

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
HELD IN THE CORN EXCHANGE, ST IVES  
on Saturday 3 March 2018**

**Present:**

Chairman: Town Mayor, Councillor Philip Pope  
Town Clerk (Alison Benfield)

Panel Members: Chairs of Standing Committees (Councillors Rowe, Pallant, Kuch, Dibben)  
Sgt Andrew Street, St Ives Police  
Mr Ed Goodman, Host

**In Attendance:** Members of St Ives Town Council  
Members of the Public *[47 signed in]*  
Committee Clerk (Sue Rawlinson)

**1.0 Welcome and Introduction**

Mr Goodman initially opened the Meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for attending.

Town Mayor, Councillor Philip Pope, thanked the community groups which had attended the Fair and helped to make the event very special. He expressed his pride in how much support was offered by volunteers in St Ives.

He briefly outlined details of some of the projects undertaken by the Council in the last 12 months and said he looked forward to hearing the views of St Ives residents on these.

**2.0 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 1 March 2017 were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

**3.0 Question Time**

Some questions had been received in advance of the meeting and, if the questioner was not in attendance they were read out by Mr Goodman. Other questions were raised during the meeting.

**Q:** When did the St Ives Citizens Advice Bureau close? Does the Council give grants to the CAB and DISH, if so how much have they received and when? Does the Council make available its premises free of charge for the CAB to interview clients.

**A:** The St Ives CAB closed in 2011, it was never billed for rent.

The following grants were paid:

- DISH £1,850 in 2017 and £550 in 2018
- CAB £850 in 2015, £1,000 in 2017 and £1,000 in 2018

The Council is always willing to provide a room at the Town Hall free of charge for use by any support groups.

**Q:** Would the Council be willing to provide a facility to serve as a centre for the St Ives voluntary sector?

**A:** The Town Mayor responded that this was an initiative on which he believed the Council would be keen to lead. He requested that the questioner call into the Town Hall to discuss the matter further with the Town Clerk.

**Q:** Did the Council authorise contractors to cut down two of the hedging plants put in Westwood Road Cemetery by In Bloom in order to deal with a storm damaged tree in a neighbouring garden?

**A:** The Council only became aware of the situation two days following the incident. The Town Clerk has spoken with In Bloom and the Grounds Maintenance staff have done some remedial work. The Town Clerk would speak to the resident concerned and with residents in Westwood Road also.

**Q:** Why is there such a low police presence on the streets, particularly when crime is on the increase.

**A:** Budget cuts were one reason, not only just the Police but in other support agencies also. The reduction of administrative staff meant that Police had to compile their own paperwork which took them off the streets. Numbers of Police Officers had not increased with population growth and Cambridgeshire was the lowest funded force in the country.

The increase in domestic violence and sexual offences means that much police work is done behind the scenes and is, therefore, not visible.

More reporting of crime via social media means that people are much more aware of events than they used to be.

If the proposed rise in Council Tax was agreed it would result in 150 more officers in the Constabulary.

**Q:** Why can't we have a Police Station that is open?

**A:** The St Ives station was only ever open part time and never had many visitors. Most people telephone and present documents requested online nowadays. There was still a telephone at the Station for use by the public.

**Q:** The 101 non-emergency number is very slow. Are there any back up measures? How else can the public get in touch?

**A:** There is no interim service between 101 and 999 but it is possible to email and chat live online.

**Q:** There are frequent incidents of anti-social behaviour, particularly street drinking, on The Quay. Why is there no legislation on this?

**A:** The Designated Public Places Order expired in October and was not renewed. It was possible to apply for a Public Spaces Protection Order but the Police have not received sufficient complaints to warrant this.

**Q:** What level of complaints would be sufficient?

**A:** To apply for an Order there would have to be, say, a month with more than half a dozen complaints.

**Q:** A residents van was recently broken into and the number plates stolen. Was there any liaison with other forces to track down stolen vehicles by ANPR?

**A:** It was possible to track vehicles using ANPR but only over a narrow time frame. It would not be possible to track if there was a long interval between the theft and it being noticed.

**Q:** What is the definition of anti-social behaviour?

**A:** That which causes harassment, alarm or distress to others.

**Q:** Parking in the town was a massive problem, particularly in Crown Street where parked vehicles meant that other vehicles had to mount the pavement to pass. Does the Police have any solution to this problem?

**A:** A full time Traffic Warden would be the best solution, although this was unlikely within the current budget. PCSO's do some enforcement but parking is quite a low priority. Also signage in the town centre is quite poor.

**Q:** Could the Police not work with the County Council on improving signage and in seeking a Traffic Warden?

**A:** The Police have spoken with Highways regarding signage. There is no reason that a Traffic Warden couldn't be requested.

**Q:** What can be done about cyclists crossing the town bridge? It is necessary when exiting The Quay to pull out into the middle of the road in order to see if anyone is approaching?

**A:** Placing a 'Cyclists Dismount' sign on each approach would be the best solution. This would need to be discussed with either the District or County Council.

The Town Clerk commented that there had been complaints about too much signage on the bridge. She agreed to raise the matter with the County Council.

**Q:** What about stopping motorists from driving onto The Quay?

**A:** The signage that was there was what was permitted under legislation. The Town Clerk agreed to raise this matter with the County Council also.

**Q:** What about pedestrianizing the entire town centre and making it an alcohol free zone?

**A:** The Town Council is producing a Neighbourhood Plan which can apply additional policies in addition to the ones put in place by the District Council. Pedestrianisation could become one of these policies with delivery vehicles only being permitted during certain hours.

**Q:** Could steel bollards be placed along the pavement in Crown Street to prevent vehicles parking?

**A:** The Town Mayor said the County Council would be asked about this.

**Q:** What is happening with the decriminalisation of parking?

**A:** This has been discussed. If implemented it would mean that the District Council's wardens could enforce on-street parking as well as just in car parks as they do at present.

**Q:** Communication needs to be improved between County, District and Town Councils. Could there be a meeting to discuss problems in the town centre?

**A:** Representatives from the County and District Councils were invited to attend the meeting but were unable to attend due to other commitments.

**Q:** The busway crossing creates a lot of congestion around the town. Can the County Council be asked to look at problems in that area?

**A:** The County Council has arranged for a study and the outcome is still awaited. The Council can put forward some ideas once the results of the study are known.

**Q:** St Ives in Bloom is not getting proper support from the Town Council. Help in painting benches was refused, as was watering the planters in Kings Hedges. Is the Council willing to increase its support possibly by hiring a horticultural student to look after watering the baskets?

**A:** The Grounds Maintenance team have never painted benches in the town, it was last done by the District Council.

Refusal to water the Kings Hedges planters was based on the fact that this is a very busy junction and the bowser would create a dangerous obstruction.

Having a horticultural student is a good idea and the Town Clerk agreed to look into it.

The Council was very keen to support and work closely with In Bloom.

The Town Mayor agreed to speak with shopkeepers in Kings Hedges to see if they would be willing to help with watering in that area.

**Q:** What does the Town Council propose to do to make St Ives more environmentally friendly in 2019?

**A:** There was currently no initiative in place but this was something the Council would ask the new administration to look at following the May elections.

**Q:** A motorised scooter/pram challenge should be held around the town on a circular route along East Street/St Leger Mews only on footpaths and avoiding obstacles. This would highlight the many difficulties experienced in these areas by users on wheels. Would the Council support this?

**A:** The Town Team could be asked to look at this as an alternative to the town centre scooter grand prix and comments received would be passed onto the County Council.

St Ives Access Group was looking into difficulties in that area but appear to have been disbanded. If anyone has information about them please contact the Town Clerk.

The County Council planned to produce a transport strategy. We will make further enquiries on this.

The Town Mayor thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their questions. He reminded them that they could attend any meetings of the Council and also speak prior to the meeting if they wished.

The Meeting closed at 7.36 pm.

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