

**MEETING OF TRURO CITY COUNCIL HELD ON
MONDAY 29 MARCH 2021 at 7.00 pm via ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING**

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Bert Biscoe), Honorary Freeman Cllr Wells, Councillors Allen, Mrs Callen, Mrs Carlyon, Mrs Eathorne-Gibbons, Ellis, Green, Nolan, Mrs Nolan, Pascoe, Rich, Roden, Ms Southcombe, Mrs Stokes, Mrs Swain, Tamblyn, Mrs Tudor, Vella, Webb and Wilkins.

APOLOGIES: Apologies of absence were received by Councillors Mrs Neale and Mainwaring-Evans

Also in Attendance: Roger Gazzard, Town Clerk;
Isabelle Reisner, Administrator

Apologies from absence also received from David Harris CC and the Dean of Truro, the Very Rev'd Roger Bush (Mayor's Chaplain).

PRAYERS

Prior to the formal business of the Council, as the Dean of Truro had tendered his apologies, the Town Clerk said prayers.

441 DISCLOSURES OR DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Planning Committee (Minute 407 (c,i), page 205, 04.03.2021) – Land Adjacent to 31 Albany Road

Councillor Roden and Honorary Freeman Councillor Wells (as well as the Town Clerk) declared an interest in the above application on grounds of being Directors of New Beginnings Residents Association which is developing the Malabar Community Centre. The item was not discussed further during this meeting.

442 MINUTES OF COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 1 March 2021 were taken as read and signed by the Mayor as a correct record with the following comments:

Minute 391 (vi) Pydar Street (p.197)

Councillor Roden queried that during the meeting it was agreed there would be a separate meeting held to discuss Pydar Street. The Town Clerk pointed out this was included within Minute 396, pages 199 & 200 as it was integrated as part of the recommendation on the Truro Development Company. The Town Clerk confirmed a separate informal meeting would be held. The Mayor had been speaking to Phil Mason, Head of Planning and Regeneration at Cornwall Council, who would be organising this. The Town Clerk agreed he would write to Mr Mason to prompt him.

443 CORNWALL COUNCIL

(i) South West Water – Squeeze Guts Alley

Councillor Biscoe CC commented he was pursuing South West Water, as is Cornwall Council, over the matter of the water leak in Squeeze Guts Alley.

(ii) Harbour

Councillor Rich CC commented the Harbour Authorities had chased a jet ski who had evaded them. Following an investigation, the owner was found and prosecuted. This could become an issue over the summer months. Councillor Allen (Mayor Elect) commented Councillor Rich CC was quoted in the Sunday Times on this matter.

(iii) Covid-19

Councillor Nolan CC commented parking enforcement was back out, just reminding people of their presence prior to the ease of lockdown. The number of police complaints had reduced during the pandemic.

(iv) Garden Waste

Councillor Nolan CC commented there was a new timetable for garden waste collection and the majority of Truro would be on a Tuesday. On Cornwall Council's

website there was a section (bottom right) that allowed people to type in their postcode and they would see several services in their area, and information including waste collection dates.

(v) Quiet Lanes

In the absence of Councillor Harris CC, Councillor Roden commented that there had been press coverage regarding the quiet lanes between Truro and Shortlanesend and the lack of consultation with the two parish councils, adding many residents around Kenwyn Nursing Home had been asking for speed restrictions for a long time but there was nothing about this in the proposal and nobody seemed to have been consulted apart from the ward members.

Members briefly discussed the quiet lanes, including their use for the ambulance service, and whether the proposals would impact the Truro and Kenwyn Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Town Clerk agreed to contact Cornwall Council Highways to ascertain when the City Council would be consulted, and to let the Planning Committee know when he had this information.

444 OPEN SESSION FOR THE ELECTORS OF TRURO

There were no questions from the electors of Truro.

445 MAYOR'S VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor spoke about HMS Tamar and the regular newsletters that the City Council would now be receiving regarding the ship's work. The Mayor felt it was important the City Council was developing a close relationship with HMS Tamar and suggested the Town Clerk contacted Trevor Brookes, the Lieutenant Commander at RNO Falmouth for the relationship to continue beyond the current Mayoralty.

The Mayor also spoke about wooden plaques he had commissioned with the City Council crest, which could be used as civic gifts for future years.

446 CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk reported correspondence from the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government in relation to virtual meetings, advising that the legislation allowing for the meetings to take place does not currently extend past 7 May 2021, and there was no proposal to pass legislation to extend this. There is a legal action being taken, supported by the National Association of Local Councils which would allow Councils to continue with virtual meetings for a period, but the outcome of this would not be known until the end of April. The government's roadmap states indoor meetings will be permitted from 17 May. However, the letter suggests remote meetings should take place until the full lifting of lockdown on 21 June. This would mean there would be a period during which legislation would not cover virtual meetings, but it would also be difficult for face-to-face meetings to resume due to legislation, so all eventualities needed to be considered, including provision for members of the public to attend meetings.

The Town Clerk commented he was currently investigating feasibility of holding the Annual Meeting of Council and Mayor Making Ceremony in the Cathedral with appropriate social distancing, and this would also be live-streamed, and then a view could be taken on committee meetings. It was possible to hold committee meetings (which allowed for up to twelve people) in the large meeting room after 21 June, but there were many risk assessments to consider. It was also possible to look at delegated decisions in the meantime.

Following discussion, where Honorary Freeman Councillor Wells suggested he sends a circular to parish councils in the Community Network Panel area (as Chairman of the Truro and Roseland Community Network Panel), urging them to

contact their local MP about this matter, it was proposed by Councillor Roden, seconded by Councillor Mrs Eathorne-Gibbons and

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk writes to Cherilyn Mackrory, MP for Truro and Falmouth, to ask her to speak on behalf of parish councils to extend the legislation to allow for the continuation of virtual meetings, as a matter of urgency.

447 QUESTION TIME – WRITTEN QUESTIONS

There were no written questions.

448 COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Minutes of the Meetings of the under-mentioned Committees were approved and adopted by the Council, except where otherwise stated:

MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE 4 MARCH 2021
Proposed by Councillor Webb, seconded by Councillor Vella

MEETING OF THE PARKS AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2021
Proposed by Councillor Ms Southcombe, seconded by Councillor Mrs Eathorne-Gibbons

Miss Connie Fozzard's Funeral (Minute 410, page 207)

The Mayor commented he had attended Miss Connie Fozzard's funeral along with the Parks & Amenities Manager, at Penmount Crematorium. It was a moving and illuminating service.

MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE 15 MARCH 2021
Proposed by Honorary Freeman Councillor Wells, seconded by the Mayor.

Boscawen Tennis Pavilion (Minute 437, page 214)

Councillor Mrs Stokes commented she felt the minutes were not quite an accurate reflection of the discussion on this item and asked that the questions she asked the Town Clerk during the meeting be added to the minutes. It was agreed the Clerk of the Finance & General Purposes Committee would check her notes and amend accordingly.

[N.B. Following the meeting, the Clerk checked her note, and the following was agreed as an addendum to the minutes:

Councillor Mrs Stokes asked the following questions:

- *What is the outstanding balance of the City Council's loans which had been taken out from the Public Works Loans Board?*
- *Could Councillors have a business case for the Pavilion to include a plan of how many covers would be expected and therefore how many staff would be taken on, menus etc.?*

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that he would have to get a full Council resolution to approve the borrowing of money for the above scheme and would write a report to full Council which included the amount of existing loans outstanding.]

Town Clerk/Financial Officer's Report – Municipal Buildings

Councillor Mrs Carlyon requested an update on the status of the clock tower. The Town Clerk responded that the City Council was expected to pay 50% of the costs, as per the conditions of the lease, as explained previously.

Following discussion regarding how the City Council would meet the expenses, the Town Clerk confirmed that the Public Works Loan Board could be approached for the monies, and the annual repayment costs were built into the estimates assuming the loan was taken out in April 2022. The Town Clerk had written to Cornwall Council to ask if they would provide a loan as a last resort, with repayments across fifteen years, but he had not yet heard back.

Councillor Mrs Stokes expressed her concern over the amount of money being borrowed and asked if there was a limit of borrowing against the precept. The Town Clerk confirmed there was not.

Following discussion over whether it would be worth getting another opinion on the works and associated costs, where it was pointed out the work was highly specialised and there was only one contractor in the county, the Town Clerk confirmed he would be looking to re-negotiate for the future the part of the lease on the Municipal Buildings that held the City Council, as tenants, responsible for 50% of the cost of maintenance works.

Correspondence – Cornwall Council Letter (Minute 439, page 216)

Councillor Roden commented that the tone of the letter was regrettable, and it misrepresented the City Council's position, making out the Council was against public transport through the City, which was not accurate.

449 BOSCAWEN PARK TENNIS PAVILION

Councillors considered a resolution to take out a loan from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) to complete the funding for this project (Minute 437, page 214 of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, 15.03.2021 refers). The Town Clerk explained that according to the rules of the PWLB, a resolution had to be made by the full Council for this to take place. Both the Parks & Amenities and Finance & General Purposes Committees agreed they wished for this project to go ahead. The Town Clerk had circulated a report for this item, which he felt addressed the questions raised at the Finance & General Purposes Committee in relation to paying back the loan and the amount of loans the City Council had outstanding.

The Town Clerk also confirmed there was a backlog of around three months for the PWLB to respond to applications, and this could jeopardise the Towns Fund grant which had to be spent by the end of May to qualify, as well as result in the potential loss of tender. Councillor Mrs Stokes felt that as the amount of the tender was under a certain threshold, it was acceptable to directly negotiate with the successful company for an extension.

The Town Clerk was asked whether earmarked reserves could be spent, and the Town Clerk confirmed it could with Council's approval, and that the only unmarked revenue was the cash sum of the Council. The Town Clerk also confirmed that capital from the revenue, across the fifteen-year borrowing period, would go back to reserves, which was what happened when the Tourist Information Centre moved into their new location at Boscawen Street, though this was acknowledged to be a lesser sum.

Councillor Mrs Stokes commented that borrowing the money for this project would increase the precept and this felt uncomfortable as there was not, at present, a clear business case to suggest how sufficient income would be generated. This needed to be drawn up before a decision could be made, and it would need to include costs and projected sales for the next five years. The Town Clerk confirmed a business case was being put together, but that it would be a working document with information relating to operations (menus, customers etc.) that was likely to change.

450 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by proposed by the Mayor, and

RESOLVED that in accordance with s1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item by reason of its confidential or special nature.

451 BOSCAWEN PARK TENNIS PAVILION (Confidential)

Councillors continued to discuss confidential details of the Boscawen Park Tennis Pavilion and associated costs, set out in a separate confidential minute.

452 READMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by the Mayor and

RESOLVED that the press and public be readmitted to the meeting.

451 BOSCAWEN PARK TENNIS PAVILION (Continued)

Following the confidential discussion, the Town Clerk confirmed professional advice had been sought on the design of the proposal and the figures included everything apart from the loose furniture.

Councillor Tamblyn left the meeting at 8:02pm.

The Town Clerk confirmed the position of the current Reserves vs its historical position and confirmed earmarked reserves was very healthy and the general reserves was at the 10% of precept as recommended.

Councillor Rich left the meeting at 8:11pm.

It was proposed by Councillor Allen (Mayor Elect), seconded by Councillor Roden, and

RESOLVED that the City Council approve the Borrowing Application (as circulated by the Town Clerk to Councillors for the meeting) for an additional loan of £140,000 for a period of fifteen years from the Public Works Loans Board, and if the City Council did not receive the Towns Fund Grant of £60,000 then the loan would be increased to £200,000.

Councillors Mrs Callen and Mrs Stokes wished for their names to be recorded as having voted against the above resolution.

Councillor Mrs Carlyon was away from her screen at the time of the vote.

452 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk had nothing to add to his report.

Ivy on the Walls of the Lemon Street Public Conveniences

The Mayor commented the Town Clerk had reported the ivy would be removed by a contractor during the summer, but he felt someone should just go ahead and remove it. Councillors Allen (Mayor Elect) and Ms Southcombe felt ivy was a great habitat for wildlife and it should be allowed to remain.

453 TRURO & THE ROSELAND COMMUNITY NETWORK PANEL

Councillor Rich re-joined the meeting at 8.16pm.

Honorary Freeman Councillor Wells reported the Network Panel had two presentations at its meeting on 16 March. One presentation was on Carbon Neutral

Cornwall and the other on the Forest of Cornwall programme. There was also a standing item on the agenda to discuss Climate Change, which Honorary Freeman Councillor Wells commented Councillor Carley from Chacewater Parish Council spoke about, proposing that in their spare time during the G7 summit, delegates could be driven around Cornwall in electric cars. A list was being drawn up of volunteers who could offer this provision. The next meeting would be the Annual General Meeting on 8 June 2021 where the next Chairman would be elected. The Mayor thanked Honorary Freeman Councillor Wells for his work as Chairman of the Panel over the years.

Councillor Webb asked if there was any update for the suggestion of a crossing at the bottom of Tregurra to make it safer for pedestrians. Honorary Freeman Councillor Wells commented he thought there was a sum of money set aside to carry out a feasibility study.

455 REPORTS OF MEETINGS OR CONFERENCES ATTENDED

There were no meetings or conferences to report.

456 COMMON SEAL

RESOLVED that the Common Seal be affixed to any document or documents necessary to give effect to the resolutions passed by the Council at this Meeting.

The meeting closed at 8:21pm

MAYOR