

**St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Partnership
Tuesday 4th October 2022 at 9.30am
Council Chamber, Penwinnick Road, St Austell**

Attendees:

Democratic: Deborah George (TC), Anne Double (CC) Malcolm Brown (TC).

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

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

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

Also in attendance: Mike Hawes, Mei Loci.

Welcome

Sandra Heyward (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed her thanks for fitting in the extra meeting.

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), Steve Facer (CC) and Mark Ellis (CC), Mark Lewis (Lewis Estate Agents), Crystal Pearce (TC), John Watkins (White River Place).

Minutes of the meeting dated 1st September 2022

The minutes of the meeting dated 1st September 2022 were accepted as a correct record.

Actions from the minutes dated 1st September 2022

SH advised that Jonathan Aberdeen has accepted her invitation to join the partnership to replace Anne-Marie Snell but unfortunately could not attend this meeting due to another commitment. He will attend the next meeting and for those who do not know him, will provide a brief biography.

BMc advised that the work stream reports with regard to inclusivity, events and education are nearing completion and will be made available to the partnership shortly.

Mr Mike Hawes – Mei Loci

MH confirmed that the masterplanning work is progressing well and that he would deliver a presentation, display material and a report in due course. He advised that over 150 on-line survey responses had been received and that the day time consultation events had been well supported but the evening event was not. Further consultation events were planned in October and November events would be an occasion to feedback the agreed proposals and obtain ongoing comment.

Feedback from the public consultation suggests that the majority of people visit the town to use the Bank and hairdressers with lots of requests for more restaurants, cafes and a covered space. There were also a number of comments about ASB. Mr Hawes suggested that the perception of ASB is worse than the reality and that there is a real need to increase footfall, improve lighting and generate a night time economy to reduce the impact of ASB.

During discussion the following comments were made:

- General support for the refined proposals
- The need for further work on General Wolfe corner to include, if possible, the restriction of large vehicles coming into the town centre from the Bodmin Road direction. Mike agreed to investigate with his consultants
- A need for short term solutions such as a replacement banner on Poundland as well as major improvement schemes. Mike commented this was already in his plans along with lighting and greening initiatives
- Access options for the Old Vicarage Place car park area;
- The benefits of including residential accommodation in the town centre;
- The potential for a third story on 19-21 Fore Street to create residential accommodation;
- Options for provision for student accommodation;
- The potential to work with White River Place on improvement schemes including an all weather covering for parts of the shopping centre. Mike and Bill commented conversation already underway
- The long term ownership of Aylmer Square;
- The need to improve lighting throughout the town (see above)
- The potential to project images on to buildings (see above)

Project Update (BM/DP)

Work Stream update

BMc thanked everybody for their input and stressed that the ideas developed are built on the feedback from the partnership and the wider community. He advised that he and David are exploring the potential for funding from the Good Growth Fund and other opportunities as they become available to help develop further some of the key projects identified. Discussions were taking place with Cornwall Council's Planning and Transport Teams to assess viability of the proposals developed. He stressed the importance of managing expectations and thanked Mr Hawes for his excellent work so far.

DL provided an update on the events programme undertaken by the BID and explained that the national average footfall movement in retail areas was down

21% but during events footfall had increased in St Austell by 31%. He felt that this demonstrated the importance of needing to give people a reason to come into the town.

Councillor Double left the meeting

CS advised that the points raised in the original bid agreement had been addressed and provided an update on the Education workstream which was a collaborative exercise involving CELT, Cornwall College and local primary schools and BID. He outlined the main areas identified for action as follows:

1. The need for bespoke training for businesses
2. Better access to Higher Education for students
3. A digital learning hub
4. An Adult Education facility within the area
5. The need for a better training provider presence in the town
6. Better nursery/pre school provision
7. Opportunities for exhibition/display space such as in the Market House, old Eden Café and empty shops
8. Better communication of training opportunities
9. An A level 6th form facility

CS advised that Brannel and Poltair Secondary Schools are producing a video report into St Austell town centre and Cornwall College are producing a digital presentation relating to the town centre. He referred to the feedback from Carclaze (on display at the back of the room) and St Mewan Schools (folder shown at previous meeting) and suggested that they be invited to a future meeting of the partnership to thank them for their interest. The partnership agreed this should happen at an appropriate date.

CS thanked Mr Atkinson-Beaumont, newly in post at the College for his input in such a short space of time.

HB advised that the church is undertaking parenting classes after Christmas and that the Trinity centre rooms would shortly be available for meetings of up to 20 people. She added that the proposed improvement to access around the town was very welcome as that would assist the church with their social prescribing walks. She explained that it is currently quite dangerous walking with lots of people on narrow pavements next to large volumes of traffic.

Cornwall Council – update

None.

Financial Update

Bill McCardle advised that £68,000 had been spend against the total budget of £140,000.

Any Other Business

PM asked if anyone knew when the hotel might be delivered at Sedgemoor and if any progress had been made with the amalgamation of the Doctors' surgeries.

MB expressed concern with regard to the lack of Cornwall Council officers at the meeting and asked if written update reports could be made available from the officers in the future if they were unable to attend.

Action: DP to liaise with Mark Ellis about the attendance of Cornwall Council officers and the potential for written reports if apologies are received.

Date of Next Meetings

The group discussed the most suitable time for meetings and it was agreed that mornings were preferable.

The next meeting was noted as Tuesday 25th October at 9.45am and in order to accommodate everyone as far as possible, it was agreed that this should be a hybrid meeting.