

St Austell Revitalisation Partnership:

Date: 18 May 2021

Locations: Via Zoom

Time: 9am

Chaired by James Staughton

Attendees:

Anne Chapman (SABEF), Anne Double (Cllr/MP rep), Howard Flint (Rev), Grant McDonald (Market House), Peter Moody (St Austell Printing Co), Kym O'Mara (Cornwall College), Richard Pears (Cllr), Jordan Rowse (Cllr), Dr. Stewart Smith (NHS), James Staughton (St Austell Bay Economic Forum), Ann-Marie Rogers (Ocean Housing), Mark Williams (WTW Cinemas), Chris Sampson (Community), Deborah George (Town Council), Crystal Pearce (Town Council).

Advisors: Sara Gwilliams (Town Council), Helen Nicholson (CC), David Pooley (Town Clerk), Caitlin Murray (CC), Rachel Smith (CC), Louise Wood (CC), Olivia French (Ward Williams), Glenn Caplin-Grey (CC), Emily Kent (CC), Mike Hawes (Mei Loci).

Apologies: Tamsin Thomas (CC); Steve Double (Anne Double Sub) Mark Ellis (CC), Dale Lovatt (St Austell BID), Mark Lewis (Lewis Estate Agents).

Actions:

JS opened the meeting and welcomed the new Cornwall Councillors, Town Councillors and Dr Smith to the group. JS also welcomed Olivia French to the group and thanked Anne Chapman for her contribution as this would be her last meeting.

2. Review of notes of the previous meeting:

JS now has a website link for the meeting papers. RS to liaise with Nikki Hotchin to ensure all documents are placed publicly online **(RS)**

(RS) to follow up with ME regarding Pop ups status.

HN reported that there was no further update from Kneehigh but that she had made enquiries with FEAST which were promising. This is under the Community Renewal Fund and this will hopefully result in some arts related animation for the town centre. Also, HF has offered the Church for some venue space which has been passed on as an offer.

LW stated that there was no further update on the purchase of White River Place but that parties were engaged.

(RS) to follow up with ME regarding role profiles.

JS then gave a brief overview for the new members of the group and the presentation regarding the different options for funding will be recirculated **(RS)**

It was noted that the Terms of Reference had also been amended to reflect the website and publication of documents.

3. Town Centre Vitality Fund Application update

LW explained that the application was progressed at the end of the last administration for Cornwall Council. The portfolio holder at the time thought it was prudent to wait until after the elections on May 6th. However, Economic Development have started the assessment processes. There is a short delay period now until the Councils AGM, when the portfolio holders will be confirmed, and decisions made around how the pots of money will be awarded. LW wanted the group to be mindful that there are 5/6 towns bidding for the same pot so just to be cautious with the group's expectation.

EK explained that the team are now looking at the applications and coming back to each of the towns with suggestions and questions to ensure each bid is as strong as it can be. **(EK)** to check on the status of St Austell's bid.

LW explained that the portfolios are slightly different for this administration. Economy has been split from planning. It seems likely that Olly Monk will be the portfolio holder for Planning & Housing and Stephen Rushworth will be Economy. JS stated he knows Stephen Rushworth and will make contact if he is appointed.

4. Next Steps for delivery of the Vitality Fund

MH explained that if we are successful with the bid we will need to move quite quickly. He explained that he has been putting together some briefing notes under each project identified.

MH stated that the bid was broken down into 9 key projects. Each project could potentially require a commission and the group need to decide how this would be procured.

MH shared his document, to be circulated to the group **(RS)**, and explained how each one has a figure against it, and he has started allocating deliverables too. MH explained how delivery is dependent on funding but that everything addresses the key issue of the decline of town centres.

JS suggested that a small working group would be created once the group had made a decision on the funding allocation **(JS/RS)**.

HN asked if the group could feedback over email to MH once the document had been circulated **(ALL)**.

MH asked for the procurement process to be looked at and how we package, and commission works. JS referred to an email from ME explaining part of the process. **(JS/LW/RS)** to pick this up and report back at the next meeting with a state of play.

5. Community Renewal Fund Application

JS stated that with encouragement from HN, MH put this together on behalf of The St Austell Bay Economic Forum with very short notice. MH explained that the fund is 90% revenue and 10% capital with a minimum bid of £500,000. It

was tricky to navigate as it was important to be aligned to all works but not to duplicate the Vitality bid.

MH explained that this bid focused on the Town Centre, Rural Coast vitality and reducing the digital divide. The aim is to share information and make links with the villages around St Austell. Plus, it was important to address consultation which activates the town centre and hinterland.

MH also stated that this is similar to the FEAST work detailed above by HN and the money has to be spent by March 2022.

SS stated that there is overlap here with social prescribing and reducing health inequalities and would welcome a conversation to join up the work **(SS/MH)**

6. Overview of other funding opportunities - Levelling Up Fund

GCG explained that the Levelling up fund is a new pot of money from UK Government. Cornwall is placed in category two which means that the application is a strict test of criteria (it also doesn't come with resource to develop bids, so it is important to manage expectations).

GCG explained that from an officer point of view that St Austell & Newquay have been highlighted as a priority for the application. The Economic Development Team have spoken to the MP and will recommend to the new portfolio holder to progress with the bid.

It was highlighted that there is one bid per constituency which can be phased over a period of time.

EK shared the funding summary matrix **(RS to recirculate as above)**.

EK stated that this is a fast-paced programme and projects should be shovel ready with feasibility studies already undertaken. EK also stated that there is a £20m bidding limit but that there is an opportunity for an additional bid for transport of £50m that covers the whole County. The deadline is June 18 with subsequent rounds to follow.

EK explained there are 3 areas – transport, regeneration and town centre cultural investment. There are also key priorities of match funding alongside

the bid, invest in places that need it most, respond to local issues, aligned to net zero goals and engagement.

EK stated that a number of schemes can be considered either as one main project or 3 smaller ones which need to have a set of common outcomes and cohesive narrative. EK said the team are compiling the list and will be narrowing this down over the next week.

CS asked in light of the tight timescale if we could defer to the next round. EK stated that the team assessed that St Austell & Newquay were the most ready but that a collective decision would need to be made with the stakeholders.

JS stated he was aware of an additional bid from CEG for Carlyon Beach and GCG explained that it is only the local authority that can submit the bid and the ask needs to demonstrate outputs which also allows other projects to happen.

JS asked if the 10% match funding can be from the Council. GCG confirmed it could be and in previous bids they have sought informal permission to include match funding from Cabinet and then sought formal permission once funding is approved.

JS stated given the capital element he is keen the Market House doesn't miss out and to align with Grant **(MH/GM)**

HN raised a concern of applying for the bids a little early. JS stated that we would need to see the work from EK team on the combination of schemes.

EK then explained the Welcome Back Fund. The approach is that a menu of support that links the town activity with people and culture. £609,000 needs to be spent by March 2022. This menu is being circulated to Town Councils over the next month once agreed by government. There is no match funding for this fund as it has compliance and procurement (ERDF).

EK also explained that this is revenue driven with a small amount of capital for public realm.

LW stated that it is important to note that with big projects the £20m can quickly be reached.

JS agreed that EK will notify him/RS when they are ready for the group to review ahead of the deadline **(EK)**

AOB

JS stated that a Vice-Chair will need to be appointed from the Democratic group of Cornwall and Town Councillors due to the new members. **(DP)** to feed this back.

HN raised a suggestion of using FACEBOOK as other towns have for gaining community feedback. The Let's Talk platform was also mentioned and using Nikki Hotchin for her existing platforms. It was agreed that **(JS)** look at standard wording and parameters, contact Nikki and come back to the members with a proposal.

The next meeting was agreed for Thursday 24th June at 2pm. A TEAMS link is set but we may be able to meet physically depending on any restrictions announced on 14th June. **(RS)** will confirm with **(PM)** the availability of a meeting room at St Austell Printing Co.

The meeting closed at 10.30am.