

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT – 27TH JULY 2021 – FINANCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

13. DEVOLUTION – INITIAL PROPOSAL FORM (attached) – Parks and Open Spaces Working Party + Facilities Committee – a) To note the return of the revised Initial Proposal Form including the addition of the land surrounding the War Memorial. b). To note the Parks and Open Spaces Working Group recommendations regarding Phase 1 Castle Park transfer April 2022.

Background – Since the formation of Cornwall Council in 2009 it has periodically disposed of properties that are assets and liabilities to themselves, to other organisations.

Town and Parish Councils' have been amongst the organisations to be offered these. Aside from any inherent structural issues relating to a building, the willingness of Town Council's to take over such properties is often influenced by its own existing property ownerships. Some having extensive property ownerships in need of care and attention of their own (e.g. Liskeard, Bodmin and Launceston etc). In other cases Town Councils did not previously own property and have had to rent office and chambers from landlords. For those Town Councils', this has provided a very different circumstance in which taking over a property has been seen as the opportunity of achieving a degree financial independence (e.g. Looe, Penryn and Newquay etc.)

There are also occasions in which budgetary constraints have prompted services to be discontinued or scaled back. Town and Parish Councils' have been asked pay for the continuance of a service or to take it over completely.

Liskeard Town Council has taken over the public toilets, CCTV, weed treatment, grit-bins etc. Westbourne Garden is subject to a 10 year agreement with Cornwall Council in which the Town Council will deal with the handling of additional events. The freehold ownership and responsibility for structures such as walls, the footpath, benches and the trees remains with Cornwall Council along with grass cutting and bin emptying.

War Memorial Meeting – The Town Council is responsible for a small concrete area on which the War Memorial is located. The grassed area surrounding the War Memorial is owned by Cornwall Council. The Royal British Legion had been wanting to see improvements to this area which they were willing to organise and pay for themselves. A meeting was held (20th April 2021) between representatives from Cornwall Council, the Royal British Legion and Liskeard Town Council. The Cornwall Council representative agreed to the Royal British Legion carrying out the changes to the grassed areas and planted areas that they owned. It was suggested that the

grassed area surrounding the War Memorial might be included in the Devolution package to come across from Cornwall Council to the Town Council.

Devolution - A revised Initial Proposal Form (IPF) has been received from Cornwall Council showing this added as a prospective item for transfer subject to checks etc.

Parks and Open Spaces Working Group – The Parks and Open Spaces Working Group has been reviewing the various possible options for possible Devolution. The size and relative use and value to the community as well as its condition and recent investments being considered the Working Group recommends and the Facilities Committee (20th July 2021) supports further work on developing the detail of the transfer of the Castle Park as a Phase 1 April 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS: a). That the Town Council supports the inclusion of the grassed area surrounding the War Memorial as an item for potential Devolution from Cornwall Council. b). That the Town Council supports the recommendation of the Parks and Open Spaces Working Party, endorsed by the Facilities Committee, that work on Castle Park be prioritised as a Phase 1 Devolution for transfer by April 2022.

14. FREEDOM OF THE TOWN – ROYAL NAVY – To consider the principal of granting the Freedom of the Town to a unit of the Royal Navy.

Background – Legislation provides the Town Council with the power to confer the “Freedom of the Town” upon a military unit or facility. This would give the unit the honour of parading with its colour and band through the town. Those occasions depend upon the operational deployments to which all units are subject. A unit might not be able to parade in full for 3 or 4 years.

Several other towns in Cornwall have offered the “Freedom of the Town” to facilities or units e.g. Falmouth (Royal Fleet Auxiliary RFA), Helston (RNAS Culdrose), Torpoint (HMS Raleigh) and Truro (the Rifles).

The Town Council granted the “Freedom of the Town” to the Rifles (the modern successor to the former county infantry unit of the British Army) on the 29th October 2019.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Town Council consider the principal of granting the “Freedom of the Town” to a unit of the Royal Navy.

15. CASTLE PARK – MOBILE CCTV – To consider the request from the Parks and Open Spaces Working Party supported by the Facilities Committee, that the use of mobile CCTV equipment in Castle Park, be investigated including costings and timescales for deployment.

Background – Under the Making Space for Nature project significant grant funded investment is being made in the Cornwall Council owned Castle Park. The case for Castle Park being transferred to the Town Council under the Devolution process is being developed. During a recent event in the park members of the public reported cases of vandalism and the Parks and Open Spaces Working Party has discussed this and raised the issue of general security at Castle Park. The Facilities Committee at its 20th July 2021 meeting agreed to support the request that the use of mobile CCTV equipment at Castle Park be investigated including any cost and timescales around the request for and deployment of the equipment.

A request for required information has been submitted and will be reported to the Finance, Economic Development & General Purposes Committee.

RECOMMENDATION: That the information is considered.