

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HELSTON TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE GUILDHALL, HELSTON
ON THURSDAY 16TH JANUARY 2025 AT 7.00 PM

Councillors: M J Kenchington (Town Mayor) in the Chair

R Williams
M H Thomas
P M Webb
P E Williams

R J L Boase
T Grattan-Kane
D Willey
S Greet

Mrs F N E Boase
M Benyon
M P Andrew
M Riley

Officers: Miss P J Lavelle (Town Clerk)
Miss A Retallack (Deputy Town Clerk)
Miss A Harris (Communications Officer)
Mrs M Lane (Mayor's Secretary/Administrative Assistant)

243. Prayers

The meeting opened with prayers offered by Councillor Andrew.

244. Apologies

An apology for non-attendance was submitted by Councillor Martin.

245. Detached Youth Work Provision

At the discretion of the Chair agenda item 5 was brought forward.

A presentation regarding the detached youth work provision funded by Helston Town Council through Young People Cornwall was given by youth workers and young people who benefitted from the service.

The Mayor thanked the Youth Workers and young people for attending the meeting.

246. Cornwall Councillors' Reports

Apologies were given on behalf of Cornwall Councillor Foreman.

Cornwall Councillor Thomas gave a report during which he gave particular mention to:

- The Newquay Airport proposal which was being discussed at an extraordinary cabinet meeting on 17 January 2025;
- Ongoing discussions regarding the Devolution Deal outlining the response received from Jim McMahon MP stating that Cornwall would have to be part of a regional Mayoral group#;
- His work with Coastline and their residents regarding his request for repairs to the wooden railings on Trengrouse Way advising that he was challenging Coastlines decision to seek to charge residents and was suggesting alternate options;
- The installation of the Real Time Passenger Information display screen for Tesco's Helston bus stop would take place shortly and was expected to be operation at the start of the new financial year;
- The potential removal of the dumpy bags from Godolphin Road advising that the developer was planning to begin groundworks in April which raised concerns with the potential impact on Flora Day;
- The ongoing meetings regarding the Leats and Kennels advising the two repairs of the Kennels remained in progress with Cormac;
- The Gateway Building was proceeding on schedule and was attracting a lot of interest outside of Cornwall due to its NHS status; and
- His work assisting residents impacted by the spray loft insulation scam advising that he had made contact with Andrew George MP regarding the issue. His case work team is gathering data and working with others to bring the matter to the new Government's attention.

Cornwall Councillor Thomas then responded to Members questions.

The Town Clerk advised that she was happy to write to Cornwall Council to raise concerns with the impact of the proposed groundworks in Godolphin Road on Flora Day.

247. Public Participation

A member of the public commented on his recent election experience for Helston South Ward.

248. Minutes

On the proposition of Councillor Benyon, seconded by Councillor Willey, it was:

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 19th December 2024 be approved and signed as a true record.

Voting: For – 11, Against – 0, Abstain – 2

249. Announcements

The Mayor informed Members that he will be attending the Mustard Seed next week.

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Riley to Helston Town Council following her recent election win.

The Town Clerk informed council that David Turnbull has asked that his thanks be passed on to Members and to inform Members that an invitation for a further site visit would be extended in the near future.

The Town Clerk informed members that they can obtain White Ribbon Campaign ribbons or pin badges from the office if they wish and that they can also sign the pledge as individuals via the white ribbon website.

250. Standing Order 8.1

The Town Clerk advised that a question had been received from Councillor R J L Boase seeking an update regarding the progress of removing A frames from the cobbled area beside the Guildhall.

The Town Clerk advised Members that a letter had been issued to the businesses and organisations who use the area informing them of the decision and giving them until Monday 20th January 2025 to arrange removal of any signs or goods. The circulation of this letter was timed to avoid conflict with Council activities requiring business involvement and to avoid impact on the operation of the businesses in the lead up to Christmas.

The Town Clerk further advised that the following question had been received from Councillor Thomas:

In the interests of transparency and clarity please could the Council explain to the public why it was necessary to hold an election for Helston South last week without poll cards. What could have been done to let the casual vacancy wait until the full municipal elections on May 1st 2025.

The Town Clerk informed Members that the resignation of a Councillor in Helston South Ward had been received on 23rd October 2024. Cornwall Council as the electoral authority were notified on the same day and they advertised the vacancy in accordance with legislation. 10 electors from the South Ward contacted Cornwall Council requesting an election as was their democratic right, which means that it was no longer permissible to fill the vacancy by co-option (S39(1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983) and the election took place on 9th January 2025. Helston Town Council did not have the option to fill the vacancy by co-option.

Due to the timings involved Councillors were consulted following the November Full Council meeting to clarify if poll cards were required. The majority decision of those present was that it was not an appropriate and proportionate use of public funds to issue poll cards at a cost of around £2,000 when full elections would be taking place in May and the post holder would only be in place for four months.

If the resignation had been received after 6th November it would have fallen within 6 months of the new Council taking office following the May election. At this point Council would have been able to decide if it wanted to fill the vacancy by co-option or leave it until the May election. As the resignation was received before 6th November this was not a legal option, there was no way to lawfully avoid notice of the casual vacancy being published. In summary, there was nothing that Helston Town Council could have lawfully done to let the casual vacancy wait until the May elections.

251. Report of the Communications Officer

Members considered the Report by the Communications Officer (circulated prior to the meeting). No questions were raised.

252. Communications Officer Report on Councillor Surgeries

Members considered the Report by the Communications Officer (circulated prior to the meeting) regarding Councillor Surgeries. Following a brief debate, on the proposition of Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Grattan-Kane, it was unanimously

RESOLVED – that Council agree to hold Councillor Surgeries from June 2025 and that the Communications Officer be given delegated authority in consultation with the Town Clerk to make the arrangements.

An Amendment had been proposed by Councillor Andrew, seconded by Councillor R Williams, that Council agree to hold Councillor's Surgeries regularly from June 2025 and that the Communications Officer be given delegated authority in consultation with the Town Clerk to make the arrangements. The Amendment failed. (*Voting: For – 2, Against – 10, Abstain – 1*)

253. Report of the Town Clerk

Members considered the Report by the Communications Officer (circulated prior to the meeting).

a) Beating the Boundaries

Councillor R J L Boase confirmed that, as a member of the PCC, he had spoken with St Michaels Church's insurance underwriter who confirmed they would be happy to insure the church for Beating the Boundaries, as long as the correct risk assessments were carried out. Following a brief debate, on the proposition of Councillor Kenchington, seconded by Councillor Grattan-Kane, it was unanimously

RESOLVED – that:

- a. Helston Town Council agreed to transfer the ownership and responsibility of Beating the Boundaries event to St Michael's Parochial Church Council subject to receipt of a formal minute from St Michaels Parochial Church confirming they would become responsible for the event; and
- b. the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to support the event as appropriate.

b) A3083 Culdrose Road – Safety Concerns

On proposition of Councillor Mrs Boase, seconded by Councillor Greet, it was unanimously

RESOLVED – that:

- a. Helston Town Council write to Cornwall Council and division members formally expressing support of average speed cameras on this section of road; and
- b. the Town Clerk would sign the local petition for an average speed camera on this section of road on behalf of Helston Town Council.

c) Fairground Car Park Pop-Up Licence

Following a detailed debate, on proposition of Councillor Mrs Boase, seconded by Councillor Willey, it was unanimously

RESOLVED – that the Council write a letter to Cornwall Council objecting to the proposal.

d) Government Consultation ‘Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England’.

On proposition of Councillor Kenchington and seconded by Councillor Mrs Boase, it was unanimously

RESOLVED – that the Mayor, Councillors Mrs Boase, Grattan-Kane and Andrew be appointed onto the Task & Finish Group to compile a response to the consultation on behalf of the Town Council.

254. Payment of Accounts

On the proposition of Councillor R Williams, seconded by Councillor Mrs Boase, it was

RESOLVED – that Account Nos. 639 – 693 inclusive, as listed and set out as an Appendix to these Minutes, in the total sum of £51,270.46 be certified for payment.

Meeting closed at 8:40 pm

Confirmed

Town Mayor