

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING held in Committee Room No. 3, St. John's Hall, Penzance on Monday 2 November 2009 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillors P C H Rendle (Chairman)

Councillors R Lewarne (left at 8.00 pm)
R A Mann
D Nebesnuick
J Ruhrmund

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – were received from

Councillors C A Dennis, F Granger, R M Lawrence, M Lovegrove, J F Moreland, H Worth.

24. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

25. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2009

Having been circulated, it was

RESOLVED that the Chairman sign the Minutes as a true and correct record.

26. REPORTS FOR DECISION

(a) Street Trading Applications

- (i) A street trading application had been received from Mrs Jean Howes to hold a craft fair on the Harbour Car Park on Saturday, Sunday and Monday 1-3 May 2010 selling handmade Cornish crafts and it was

RESOLVED – to offer no objection.

- (ii) An application for the renewal of a street trading consent had been received from Mr Graham Barratt to trade in the sale of house signs at Market Place, Penzance on Fridays from April to December 2010 inclusive and it was

RESOLVED – to offer no objection.

(b) Proposed International Market - 2010

Notification of a proposed International Market selling food and non-food items to take place in 2010 had been received from Mr Olivier Simonin. It

was noted that similar fairs had been held in Penzance in previous years and it was

RESOLVED – to offer no objection subject to further information and confirmed dates being received.

(c) Car park fees in December

A report had been circulated to members regarding the possibility of reducing or waiving car parking fees on the Saturdays in December leading up to Christmas to attract more visitors to the town centre. Members agreed that this could also be extended to cover late night shopping on Thursdays in December and Councillor Nebesnuick suggested that any resultant loss of revenue could be compensated for by raising the parking fees slightly during the rest of the year.

It was

RESOLVED – that the Committee supports the recommendation for free parking in the Penlee Car Park on Saturdays and late night shopping Thursdays in December in principle, subject to the provision of information concerning the financial implication, and that the matter be taken forward to the Finance and Property Committee for further consideration. Also, the Director of Penlee House Gallery and Museum should be advised of the proposal.

It was further

RESOLVED – that the Town Clerk would write to Cornwall Council suggesting that similar arrangements are put in place for the other car parks in the town centre and also enquiring whether it would be possible to organise free bus transport to and from the town centre on those days or for special 'shopper' buses to be put into operation.

(d) Seating areas at Penzance Bus Station

The Town Clerk referred to discussions that had been held with Councillors Lovegrove and Perry concerning the issue of the seating areas at Penzance Bus Station being used as gathering points and sleeping areas for vagrants. There had been complaints to the police about anti-social and abusive behaviour and the police had suggested replacing the existing benches with sloping 'perch' style benches that are found in some bus shelters. However, whilst this proposal was supported by some, others felt that this was not tackling the issue itself and that moves should be made to dissuade people from using the Bus Station as a sleeping area.

It was pointed out that sleeping on a public bench is not a crime and it was felt that increased support for homeless people would be more appropriate than just moving them on or changing the seating arrangements. It was therefore

RESOLVED – that a letter should be sent to the ‘Street Support Service’ acknowledging a problem exists and requesting advice on any appropriate action that could be undertaken by those responsible for the seating area.

27. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

(a) Invitation to Cornwall County Playing Fields AGM – 10 November

An invitation to attend the Annual General Meeting of Cornwall County Playing Fields taking place at 7pm on 10 November in Bodmin had been received, and all interested members were welcome to attend.

(b) Report from West Cornwall CCTV Interest Group meeting

Councillor Nebesnuick had provided a written report of the West Cornwall CCTV Interest Group meeting that took place on 22 September 2009 and in which he had attended in place of Councillor Dennis, the Town Council’s appointed representative.

Members’ attention was drawn to the statistics relating to the high percentage of recorded incidents in Penzance and it was felt that these statistics would support the need for a greater police presence in Penzance and the opening of a custody suite at Penzance Police Station.

Councillor Nebesnuick also pointed the problem concerning the position of the camera at Adelaide Street. It was felt that this camera would be more effective in capturing incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour if it was moved slightly but Cornwall Council had reported that it would need to be moved to Albert Street at a cost of £5,000, funds for which were not available.

During the CCTV meeting, it had also been mentioned that the near proximity of a ‘soup kitchen’ to the Club 2K nightclub was aggravating the situation in the vicinity of the club and it was

RESOLVED – that the Town Clerk would again write to the Chief Constable (with a copy to Inspector Mark Eccles at Penzance Police Station) putting the case for a custody suite in Penzance (supported by the ‘incident’ statistics) and that the issue would also be raised through the Community Network Panel.

It was further

RESOLVED – that a letter be sent to Cornwall Council citing the ‘incident’ statistics as support for the urgent need to move the camera at Adelaide Street and also suggesting that the soup kitchen should be moved a little further away from Club 2K.

(c) **Christmas Lights**

The Town Clerk reported that, unfortunately, due to the requirement of the Conservation Officer to submit individual listed building planning applications for all the buildings affected by the proposed electrical infrastructure system, it had not been possible to implement the scheme this year in time for the Christmas lights switch-on. It was also reported that, due to structural damage, one set of suspension wires in Market Jew Street had been lost.

Members were dismayed to learn that the Conservation Officer had not been supportive of the scheme and it was

RESOLVED – that a letter would be sent to Tom Flanagan, Director for Environment, Planning and The Economy, Cornwall Council (with copies to the Chief Executive and the Penzance Cornwall Councillors) regarding the position of the Conservation Officer and requesting support for the project that would help to ‘tidy up’ the tangle of cables and wires that are currently draped across the front of many buildings in the town centre.

28. FINANCIAL POSITION

The Committee considered its financial position to 31 August 2009 (see Appendix ‘A’) and it was

RESOLVED: to approve the financial position.

29. ITEMS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Inspector Mark Eccles, Penzance Police, should be invite to attend the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee.
- Major topics, such as ‘Regeneration’ should be included on the Town Council agenda rather than on the agenda of one of the four standing committees and items of significant interest and importance, e.g. The Route Partnership, should be tabled for a ‘single issue’ special Town Council meeting. It was also confirmed that regular updates on all regeneration matters (even if it was ‘nothing further to report’) would be reported at full Council meetings.
- Councillor Ruhmund reported that a report from Penzance THI should be forthcoming before the end of the year and this would be copied out to all Councillors by the Town Clerk’s Office.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Chairman
30 November 2009