

St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership
Thursday 1st September 2022 – 9.30am
St Austell Bowls Club, Poltair Park, St Austell

Attendees:

Democratic: Deborah George (TC)

Voluntary/Community: Sandra Heyward (Market House) (CHAIR), David Atkinson-Beaumont (Cornwall College), Chris Sampson (Community).

Business: Dale Lovatt (Business Improvement District), Neil Woodward (South-West Financial Services), Peter Moody (St Austell Print), Miles Lovegrove (Fluid Branding), Mark Lewis (Lewis Estate Agents).

Advisors: Sara Gwilliams (TC); Bill McCardle (TC), David Pooley (TC).

Also in attendance: Mike Hawes, Mei Loci, Le Paige Architects and Kovia Consulting (Alistair Donohew).

Welcome

Sandra Heyward (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced David Atkinson-Beaumont representing Cornwall College.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Richard Pears (CC), Rev Howard Flint (Holy Trinity Church); Caitlin Lord (CC), Dr Stewart Smith (NHS), Rachel Smith (CC), Steve Double (MP), Jordan Rowse (CC), Louise Wood (CC), Anne Double (CC), Steve Facer (CC) and Mark Ellis (CC).

Minutes of the meeting dated 26th July 2022

The minutes of the meeting dated 26th July 2022 were accepted as a correct record.

Actions from the minutes dated 28th June 2022

SH advised that she has approached Jonathan Aberdeen from St Austell Arts Centre about joining the partnership as a community representative to replace Ann-Marie and is awaiting his reply.

DP confirmed that a letter of thanks had been sent to Ann-Marie.

Mr Mike Hawes – Mei Loci

Mr Hawes advised that since the last meeting he had carried out a small number of low key consultation exercises which had revealed a public desire for more town centre planting, better lighting, a space for mental health wellbeing and cheaper/free parking.

Arising from a question, Mr Hawes confirmed that the consultation carried out to date has purposely been low key due to most of the projects identified being at feasibility stage. He stressed that more consultation is needed and that after the Town Council meeting on Monday, more consultation will be carried out, widely publicised, accessible and include evening events. He added that Nikki Hotchin is lined up to publicise events on the St Austell Facebook page.

Mr Hawes advised that the following changes have been made since the last meeting:

- The potential demolition of redundant building at 24/26 Fore Street
- The potential to create Higher Education Halls of Residence in High Cross Street
- The potential to partially demolition and create small business/retail units in a large key building in Fore Street
- The demolition of a key building close to Biddicks Court discounted
- The creation of a health hub at High Cross Street discounted
- The creation of a gateway at the Old Fire Station site to include a café/culture centre and a general public realm enhancement to include shared space and crossing points to ensure pedestrian safety
- The reduction of the Trinity Street bus stop to assist with the widening of the pavement to create seating and planting. Potential area for a bus cage.
- Widening of the taxi rank area in Duke Street

Potential projects still being analysed

- General Wolfe building. Issues include
 - Listed building status
 - Poor state of the building and buildings around it
 - Highways issues with regard to the narrow corner
 - Pedestrian access to the building

Mr Hawes stressed the need to consult widely over the next 5-6 weeks, to include affected shop/business owners on the agreed priorities and the Town Clerk added that it would be helpful for the partnership to agree the priorities at the meeting to keep the project moving forward. He added that he would update the Town Council at their meeting on Monday with the partnership's views.

Comments from the partnership include:

- The need to prioritise the very prominent building in Fore Street as a high priority project;
- Concerns with regard to the concept design proposed for the prominent building;
- Full support for student accommodation in High Cross Street;
- A lack of support for a bus cage on Trinity Street due to the congestion seen on South Street arising from a bus cage;
- Mixed views with regard to the future of the General Wolfe building
- Concerns with regard to culverts in the Sedgemoor/Priory Road/Trinity Street area;

The partnership reviewed the 24 projects and **AGREED** the following;

1. **Statement projects:** (14) Winter Garden / (9) prominent Fore Street building options / (7) Gateway to Fore street and town centre
2. **Support projects:** (10) Trinity Street / (6) Biddicks Court / (2) Priory car park and (3) Priory Road entrance / (5) Grants Walk / (15,16,17) Church road network / (24) Fore Street & Aylmer Square building cladding, (1) General Wolfe / (4) Old Fire Station/ (20 & 23) High Cross Street car park
3. **Basic:** (11,12,13) Access walkways / (18) East Hill Gateway / (21 & 22) Station
4. **Low priority:** (19) Old Post Office / (8) Fore Street Nos. 19-23

Action: Town Clerk to speak to Mark Ellis about the urgent need for input from Cornwall Council's Highways Department.

Project Update (BM/DP)

Work Stream update

Mr McCardle advised that St Mewan School has provided a report on what young people would like to see in the town centre, St Austell BID have provided the results of their skills needs survey and an accessibility report from Go St Austell is due next week.

Action: BM to make the reports available to the partnership

Mr McCardle added that he is due to meet with Mr Atkinson-Beaumont next week and assured the partnership that all the outputs identified are still on target.

Town Council update

The Town Clerk thanked the partnership for identifying the priorities and confirmed that he would seek to gain the Town Council support at their Council meeting on Monday evening. He added that the lack of a transparent planning process for the demolition of the Cornwall Council Penwinnick Road site has caused a lot of angst amongst politicians and has made newspaper and social media headlines.

Arising from a question, the Town Clerk advised that he is hoping to submit an expression of interest to the Shared Prosperity Fund very shortly and that he would like the partnership to continue after the masterplanning process is completed to help steer the detailed working up of the projects and future bidding processes.

Cornwall Council – update

None.

Financial Update

Bill McCardle advised that £30,000 had been spend against the total budget of £140,000.

Any Other Business

None

Date of Next Meetings

The next meeting was noted as Tuesday 4th October 2022 at 9.30am. Venue to be confirmed.