

**MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON
MONDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2020 at 7:00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillors Wells (Chairman), Smith (Mayor), Biscoe (Deputy Mayor), Mrs Carlyon, Mrs Eathorne-Gibbons, Mrs Nolan, Rich, Roden, Ms Southcombe and Mrs Stokes

Also, in attendance: Roger Gazzard, Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer
Ms Joanne Trevelyan, Financial Officer
Councillors Mrs Neale and Nolan
Ms Sarah Douglas-Martin, member of the public.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mrs Callen and Mrs Cox (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Wells (Chairman) stated that item 9 on the agenda had been withdrawn following a number of concerns by members. The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer would be seeking advice and, following this advice, a decision would be made about whether the item would appear for discussion on a future agenda.

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer confirmed that the report circulated for item 7 had not been deemed confidential.

Councillor Wells (Chairman) reminded all members to inform the office of any apologies prior to meetings.

347 DISCLOSURE OR DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were received

348 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 13 January 2020, having been before Council on 27 January 2020, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Councillor Rich joined the meeting at 7:14pm

**349 TOWN CLERK/RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 2019/2020**

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer presented the management accounts to members of the committee highlighting that he did not foresee any significant changes over the following weeks and therefore anticipated being close to the budget at the end of the financial year.

Councillor Mrs Carlyon questioned if the underspend of £4k for the year included the £120k raised each year for the library. The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer confirmed that the money for the current year had been built into the budget. However, money from previous years had been placed in a reserve fund specifically for the library building. The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer confirmed that the final figure the City Council would be required to pay for the renovation work on the Municipal Building was still unknown. However, he had been advised that there would be little change from the original quote. The Hall for Cornwall had indicated that scaffolding from the front of the building would be removed in April and the Boscawen Street foyer would open prior to the main auditorium. The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer anticipated that, at this point, contractors would be engaged to begin decorating the Municipal offices; money for this work had been built into the estimates.

Councillor Biscoe (Deputy Mayor) requested information regarding the £304k of investments. The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer explained that this was money held in the Churches, Charities, and Local Authorities (CCLA) Cash fund; Councillor Biscoe also asked about the S106 monies due to the Council.

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer explained that the Council had agreed that this be invested in the CCLA property fund. The issue at the present time was that whilst this was generated 4% returns, the capital values were falling. Therefore, it was a difficult decision about the best time to invest and it would be reviewed once the large S106 receipt in connection with the Newbridge Lane playing field had arrived.

Tourist Information Centre (TIC)

The position with the guide continued to be disappointing and the 2020 costs would be further reduced. The Council would reduce the quantity of printed guides this year which would result in the guide being within the estimated budget.

The report was noted

350 TOURIST INFORMATION SERVICE

Members discussed whether the guide was attractive to advertisers in its current format and if it provided enough encouragement to overseas visitors to come to Cornwall. Councillor Biscoe (Deputy Mayor) considered whether market research had been undertaken and if this had demonstrated what information the current guide gave potential visitors from further afield. The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer confirmed that 'Visit Cornwall' undertook extensive market research that provided data for the TIC to compile the guide. However, he agreed that the necessity of undertaking more specific market research for Truro would be addressed. Councillor Mrs Stokes highlighted that a previous committee meeting had discussed the guide in depth and suggested that the actions from this meeting be re-visited.

Members discussed Cornwall Council's ban on caravans and motor homes in some car parks with a view that this would deter visitors to Cornwall. Some members believed that for Truro to compete in the tourist market it should be identified as a place that welcomed motor homes and parking be provided. This would promote Truro as a tourist destination.

Following the discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Smith (Mayor), seconded by Councillor Mrs Carlyon and unanimously

RECOMMENDED that

the City Council write to the relevant officer at Cornwall Council asking to be considered a place where motor homes can visit and parking be made available to facilitate this.

Councillor Mrs Carlyon requested information regarding the renaming of the Hall for Cornwall. Councillor Rich highlighted that the 'City Hall' sign was currently stored in the Municipal Building's attic and could be re-used.

It was proposed by Councillor Rich, seconded by Councillor Mrs Carlyon and

RECOMMENDED that

the name 'City Hall' be suggested to the Hall for Cornwall.

Thanks, were expressed to the TIC for providing the report and congratulations offered in reflection of their recent win at the Cornwall Tourism Awards.

The report was noted.

351 CCTV MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer presented the CCTV quarterly report from Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service showing incidents recorded between October and December 2019. The CCTV system had proved its worth following the murder in Liskeard as footage from the system had created evidence that had led to an arrest. Councillor Smith (Mayor) requested information relating to the number of incidents by

day, week and month and whether this data could be linked to drinking in certain areas of the city centre. The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer confirmed that the CCTV system did not provide data of the reason behind incidents only the number and type were recorded. However, he was currently working with the police on a piece of work to understand their reports and to enable him to focus on particular areas of the City. This was not only data from the CCTV system but incident reports that were able to 'drill down' to the time when incidents had occurred; it was concerning that not all incidents were reported so a true picture could not be provided. Once this information had been made available it would be shared with the committee.

Councillor Biscoe (Deputy Mayor) highlighted that, following an incident in the town centre, it was important to ensure that all involved had received relevant counselling and support and that the infrastructure in place and the quick and effective response of the services be applauded. The infrastructure had been in place for three or four years and people and other services should take comfort in its position and appreciate the financial commitment to maintain it.

Councillor Wells (Chairman) permitted Councillor Nolan to address the committee. Councillor Nolan highlighted that it was possible for all members to attend Tolvaddon to view the CCTV operations should they wish.

Councillor Wells (Chairman) permitted Councillor Mrs Neale to address the committee. Councillor Mrs Neale requested clarity regarding the authority to view requests. The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer confirmed that these were requests made from others' and were authorised by Cornwall Council.

Members requested that the spelling of 'Boscawen' be corrected in the report.

The report was noted.

352 TRURO AND FEOCK PARISH COMMUNITY CONNECT PROJECT

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer highlighted that the Council had agreed to fund the Community Navigator post until 31 March 2021. This would be without Feock Parish and jointly funded by the NHS' GP's association, Kernow Health. The project would run from the beginning of June 2020 and he suggested that a small number of Councillors and a representative from the NHS be selected to assist with setting the parameters and the objectives for the period of the project.

Councillor Wells requested if the co-funder would require an input into the objectives or would they be willing for the Council to take the lead. Councillor Mrs Stokes highlighted that, in her opinion, any emergency aid would be provided by the NHS and not the Community Navigator. The City Council would pay for residents' well-being rather than their health and delivering emergency medication would not be deemed the responsibility of the Council's employee (Community Navigator). Councillor Stokes further highlighted that the project not duplicate work that other agencies were already providing. Councillor Biscoe (Deputy Mayor) added that it would be beneficial for enquires to be made to establish whether other agencies had volunteers that could be enlisted to support the project; Age UK, U3A. The aim of the project would be to provide a social network that would deter people from attending the GP surgery unnecessarily and increase wellbeing, activities that would facilitate this were needed. Coosebean and the activities being developed there were recognised as potential positive additions to the project as they provided beneficial outdoor activities. Councillor Ms Southcombe confirmed that she had been involved in this work which was positive to the environment and attracted many Truro residents. The Countryside Ranger was greatly involved in this and had encouraged walks and other activities that had attracted groups of people from various supporting charities that were improving health and well-being. Members highlighted the need to link the Community Navigator's role and the project with other volunteer agencies.

The Chairman proposed and

RECOMMENDED that

- i) an item be added to the next agenda to discuss and select a small number of Councillors to meet with the NHS co-funders in order to agree the aims and objectives of the project until June 2021 and
- ii) the report be noted.

353 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by the Chairman, 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.

354 CITY OF LIGHTS

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer requested members' opinions on the additional contribution that had been requested by the organisation in reflection of the deficit following the 2019 event. The budgeted contribution for 2019 and previous years had been £3k. However, he requested that members discuss whether they would be willing to reimburse the BID one half of the deficit and what contribution they would be willing to offer for the 2020 event. Members highlighted the lack of physical collection buckets during the event, the lack of engagement with the TIC to promote and support the event and questioned if the event had been managed with a business focus and a good creative direction. It appeared that the lack of creative development of the event had resulted in the Arts Council not providing grant money which, in previous years, had been forthcoming. This highlighted the need for the City Council to be prudent in their consideration of allocating funds each year for an event that no longer had a creative vision, a professional business input and did not create a benefit for Truro. Shops had not been permitted to remain open as this had been deemed a detraction from the parade. Members felt that it would be disappointing to not support a prime regular event in the City centre. However, it needed to have a creative boost, a creative business plan and one person with a vision of how to make the event a success.

After a long discussion it was proposed by Councillor Roden, seconded by Councillor Biscoe and

RECOMMENDED that

- i) an additional contribution of £1,875 be allocated for the 2019 parade from the Community Events Fund.

Members continued to discuss the event with regards to the necessity of the organisers having a sustainable system and business plan that would be submitted to the City Council prior to any allocation of funds. Councillor Wells suggested that the City Council request the organisation to take a member of Council onto its board of decision makers. Councillor Roden suggested that the organisers be invited to meet with members to discuss and share councillor's views and concerns raised in the meeting.

After discussion it was proposed by Councillor Rich, seconded by Councillor Mrs Stokes and

RECOMMENDED that

- ii) financial support would only be considered for the 2020 parade once a satisfactory and viable business plan from the organisers highlighting the purpose, aims and objectives and where funding would come from, had been presented to the committee.

Councillor Wells (Chairman) suggested that the other points in the confidential report summary be discussed should the above recommendation result in financial support being agreed by the Council.

355 RETURN OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by the Chairman, and

RESOLVED that the press and public be invited back into the meeting.

356 CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was received

357 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Chairman confirmed the next Committee meeting would be held on Monday 16 March 2020 starting at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8:19 pm

CHAIRMAN