

**Minutes of a Meeting of St Ives Town Council
Held on Wednesday 10 June 2020 via Zoom**

Present:

Town Mayor: Councillor J Pallant

Deputy Town Mayor: Councillor P Hussain

Councillors: R D'Souza, J Davies, N Dibben, R Fuller, M King, P Pope, D Rowe, J Tiddy,
T Drye

Absent: L Davies, R Bellamy

In attendance:

Town Clerk: A Benfield

Lochailort Ltd: Mr J Croucher, Mr H Haig

Committee Clerk: S Rawlinson

C12.00 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors A Ayers-Wilson, A Dickinson and Dr C Pegoraro (all Personal).

C13.00 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

C14.00 FORMER MURKETTS CAR DEALERSHIP, LONDON ROAD

The Town Mayor welcomed Mr Croucher and Mr Haig to the meeting.

They had contacted the Council regarding their development of the former Murketts Dealership in London Road and to offer a piece of land nearby to the Council for use as a car park.

The site was proving challenging to redevelop as it was in the Conservation Area, on a flood plain and was heavily contaminated from past use as a gas works.

A planning application was submitted in January last year, which the Council's Planning Committee supported, requesting them to address several matters, in particularly flooding. Lochailort were working with the Environment Agency and the issue was almost resolved. They had also been asked to look at parking issues in London Road.

Following discussion with the owners of neighbouring land they had acquired a plot of land nearby which they wished to offer to the Council for use as a car park.

The developers believed the site to be a good location for a car park as it was a dead end and wouldn't generate any additional traffic in the town centre.

C14.01 RESOLVED: that the meeting be suspended briefly to enable members of the public to participate in this item.

A representative of the Civic Society of St Ives raised concerns that the area proposed for car parking had a special designation and was a natural wildlife habitat area.

The St Ives Eco Group which was opposed to the loss of green spaces had submitted a statement to Members hoping that the Council would take advantage of the opportunity to discourage car use and encourage sustainable travel. The Cambridge Nature Group recognised that putting nature at the heart of communities was essential to improved quality of life and wellbeing.

The representatives from Lochailort responded that Murketts was a brown field site and one which the District Council was keen to see developed and decontaminated. They believed the additional car parking would improve the appearance of London Road and encourage less traffic in the town centre. They stated that it would not be necessary to develop the whole site as a car park, some of it could be retained as green space. Additionally, the car park would have a permeable surface to facilitate drainage.

C14.02 **RESOLVED:** that the meeting be re-convened.

There followed a lengthy discussion during which Members gave consideration to both the option of having a car park and the desire for the land to be retained as a natural habitat.

It was considered there were too many downsides to managing a car park, specifically, the expense involved in maintenance; business rates; the requirement to provide EV charging points and bicycle racks. Eventually there might be demands for CCTV and lighting. It was noted that an HDC survey on car parking conducted several years ago had determined that there was sufficient capacity remaining in existing car parks to 2027 based on projected growth trends. There was no urgent need for further parking in the town centre.

C14.03 **RESOLVED:** that no further consideration be given to taking over the land for car parking.

The Town Mayor thanked the Lochailort representatives for their generous offer and for attending the Meeting.

C15.00 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A resident addressed the Meeting to raise issues regarding the Burleigh Hill Community Centre.

There were, he stated, no keyholder details on the notice board just a phone number which was obscured, there were no sanitary disposal facilities and inadequate first aid supplies. He also commented that there was no AGM in the previous year and no annual accounts available. He asked when plans would be available for re-opening the building and confirmation that the building would be properly managed.

Councillor Drye, a Member of the Management Group, responded that the Centre Manager was currently furloughed and was unavailable. His comments would be noted and referred to the Management Committee for a response.

C16.00 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 May 2020 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Town Mayor at a future date.

C17.00 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor informed Members he had been involved in discussions with HDC concerning the new layout for the town centre to support social distancing. A formal announcement would be made by them shortly.

He had attended a meeting earlier that day with representatives from surrounding parishes. It had been very interesting hearing what other towns were doing to help their community during lockdown.

C18.00 APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Consideration was given to a request from St Ives Library for a grant of £600 to support a new Summer reading project

RESOLVED: that the sum of £600 be provided to St Ives Library.

C19.00 REPORT ON DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The Town Clerk reported that the Community Hub group had been very busy since the last Council Meeting.

The number of meetings had recently been reduced down to two per week as it appeared demand was decreasing.

Three leaflets had been distributed to households in the town. She thanked Yorke Graphic who had kindly designed the leaflets free of charge and all the volunteers who had delivered them.

A network of street wardens had been built up, although more were needed. The take up had not been as high as had been hoped. The smaller villages found it easier to recruit volunteers, the larger towns were generally using the services of pre-existing charitable groups.

The Town Mayor's Covid Fund had provided two grants so far to two separate families needing play equipment. Most of the items had been delivered to them.

Town Hall staff would be returning to the office from Monday 15 June on a rota basis. She was still working on plans to make changes for marking out areas and additional cleaning. Most of the tenants attended the office very rarely which made distancing easier.

Discussions were being held with the Museum Director about re-opening.

Masks had been ordered for the use of staff if they wished to use them and hand

sanitising stations were to be set up at various locations.

The GM team were now back working in teams of two.

Some work had been done with HDC in clearing grass in areas which had not been cut for a while. Joint discussions would be held with HDC and the County Council on how this would be maintained.

In response to a Member's query the Town Clerk responded that no approach had been made to schools to offer them use of space in our buildings. The only viable space would be the rooms at the Museum, she agreed to speak with the Museum Director on this.

She agreed to enquire from the Finance Officer what the current balance was on the Mayor's Covid Fund account and inform Members following the meeting.

C20.00

CCTV REPORTS

The reports for January through to March 2020 were received and noted.

C21.00

ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

The Schedule of Orders for payment were received and noted.

C22.00

BANK RECONCILIATION

The Bank Reconciliation was received and noted.

C23.00

BUDGET

The Budget report was received and noted.

