

St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership
Tuesday 22nd March 2022
9.30am to 11am
TEAMS

Attendees:

Democratic: - Malcolm Brown (TC), Anne Double (CC), Deborah George (TC), Crystal Pearce (TC), Richard Pears (CC).

Voluntary / Community: Rev Howard Flint (Holy Trinity Church), Sandra Heyward (Market House) (**CHAIR**), Ann-Marie Rogers (Ocean), Chris Sampson (Community), Dr Stewart Smith (NHS).

Business: Mark Lewis (Lewis Estate Agents), Dale Lovatt (Business Improvement District), Miles Lovegrove (Fluid Branding), Peter Moody (St Austell Print), (Cornwall College, St Austell), James Staughton (St Austell Brewery), John Watkins (Running Hare Investment Management).

Also in attendance: Neil Woodward (South West Financial Services)

Advisors: Mark Ellis (CC), Steve Facer (CC), Rachel Galbraith (CC), Sara Gwilliams (TC); Caitlin Lord (CC), Bill McCardle (TC), Caitlin Murray (CC), David Pooley (TC), Rachel Smith (CC).

Welcome

Sandra Heyward (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Double (MP), Jordan Rowse (CC), Kym O'Mara (Cornwall College, St Austell) and Louise Wood (CC).

Minutes of the meeting dated Thursday 17th February 2022

The minutes of the meeting dated Thursday 17th February 2022 were accepted as a correct record.

Resignation of James Staughton

James Staughton advised that it was his last meeting as he had resigned from the partnership and thanked the group for their support over the last 14 months. He confirmed that he would be happy to help from time to time from the side-lines and the group unanimously thanked him for his excellent work as Chair since the Partnership's inception.

The Chair advised that Mr Neil Woodward who was present at the meeting had expressed an interest in replacing Mr Staughton as a business sector representative.

Mr Dale Lovatt proposed, and Mark Lewis seconded Mr Neil Woodward joining the Partnership as a business sector representative.

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Mr Neil Woodward to the Partnership as a business sector representative.

Mr Woodward thanked the partnership for electing him and explained that he is based in the town centre managing a number of retail units and that he has a good feel for what improvements are required in the town.

Terms of Reference

David Pooley, Town Clerk advised that the amendments suggested at the last meeting had been made and a final draft circulated to the partnership.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference (Version 4 – March 2022).

Top 10 Priorities

The Chair advised that James Staughton had submitted his top 10 priorities and a discussion ensued with regard to the key buildings in the town centre and the need to have a menu of options worked up for both small and large projects that can be adapted to suit different funding streams.

Tender submission

The Town Clerk advised that following the last meeting he, Bill and Sara had refined the tender brief with the comments suggested and had received input from Steve Sandercock, a Procurement specialist who used to work for Cornwall Council. He explained that the Town Council had reviewed and approved the tender documents at their meeting on Monday 21st March 2022 and that the tender submission was made up of the following documents:

- Volume 1 – Background Information/Instructions
- Volume 2 – Applicants Offer/Selection Questionnaire
- Tender Brief
- Price Schedule

Arising from a question, the Town Clerk confirmed that the documents still required further refining and that it would be made clear within the documentation that the successful consultants would be expected to suggest their own ideas as well as considering the priorities put forward.

He advised that it had been suggested that an inspiring quote from the Chair of the Partnership could be incorporated into the document and that this would be incorporated into the final tender brief.

Mr McCardle explained that the following outputs are separate pieces of work and are excluded from the tender:

Output 3 - Community Engagement/Events

Output 4 - Establish education opportunities in St Austell town centre

Output 7 - Active Transport

Concern was expressed that the Partnership date scheduled for the 23rd August 2022 to consider the consultants' interim report might not be able to take place due to the summer holidays and the potential for a number of the partnership members to be away. The Clerk acknowledged that the timescales were tight and coincided with the summer holidays but stressed the need to keep driving the project forward to enable it to be finished within the 12 month deadline set.

A suggestion was made that there might be a need to appoint more than one consultant, particularly if a preferred tenderer was very strong in some areas but not in others but the weaknesses identified could be fulfilled by another contractor. The Clerk advised that awarding the contract in this manner would complicate matters and re-assured the partnership that the process does allow for the successful contractor to sub contract any elements of the bid but that they would be expected to manage the sub-contractors to ensure that they perform and produce the output required. The Clerk advised that contracting with one organisation would, in his view, minimise contradictions in the final reports received.

Arising from questions, the Clerk confirmed that the tender would be placed on Contract Finder and the consultants who had responded to the Soft Market Test would be advised accordingly. He stressed to the Partnership that it is very important for the Town Council and Partnership to remain engaged throughout the process and that the consultants would be managed very closely and be required to produce monthly reports, have conversations with the Output Champions and provide presentations to the Town Council and Partnership at the appropriate stages of the project to ensure that the Partnership has a fit for purpose document.

During discussion the partnership **AGREED** that the contract should be awarded to one contractor who would be given the flexibility to sub-contract if required.

It was **RESOLVED** that subject to the minor amendments suggested, the Town Clerk be authorised to submit the Tender documentation to Contract Finder and other sources as appropriate.

Evaluation of Tenders

The Town Clerk advised that in order to make the process manageable, the evaluation of tenders needed to be delegated to a small group of people and suggested the following composition:

- Chair of the Partnership
- 2 x Vice Chairs of the partnership,
- Chair of the Town Council's Finance and General Purposes
- The Town Clerk

He advised that the current timetable indicates that the tender submission deadline is 3rd May 2022, evaluation on the 4th May 2022 and interviewing of candidates on 11th May 2022 which would include a presentation. It is envisaged that the successful candidate will be appointed on that day. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council had agreed the tender evaluation process at their meeting on Monday 21st March 2022.

During discussion, it was agreed that the evaluation of the tenders scheduled for the Wednesday 4th May 2022 should be extended into a second day ie Thursday 5th May 2022 to ensure a thorough process in the eventuality of a large number of tenders being received.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Tender Evaluation document subject to an amendment to reflect a two day evaluation process for the tenders received and to delegate the selection of the preferred consultants to the panel.

Chris Sampson – Education Output

The Education Output Group composed of Kym O'Mara (College), Elizabeth Fletcher (CELT), Bill McCardle (Regeneration Officer) and Chris Sampson met during February and March at St Austell College and Brannel School and are working on two specific actions: the college are identifying gaps in provision covering St Austell town centre businesses while CELT are developing plans to deliver activity with primary and secondary schools across the summer and early autumn months. The activity to engage primary schools will be around "St Austell – yesterday, today and tomorrow", while secondary schools will look at "The future of St Austell town centre". In addition to schools and the college, local businesses will be involved through their links to the Business Improvement District (BID).

Dale Lovett – Engagement and Events Output

St Austell Business Improvement District (BID) is leading the creation of the first town centre events and engagement group which is bringing together key stakeholders to identify, plan and deliver a sustainable programme of activity across the town centre. The first meeting in February was attended by BID, White River, Holy Trinity Church, Music Studio, Museum Vinyl, Music Teaching and the town council. In addition, SABEF, Cornwall Council and others will attend future groups as required.

Plans are being worked up for a range of exciting events including music, dance, record store day, art and culture. The group are also identifying what they need to do to make all activity sustainable for the long term. The focus is to deliver events and engagement based on themes, festivals and seasons, similar to the format of the successful Christmas Festival, which can be promoted across the year and leave a long standing legacy for the town.

Andrew Richards – Town Heritage Scheme Presentation

Andrew Richards providing an in depth presentation on the Town Heritage Scheme which provided an overview on a number of projects in the town centre including the improvement to historic buildings, shop fronts and repairs to the drinking fountain and the churchyard wall.

Members thanked Mr Richards for his interesting presentation and asked if the presentation could be e-mailed to the group.

Action: Sara Gwilliams to e-mail Andrew Richard’s Townscape Heritage Scheme Presentation to the Partnership.

Any Other Business

Caitlin Murray advised that she is leaving the employ of Cornwall Council and that Steve Facer would be attending all future meetings. The Partnership expressed their thanks to Caitlin and wished her well.

Date of Next Meetings

The Town Clerk advised that with the agreement of the Partnership, he would explore with Cornwall Council the potential to use the Council Chamber/Committee Room at Penwinnick Road for future meetings. Rachel Smith advised that the room would be suitable but that there is no Wifi which would make holding a hybrid meeting difficult. The group agreed that face to face meetings were preferable and that due to the high level of Covid in the schools and colleges, it would be prudent to find an alternative venue.

ACTION: The Town Clerk to secure an alternative meeting venue for the partnership.

The meeting closed at 11.10am.