to the provision of the Public Bodies (Admissions to meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

144. 3 Penrose Road

Members considered correspondence from the Town Council's Solicitor and a prospective purchaser (circulated at the meeting). Following a detailed debate it was proposed by Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Miss Hornsby, and

RESOLVED – that:

- a) the Council accept the advice contained in Alternative 1 (paragraph 4) of the letter from Randle Thomas Solicitors rescinding the contract with the purchaser and allowing no further time to complete;
- b) the Council accepted the offer from an alternative purchaser received via Borlase & Co solicitors on 19th July 2012;
- c) the property would not be withdrawn from the auction until the alternative buyers had signed a binding unconditional auction Contract and 10% deposit had been received by the Town Council's Solicitor by 4.00pm on Monday 23rd July 2012;
- d) Councillors Mrs Swift and Reynolds had delegated authority to sign the contract on behalf of Helston Town Council; and
- e) when the Contracts were signed and exchanged, Councillors Mrs Swift and Reynolds be authorised to withdraw the property from the auction.

Councillors Williams and Devenish requested that their vote against the Motion be recorded.

Councillors Mrs Swift and Reynolds requested that their abstention from the vote be recorded.

Meeting closed at 10.58 pm

Confirmed

Town Mayor