

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING held in
Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Monday 19th May 2008
at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor J Ruhmund (Chairman)

Councillors CA Dennis (left at 8:45pm)
R Clark
M Freeman
M Lovegrove
D Nebesnuick
KLW Perry (left at 8:30pm)
PCH. Rendle

Also present: Inspector Chris Strickland, Penzance Police Station.

Inspector Strickland advised members of a re-organisation that had taken place within Devon and Cornwall Constabulary which would result in a greater police presence on the streets but it was not yet known how many officers would be assigned to the Penzance area. The number of Chief Inspector roles had been reduced and a Superintendent had been appointed to take over responsibility for West Cornwall in place of Chief Inspector Mike Ward.

Inspector Strickland also reported on two recent successful operations that had been targeted at speeding in rural areas and shoplifters and he assured members that the police were aware of the problems with 'boy racers' at the Harbour Car Park and they were currently discussing a different design for the car park with officers at Penwith District Council.

The force had recently been inspected for neighbourhood policing which had highlighted some areas that could be improved, including the use of the '0845' telephone number which meant that anyone wishing to contact the local police force had to be re-directed from the Plymouth-based call centre.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Strickland for his report and he left the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Councillors RM Lawrence, RA Mann, SJ Reed, H Worth.

2. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Nebesnuick declared a personal interest in Item 10(a) Penwith Music Centre as a governor of Humphry Davy School.

Councillor Rendle declared a personal interest in Item 4(h) St Piran's Day Holiday as a member of the Celtic League.

3. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 25TH FEBRUARY 2008**

Having been circulated, it was

RESOLVED: that they should be signed as a true and correct record.

4. REPORT OF TOWN CLERK

(a) Matthew Taylor MP – Review on Rural Economy and Affordable Housing

Matthew Taylor MP had undertaken research into affordable housing that had resulted in a paper entitled ‘A Cornishman’s Home is Out of Reach’ and he had subsequently been asked by the Prime Minister to produce a report that would be available in July 2008. A questionnaire concerning affordable housing had previously been circulated to all members for their information and individual response and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

The Town Clerk also distributed to those present a set of notes concerning affordable housing that had been prepared by the Chairman and that were put forward as a suggestion for discussion by a policy group (see minute 13) and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted and copy of notes enclosed herewith.

(b) Tourism: Minutes of P-TAG meeting of 8th April 2008

The minutes of the meeting of 8th April were available and matters under discussion had included a presentation by ‘One Cornwall’, beach cleaning, waste and dog management.

Councillor Nebesnuick, who had attended the meeting as the Town Council’s representative, pointed out that the three areas relating to beach management were dealt with by separate departments and he suggested that it would be more efficient if all beach issues were dealt with by one section of the Council and it was

RECOMMENDED: that a letter be sent to Penwith District Council requesting action as outlined on the above issue.

(c) May Horns Event – verbal report Councillor Reed

The Town Clerk informed members that this event (newly resurrected) had taken place on 4th May starting with a walk from the Pirate Inn to Trereife Gardens at midday, followed by a walk from the Fisherman’s Memorial to the Tolcarne Inn in the evening and culminating in a procession through Penzance down Chapel Street and music and entertainment in the Admiral Benbow. The event had been a success and it was

RECOMMENDED: that this item be left open for Councillor Reed (one of the event organisers) to report at full Council.

(d) Plymouth Senior Citizens Forum newsletter – April 2008

Plymouth Senior Citizens Forum liaises with the local Penwith Older People’s Forum and a group had recently visited Penlee House and passed on their congratulations to this well-run establishment. The April newsletter was available for anyone who wished to read it and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(e) Letter of thanks from Cllr Payne re 'Benefit Take Up Campaign'

A letter of thanks from Councillor Payne who had raised in excess of £4.5 million during his 'Benefit Take Up Campaign' had been circulated to members for information and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(f) Penwith District Council Young Citizen of the Year Award 2008

Correspondence had been received from PDC asking for nominations for the above award. With the closing date being 13th June it was

RECOMMENDED: that this item be taken forward for consideration at full Council and that the Town Clerk's office would contact Inspector Strickland in relation to the young police cadets and also the YMCA for possible nominees.

(g) St Piran's Day Holiday

Correspondence had been received from the Celtic League asking if the Council had ever considered making St Piran's Day a holiday for Council staff, as had already been done in Bodmin and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Committee would put forward a recommendation to the Finance Committee that a holiday for staff should be supported and, further, that a recommendation should go to full Council that the adoption of St Piran's Day as a public holiday for all Cornwall should be supported.

(h) Penwith Senior Life Skills Exhibition

The next Senior Life Skills Exhibition would take place on Tuesday 8th July with the theme being 'Fear of crime and local perception of crime' and all members were encouraged to go along and support this event and it was

RECOMMENDED: a letter should be sent to Adult Social Care (with a copy to the One Cornwall Implementation Executive) stressing the importance of such initiatives that should be supported through the change to a Unitary Authority and afterwards.

(i) Cornwall Rural Community Council's New Design Service

The Town Clerk informed members of information that had been received from CRCC regarding a new service that offered to design advertising literature etc. for charities and voluntary groups at a discounted rate and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(j) Rural Bus Services / Access to Public Transport

Correspondence had been received from Cornwall County Council following an information gathering exercise, the results of which had been collated into a draft report that included a list of 22 recommendations, such as providing concessionary travel for young people under the age of 19. A copy of the report could be viewed on the website (<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media.cfm?mediaid=35951>) and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

- (k) Letter from the Chair of the West Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Rural Transport Partnership

The West Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Rural Transport Partnership had written to advise that, although they had sufficient funds available until March 2009 they were looking for further support. The letter outlined achievements to date but the level and type of support required was not specific and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Town Clerk write requesting further clarification of the support requested and report back to the General Purposes and Finance/Property Committees.

- (l) Post Office – Network Change Programme

It had become apparent and had been accepted by the consumer group leading the protests about post office closures that there was no room for further consultation on the number of proposed closures and that if one post office was saved from closure another would have to take its place and it was

RECOMMENDED: that progress of the Network Change Programme should be monitored and the list of targeted post offices should be awaited before any further action was taken.

- (m) Trafalgar Day Society, Bolton

Councillor Reed had discovered the Trafalgar Day Society of Bolton on the internet and it appeared that members of this group regularly visited Penzance to celebrate Trafalgar Day and it was

RECOMMENDED: that Councillor Reed should be asked to liaise with the society and that a small civic reception could be organised for their next visit to Penzance.

- (n) Penwith District Council Budget

Correspondence had been received from Penwith District Council confirming that discretionary grants would still be available in the current financial year and that they had been increased slightly. Members were also advised that the small grants programme (sport and village halls) was continuing with grants of up to £500 per scheme and that if any member knew of a group that would be eligible and could benefit from such a grant application forms were available from PDC and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

- (o) Cornwall Hospice Care ‘Make a Will Week’

This event had taken place in the preceding week and participating firms of solicitors had offered to draw up wills free of charge with a donation going to Cornwall Hospice Care and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(p) CCTV System – latest position

The Town Clerk advised members that he had recently written to Kerrier District Council in order to ascertain the current position with regard to the input from Penzance Town Council in respect of the formulation of a specification for the tender documents and a response was awaited.

Members also requested that regular updates on the success rates of the CCTV system be provided and it was pointed out that quarterly reports are produced and it was suggested that these could be published in the local press.

Some concern was expressed about the slow progress of the implementation of the CCTV upgrade and it was felt that this could be due to the move to a unitary authority and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position would be monitored.

(q) List of Circulars Received (See Appendix “A”)

It was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(r) Reports from Outside Bodies (see Appendix “B”)

There were no reports from outside bodies at the time of preparing the agenda.

(s) Standards Board Issues:

(i) Penwith District Council ‘Local Assessment of Standards Allegations’

The letter outlining the method of assessing breach of standards allegations which had been changed and new regulations were also imminent and would be circulated to members when available. Councillor Rendle requested that a breakdown of the costs involved in investigating an allegation be provided.

It was felt that there was still considerable confusion concerning the Standards Board and that this will only get worse when the District Council is abolished and the move to a unitary authority is complete and it was

RECOMMENDED: that Andrew George MP be asked to raise the issue in Parliament highlighting the problems that will arise when the middle tier of local government is removed.

(ii) Town and Parish Standard Newsletter March 2008

The newsletter had already been circulated to members for information and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

- (t) Resignation of Councillor from Golowan Management Group and selection of new representative

Councillor Reed had informed the Town Clerk that he would be unable to attend meetings of the Golowan Management Group due to work commitments and had requested that another Councillor be elected in his place and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the matter be taken forward for consideration at full Council.

- (u) Visit of HMS Penzance

The Town Clerk informed members that, due to operational commitments, HMS Penzance would be unable to visit the town over Mazey weekend but it was hoped that it would be able to re-schedule its visit for some time in September and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

- (v) Animal Compassionate Charter – letters of thanks

In response to the Town Council's recent support of the Animal Compassionate Charter, several letters of thanks had been received and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

- (w) NALC Conference 2008

Members were informed that the 2008 NALC Conference would be taking place in Eastbourne from 20 to 22 May and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

- (x) CALC – Advisory and Information Service

CALC had written to inform members of a new service aimed at facilitating the understanding of new legislation and highlighting the effects of new bills and acts on Town and Parish Councils and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

- (y) Message from the Chief Constable

A letter had been received from the Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Constabulary providing a general update and an explanation for the increase in the police precept and plans for the use of the extra income and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

- (z) Civil Parking Enforcement

Members were reminded that, as of 5th May 2008, parking enforcement was a civil matter and no longer a criminal offence and enforcement had been taken over by the County Council and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(aa) PACT – Minutes of meeting on 11th March and invitation to meeting on 8th May

Councillor Perry had attended the meeting on 11th March that had been attended by a wide cross section of community representation (the minutes of this meeting were available for any member who wished to have sight of them) and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(bb) Penwith Town and Parish Forum, Thursday 15th May 2008

The meeting on 15th May had been attended by Councillors Clark and Rendle who reported that a business plan was being formulated for the future management of car parks and other assets but there were serious concerns over the efficiency of the One Cornwall Team and the lack of progress and sense of urgency in producing realistic plans and it was

RECOMMENDED: that a meeting be organised between Sally Newby, Councillor Clark and the Town Clerk to compile a list of questions to be submitted to the One Cornwall Team.

5. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

The committee considered its finances to 31st March 2008 and it was

RESOLVED: to note the position.

The Committee also considered payments made in the months of February and March and it was

RESOLVED: to approve such payments (see Appendix “C” for both financial position and payments made).

The Town Clerk informed members that discussions had been held with a lighting company concerning an improved infrastructure for the Christmas lights that would involve providing an independent circuit that would link into street lighting. New lights could then be hired on a three yearly basis and this would greatly improve the appearance of the town centre streets during the Christmas period and it was

RECOMMENDED: to support this initiative and carry forward any unexpended money from the last financial year into the current one.

6. **STREET TRADING APPLICATIONS**

(a) Joanna Bratley – Sale of handmade jewellery at Market Place, Penzance, 9am to 5pm Saturdays

It was

RESOLVED: to offer no objection.

(b) Corpus Christi Fair – Wharfside Car Park, Penzance

Penwith District Council had approved the presence of the funfair at the Wharfside Car Park for the period 1st to 8th June and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(c) Correspondence from Penwith District Council re ice-cream sales at Harbour Car Park, Penzance

The Town Clerk reminded members that there had been an appeal by a local trader against the renewal of a street trading licence for a mobile ice-cream vendor at the Harbour Car Park.

However, Penwith District Council policy was not to consult on the renewal of long-standing licences and the appeal had been overturned and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

7. **LICENSING**

(a) Penwith District Council – notification of dates of Licensing Panel meetings

Notification of the dates of forthcoming Licensing Panel meetings had been received and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(b) Licensing and Police Meeting – date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Licensing and Police meeting would take place on 27th May and it was

RESOLVED: that Councillor Lovegrove would attend as the Town Council's representative.

8. **HEALTH MATTERS**

(a) Cornwall Local Involvement Network

A pamphlet had been received outlining the work of various health support groups and asking for individuals to sign up and become involved and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the leaflet be copied out to all members.

(b) Correspondence from Penwith District Council re 'Transfer of upper Gastrointestinal Surgery'

Copy correspondence from the Chief Executive of Penwith District Council had been received concerning the proposed transfer of the 'upper gastrointestinal surgery' out of Cornwall. Efforts had been made to stop this transfer although it was pointed out that, due to the specialisation of this type of surgery and the limited number of operations performed on an annual basis, it would have a more wide-reaching effectiveness if based in a Centre of Excellence and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(c) Response from RCH NHS Trust re new CT Scanner at West Cornwall Hospital

The Town Clerk reminded members that, at a previous meeting, Councillor Lawrence had raised concerns that there may not be any suitably trained staff available at West Cornwall Hospital to run the new CT Scanner and, in response to the Town Council's letter, a response had been received from RCH NHS Trust giving assurances that suitably trained staff would be available. However, this letter did not confirm that the staff would be based at West Cornwall Hospital and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(d) Mayors Parlour Campaign Team – notification of meetings on 20th March and 25th April and press release from the 'Keep Cancer Care in Cornwall Campaign'

The minutes of the above meetings were available for any member who wished to have sight of them and it was

RECOMMENDED: that this item be taken forward to full Council for Councillor Cotton to report.

(e) West Cornwall Health Watch Annual General Meeting

Notification of the Annual General Meeting had been received and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(f) Health Promotion Newsletter – Spring 2008

The Spring 2008 newsletter was available for any member who wished to read it and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

9. **REGENERATION MATTERS**

(a) Penzance and Newlyn Regeneration Management Group – Minutes, Agendas and dates of next meetings

The meeting on 16th May had been attended by Councillor Ruhmund and had included a site viewing of the Abbey Warehouse development that was an excellent example of regeneration and it was

RECOMMENDED: that a site visit for all Town Councillors should be requested.

(b) THI – latest meeting postponed to a future date

An update on the progress of the THI was awaited from Penny Stokes the conservation officer and it was

RECOMMENDED: that a letter be sent requesting an update.

(c) Newlyn Fish Industry Forum – meeting of 12th May

It was

RECOMMENDED: that this be taken forward for Councillor Granger to report at full Council.

(d) Draft Marine Bill

A copy of the draft Marine Bill had been received in the Town Clerk's Office for information but it was felt that it would be difficult for a Council the size of Penzance Town Council to be an effective consultee.

Some concerns were raised over the reported proposal to widen the Coastal Path throughout the UK to a width of 4 metres and it was

RECOMMENDED: that further information about this proposal be sought and that PAROW could be approached for guidance.

(e) Fishing Focus & Fishing Focus Supplement Spring 2008 issue

This publication was available online and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(f) MCTI

There had been no recent progress report on the part of the Penzance MCTI and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Town Clerk should have an informal meeting with Councillor John Pollard of Hayle Town Council where more progress had been made and then invite Councillor Pollard to attend a meeting of Penzance Town Council.

It was further

RECOMMENDED: that a letter be sent to Jim McKenna, Chief Executive of PDC, recommending that St John's Hall would be the most appropriate building to house the local One Cornwall representatives and also the proposed 'One Stop Shop' and a meeting should be arranged between Jim McKenna, Sally Newby, the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the Town Clerk to facilitate this proposal.

(g) Resolution to Exclude the Press and Public

Due to the confidential nature of the next item to be discussed, it was

RESOLVED: to exclude the press and public from the next part of the meeting.

(h) Penzance Harbour Business Plan

See Confidential Appendix “D”.

(i) Resolution to Re-Admit the Press and Public

It was

RESOLVED: to re-admit the press and public to the meeting.

(j) Newlyn Regeneration

Correspondence had been received from the Newlyn Environment Group who were keen to redevelop Keel Alley and to help the community make it more of a public space and support for this initiative from the Town Council was sought and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Town Clerk contact the leaders of the Environment Group to convene a meeting.

The time having reached 10:00pm it was

RESOLVED: to suspend Standing Orders in order to allow the remainder of the business of the agenda to be dealt with.

10. **ONE CORNWALL**

Councillor Rendle raised concerns over the lack of focus surrounding One Cornwall issues and this matter was dealt with by a Recommendation under Item 13.

(a) Penwith Music Centre

A copy of a letter had been received from Penwith Music Centre Group requesting that they be considered for use of St John’s Hall under the forthcoming Unitary Authority and it was

RECOMMENDED: that a letter be sent to the organisers pointing out that this was still at a very early stage and that a lot of further discussions would need to take place before such a proposal could be addressed. It was also felt that the Group should be advised that they should consider the development of school-based facilities which would ensure maximum use and provide for potential letting income for any educational establishment.

(b) The new unitary council for Cornwall – monthly update

It was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(c) CALC – devolvment of services

The Town Clerk informed members that a false rumour had circulated that devolvment of services under the unitary authority would only be possible to those councils that were 100% elected and this rumour had been roundly quashed it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

(d) One Cornwall newsletter Issue 8 – end of April 2008

The newsletter having been circulated to all members prior to the meeting it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(e) News Release 21 April 2008

This article having been circulated to all members prior to the meeting it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(f) Letter from the Boundary Committee re Electoral Review of Cornwall

A letter of thanks for the Town Council's response to the Electoral Review of Cornwall had been received and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(g) PDC Electoral Review of Cornwall – Stage One Submission, April 2008

A copy of Penwith District Council's Electoral Review of Cornwall Submission had been received in the Town Clerk's Office and it was

RECOMMENDED: that receipt be noted.

(h) Report from Head of Financial Services, PDC re Service Costings and Asset Register

Information on assets and service costings had been received and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the town clerk should contact Martin Eddy and arrange an update meeting.

11. Website management and contribution from members

The Town Clerk reminded members that the Council's website was currently managed by Councillor Clark but that it lacked regular input. It was suggested that the Vice-Chairmen of the Committees could take on the responsibility of extracting interesting items from the minutes, expanding them and forwarding them to the office for publication on the website. These items could also be published on a regular basis in The Cornishman and it was

RECOMMENDED: that, due to the involvement and extra workload of the office staff, this item be taken forward for consideration by the Finance/Property Committee.

12. Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Town Clerk reported that financial regulations had been updated but not yet allied to the Standing Orders and this would be taken through to the next cycle of meetings and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the position be noted.

13. Council/Councillor Project/Initiatives – formulation of policies

It was proposed that a small committee (Co-ordination and Development Committee) comprising the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the Chairmen of the four standing committees should be set up to co-ordinate and crystallise the various items for discussion arising from the One Cornwall move before they are put forward for consideration at full Council. It was further proposed that small focus groups could be formed that would deal with individual issues and to encourage members to participate and bring forward written ideas and proposals and feed these into the Co-ordination and Development Committee. The aim would be to have a structured method of moving forward with a clear method of formulating policies and it was

RECOMMENDED: that the above proposal be adopted.

10:15pm

Chairman
30th June 2008