

MINUTES of the EXTRAORDINARY TOWN MEETING of ST JUST-IN-PENWITH TOWN COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, 1 Chapel Street, St Just on Monday 22 August 2011 at 7.15 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor M Thomas - Mayor
Councillor Mrs S. James – Deputy Mayor

COUNCILLORS

Ms P S Angove	N. McFadden
B F Angwin	F Morris
C S McClary	Mrs S Olds
K McFadden	D. Stevens

TOWN CLERK

Elaine Baker

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

None.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

TC.79 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None received.

TC.80 CAR PARKS IN ST JUST AND PENDEEN

The Town Mayor welcomed the public to the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council and explained that the meeting had been called to discuss information relating to the possible introduction of car parking charges by Cornwall Council at the Lafrowda and Pendeen Car Parks.

The Town Mayor reported that the proposals had been discussed at a recent meeting with the Cornwall Councillors for the West Penwith Community Network Area, when Councillors had been advised that £1.3m of revenue had to be raised from the Cornwall Council car parks in the community network area. A number of proposals were currently being considered by the Cabinet Parking Advisory Panel which would make recommendations to Cornwall Council's Cabinet, followed by a consultation period on the proposed charging options which were planned to be introduced in 2012 / 2013.

One of the suggestions that had been discussed at the Community Network Meeting was for the introduction of a £1.00 day charge for the car parks in St Just and Pendeen. Councillor Chris Goninan had advised the Town Council of the proposal at its meeting on 15 August when the decision had been taken to hold the Extraordinary Meeting to discuss the proposal.

The Town Mayor also reported that the Town Council had expressed its interest in taking on the maintenance of the car parks from Cornwall Council with a view to retaining them as a "free resource" for both communities. However, to date despite repeated requests from the Town Council, Cornwall Council had failed to open discussions with the Town Council on this issue.

The Town Mayor invited the Town Councillors to comment on the proposals.

Councillor K McFadden commented that it was important that the Town Council received detailed information from Cornwall Council on the proposal, including detailed financial information on how much it would cost the Town Council to take over responsibility for the maintenance of the car parks. He also commented that there had been a reduction in car park usage in Penzance following the recent increase in car parking charges, which had resulted in a loss of trade to local businesses and he was concerned that if car parking charges were introduced in St Just and Pendeen it would have similar effect.

Councillor K McFadden also questioned the financial viability of introducing charges in Pendeen due to the size of the car park. Councillor K McFadden was also further concerned that it appeared that charges were being considered for St Just and Pendeen in an attempt to subsidise the car parking charges in Penzance.

Other issues that were raised by the Town Councillors included the impact on local businesses, on-street car parking, problems for the emergency services on already congested roads within St Just, highway safety issues, particularly in view of the fact that additional double yellow road lining was planned for a number of roads in St Just which would exacerbate traffic congestion problems.

Councillors N McFadden and Stevens referred to comments made by the Leader of Cornwall Council that there was the political will to transfer the delivery of services to local town and parish councils and that this opportunity should be taken by the Town Council to move forward the issue to take on devolved services from Cornwall Council.

The Town Council was also sceptical that the £1.00 charge would only be a beginning and that it would only lead to further increases, and that a clear message needed to be sent to Cornwall Council that the Town Council's view was that charging for car parks in the parish was not going to happen.

The Council was also advised that officers from Cornwall Council had agreed to attend one of the Town Council meetings in September to explain the proposals in detail.

The Town Council also felt that a public meeting should be held at the earliest opportunity to advise the local community of the proposals.

The Town Council felt that the free car parks were a significant resource to both communities and did not feel that local rate payers would object to an increase in the precept to enable the Town Council to create a reserve for the maintenance of the car parks.

Members of the public who were present at the Town Council meeting were asked for their views on the proposal. The majority were in support of the car parks being retained as a free facility for the benefit of residents, local businesses and visiting tourists.

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At the conclusion of the debate it was proposed by Councillor N McFadden and seconded by Councillor McClary that the Town Council:

1. Sends a further letter to Cornwall Council reaffirming its position that it wishes to open discussion with Cornwall Council regarding taking over the maintenance of the car parks and retaining them as a free resource at the earliest opportunity, and
2. That a public meeting be held on 1 September 2011 to raise the local residents' awareness of the proposal.

It was further proposed by Councillor N McFadden and seconded by Councillor McClary that the recommendation be put to a recorded vote.

The recommendation was put to the vote and was unanimously supported by the following Town Councillors:-

Councillor Thomas - Mayor
Councillor Mrs S James – Deputy Mayor
Councillor Ms Angove
Councillor Angwin
Councillor McClary
Councillor K McFadden
Councillor N McFadden
Councillor Morris
Councillor Mrs Olds
Councillor Stevens

RESOLVED: That recommendations (1) and (2) as set out above be approved.

(Action by : Elaine Baker)

Meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.

Town Mayor