

St Austell Town Council



Finance and General Purposes Committee

To: All Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

(Councillors: Brown, Clemo, Cohen, Gray, Hamilton, Kimber, Lanxon, Marshall, Pearce, Preece, Rowse, Thompson, Whitehouse and Young).

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend a **Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee** to be held in **The Registrars Office, Carlyon Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4LD** on **Monday 23rd June 2025** at **6pm**.



David Pooley
Town Clerk

17th June 2025

Tel: 01726 829859

E.mail: david.pooley@staustell-tc.gov.uk

Website: www.staustell-tc.gov.uk

AGENDA

- 1. Election of Chair**
- 2. Election of Vice-Chair**
- 3. Apologies for absence**

This meeting has been advertised as a public meeting and as such could be filmed or recorded by broadcasters, the media or members of the public.

Please be aware that whilst every effort is taken to ensure that members of the public are not filmed, we cannot guarantee this, especially if you are speaking or taking an active role.

4. Declarations of Interest

(Purpose: To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other non-registerable interests in respect of items on this agenda).

5. Dispensations

(Purpose: To receive requests for dispensations under the Code of Conduct).

6. Minutes of meeting held on 7th April 2025

**Pages
1 to 4**

(Purpose: To agree that the minutes of the above meeting be signed as a correct record). (Attached).

7. Matters to Note

A verbal update from the Town Clerk on the actions taken since the last meeting. Note: No decision may be made under this agenda item.

8. Public participation (15 minutes maximum)

The Chairman will invite members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be carried out at the meeting.

15 minutes will be allocated for public participation (this can be extended at the Chairman's discretion). Each person addressing the Council will be allocated a maximum of two minutes.

9. Budget Monitoring Report

**Pages
5 to 10**

(Purpose: To review the Town Council's budget monitoring report for the period 1st April 2025 – 31st May 2025). (Report attached).

10. Regular Payments

**Pages
11 to 14**

(Purpose: To confirm and approve the current practice with regard to the use of BACS and direct debits for regular payments). (Report attached).

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- 11. CCTV** **Pages
15 to 16**
- (Purpose: To authorise the Town Clerk to proceed with a tender process in partnership with Newquay Town Council for the repair and maintenance of the CCTV system). (Report attached).
- 12. Paperless** **Pages
17 to 18**
- (Purpose: To provide Members with the opportunity to opt out of receiving the Town Council's agendas by post). (Report attached).
- 13. Lone Working Policy for St Austell Town Councillors** **Pages
19 to 20**
- (Purpose: To review and approve a Lone Working Policy for St Austell Town Councillors). (Attached).
- 14. Vehicle Replacement** **Pages
21 to 24**
- (Purpose: To approve the purchase of a replacement tipper truck for the grounds maintenance service). (Report attached).
- 15. St Austell Library**
- (Purpose: To provide Members with an update on the operational activities of St Austell Library). (Verbal update).
- 16. Dates of Next Meetings**
- (Purpose: To note the date of next meeting – 29th September 2025).

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MINUTES of a MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 7th APRIL 2025 in The Stable Block, Pondhu House, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5DP at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Brown, French, Lanxon and Pearce.

In attendance: David Pooley (Town Clerk) and Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Town Clerk).

Also in attendance: Councillor Thompson.

F/24/62) Apologies for absence

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Clemo and Young

F/24/63) Declarations of Interest

None.

F/24/64) Dispensations

None.

F/24/65) Minutes of meeting held on 17th February 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th February 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Councillor Brown arrived during this item

F/24/66) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that with regard to Risk Management (F/24/56), Martyn's Law has been enacted and all Risk Assessments, where relevant, will reflect the requirements under this legislation.

With regard to F/24/60 (General Wolfe Building), the Clerk advised that no further update has been received from Cornwall Council.

F/24/67) Public participation

There were no members of the public present.

F/24/68) Budget Monitoring Report

The Clerk explained the variances as at 28th February 2025 as follows:

- **Car Park income** – more income than anticipated
- **Interest income** – higher interest rates and balances
- **Other grants and contributions** – Shared Prosperity Fund and Town Vitality Fund grants
- **Contract payments** – small saving anticipated.
- **Grounds maintenance supplies** – increased cost of planting and winter maintenance.

- **Miscellaneous expenses** – Town centre projects
- **Other transport/plant expenses** – new mower/brushcutters.
- **Play equipment** – Projects in progress
- **Rates** – successful appeal against rateable value of Priory car park
- **Repairs/Maintenance Vehicles/Plant** – increased cost of repairs due to age of vehicles
- **Salaries and Wages** – reduced staff costs/vacancies

The Clerk added that the Town Council is in a good financial position and expected a surplus at the year end.

During discussion, it was noted that election costs will be less than budget due to only one Ward being contested and a view was expressed that the surplus from this budget could be expended on a community project. The Clerk suggested that the expected surplus at the year-end could also be put towards a project if Members wished.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should produce a report for the next Finance and General Purposes Committee, in consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, outlining the anticipated surplus funds and the options available for bringing forward a community project.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** to note the report.

F/24/69 Asset Register

The Clerk outlined the items added to and deleted from the Asset Register and arising from questions, explained the valuation criteria for assets within the register.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Reconciliation of Assets and Asset Register as at 31st March 2025.

F/24/70) Treasury Management Strategy

The Clerk outlined the Treasury Management Strategy and highlighted the amendment within paragraph 2.5 "Liquidity of Investments". The Clerk explained the Town Council's current investments and advised that he is in discussions with NatWest about additional investment opportunities.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report and approve the Treasury Management Strategy for a further 12 months.

F/24/71) Insurance Claim

The Clerk outlined the circumstances of an insurance claim in the sum of £2,762 and that, apart from a small excess in the sum of £100, the full cost of the claim should be received. Final approval from the insurers is awaited. The Clerk reassured Members that security has been increased at the Town Council's offices to prevent, as far as possible, another incident of this nature.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the update.

F/24/72) Community Capacity Fund

The Clerk advised that Cornwall Council has approved the grant application to the Good Growth Fund in the sum of £6,500 for a trailer and large garden games. The grant application was submitted to the 2025/26 budget round, but due to a surplus, Cornwall Council has approved the grant against the 2024/25 budget. A condition of the grant is to show the spend before 31st March 2025.

The Clerk advised that due to the very short timescales given to fulfil the grant obligations (3 working days), he agreed to the offer from Cornwall Council under delegated procedures and fulfilled the grant conditions by purchasing the equipment before 31st March 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to endorse the action taken by the Town Clerk.

F/24/73) St Austell Library

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on the following:

- The re-configured Library Help Desk
- Two retirements and the resultant two vacant positions
- The disconnection of the Customer Service telephone line
- The excellent performance figures for March
- SALSA. VE Day, VJ Day and 65th Birthday Events.

Arising from the above, Members expressed their gratitude that the Town Council election packs could be picked up from the Library and suggested that Cornwall Council should be asked to make this the default venue for picking up Town Council election packs in the future.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should write to Cornwall Council to request that the library is the default venue for prospective Town Councillors to pick up an election pack.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** to note the update.

Before the meeting closed, Councillor Brown expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Town Council to Councillor French, Chair of the Committee, who is standing down at the election. He highlighted his diplomacy and tact as a particular strength and that he would be missed in the Council Chamber.

Councillor French advised that he had been a Town Councillor for 16 years and thanked Councillor Brown for his kind words.

F/24/74) Dates of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee is due to take place on 23rd June 2025.

The meeting closed at 7.02pm.

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

23rd JUNE 2025

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with an update on income and expenditure to the 31st May 2025 and a copy of the Council's latest bank reconciliation statements.

2. LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

It is a legal requirement for the Town Council to set a budget annually and it is good practice to monitor that budget at regular intervals. The Town Clerk monitors budgets monthly and provides regular budget monitoring reports to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. It is part of the remit of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to monitor and manage budgets on behalf of the Town Council.

3. RESOURCE ISSUES

None outside of existing budgets.

4. EQUALITIES ISSUES

None.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

None.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members note the attached budget monitoring reports and bank reconciliation statement.

The budget variance report for May 2025 and the financial year to the 31st May 2025 is attached for information. After allowing for the

Town Centre Revitalisation projects which are to be largely funded from grant monies the income and expenditure are within acceptable limits.

Significant variances are explained below:

- **Car Park income** – more income than anticipated
- **Interest income** – higher interest rates and balances
- **Other grants and contributions** – Shared Prosperity Fund and Town Vitality Fund grants
- **Contract payments** – Church Piazza scheme costs which will be funded largely from grant.
- **Election costs** – awaiting recharge from Cornwall Council
- **Grounds maintenance supplies** – purchase of summer bedding plants.
- **IT/Communications** – software licences paid in advance
- **Miscellaneous expenses** – Town centre projects charged to contract payments
- **Miscellaneous Grants** – grants to St Austell BID
- **Other transport/plant expenses** – new mower/brushcutters.
- **Play equipment** – Projects not commenced
- **Rates** – likely to be slightly above budget
- **Repairs/Maintenance of Premises** – changing places toilet
- **Salaries and Wages** – pay award awaited

DAVID POOLEY - TOWN CLERK

Budget Variance

St Austell Town Council

For the month ended 31 May 2025

	MAY 2025	MAY 2025					APR-MAY 2025		
		OVERALL BUDGET	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	APR-MAY 2025	OVERALL BUDGET	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	
Trading Income									
Car Park Income	24,996.45	20,000.00	4,996.45	↑ 24.98%	45,002.59	40,000.00	5,002.59	↑ 12.51%	↑
Interest Income	8,861.74	3,000.00	5,861.74	↑ 195.39%	8,997.12	6,000.00	2,997.12	↑ 49.95%	↑
Library Income	210.24	467.00	(256.76)	↓ -54.98%	678.48	934.00	(255.52)	↓ -27.36%	↓
Other Grants and Contributions	-	-	-	-	11,959.44	-	11,959.44	-	-
Other Income	955.00	202.00	753.00	↑ 372.77%	2,029.16	404.00	1,625.16	↑ 402.27%	↑
Precept Payments	-	-	-	-	650,550.00	650,550.00	-	-	-
Public Convenience Charges	-	221.00	(221.00)	↓ -100.00%	74.16	442.00	(367.84)	↓ -83.22%	↓
Rent Received	50.00	868.00	(818.00)	↓ -94.24%	375.00	1,736.00	(1,361.00)	↓ -78.40%	↓
Total Trading Income	35,073.43	24,758.00	10,315.43	41.67%	719,665.95	700,066.00	19,599.95	2.80%	
Gross Profit	35,073.43	24,758.00	10,315.43	41.67%	719,665.95	700,066.00	19,599.95	2.80%	
Operating Expenses									
Books and Publications	-	-	-	-	-	50.00	(50.00)	↓ -100.00%	↓
Cleaning & Domestic Supplies	1,653.19	1,753.00	(99.81)	↓ -5.69%	3,534.15	3,506.00	28.15	↑ 0.80%	↑
Contract Hire and Operating Leases	-	46.00	(46.00)	↓ -100.00%	-	92.00	(92.00)	↓ -100.00%	↓
Contract Payments	52,663.74	14,085.00	38,578.74	↑ 273.90%	65,733.81	28,170.00	37,563.81	↑ 133.35%	↑
Election Expenses	-	35,000.00	(35,000.00)	↓ -100.00%	-	35,000.00	(35,000.00)	↓ -100.00%	↓

Budget Variance

	MAY 2025	MAY 2025 OVERALL BUDGET	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	APR-MAY 2025	APR-MAY 2025 OVERALL BUDGET	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %
Electricity	410.86	1,642.00	(1,231.14) ↓	-74.98% ↓	1,283.16	3,284.00	(2,000.84) ↓	-60.93% ↓
Fuel	869.92	1,030.00	(160.08) ↓	-15.54% ↓	2,138.40	2,060.00	78.40 ↑	3.81% ↑
Gas	280.97	602.00	(321.03) ↓	-53.33% ↓	231.97	1,204.00	(972.03) ↓	-80.73% ↓
Grounds Maintenance Supplies	6,729.62	2,146.00	4,583.62 ↑	213.59% ↑	7,580.02	4,292.00	3,288.02 ↑	76.61% ↑
Insurances	-	-	-	-	11,485.00	11,920.00	(435.00) ↓	-3.65% ↓
IT / Communications	1,014.83	1,968.00	(953.17) ↓	-48.43% ↓	9,184.09	3,936.00	5,248.09 ↑	133.34% ↑
Mayors Allowances	-	62.00	(62.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓	-	124.00	(124.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓
Miscellaneous Expenses	4,002.04	7,638.00	(3,635.96) ↓	-47.60% ↓	6,984.35	15,276.00	(8,291.65) ↓	-54.28% ↓
Miscellaneous Grants	-	6,160.00	(6,160.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓	37,497.09	12,320.00	25,177.09 ↑	204.36% ↑
Office Supplies	385.62	229.00	156.62 ↑	68.39% ↑	596.95	458.00	138.95 ↑	30.34% ↑
Other Transport/plant expenses	17.31	2,321.00	(2,303.69) ↓	-99.25% ↓	628.63	4,642.00	(4,013.37) ↓	-86.46% ↓
Play Equipment	1,419.50	4,167.00	(2,747.50) ↓	-65.93% ↓	1,562.69	8,334.00	(6,771.31) ↓	-81.25% ↓
Printing and Stationery	787.59	363.00	424.59 ↑	116.97% ↑	1,570.48	726.00	844.48 ↑	116.32% ↑
Protective Clothing	224.12	238.00	(13.88) ↓	-5.83% ↓	353.67	476.00	(122.33) ↓	-25.70% ↓
Publicity	225.00	158.00	67.00 ↑	42.41% ↑	240.96	316.00	(75.04) ↓	-23.75% ↓
Rates	5,449.00	3,799.00	1,650.00 ↑	43.43% ↑	10,907.10	7,598.00	3,309.10 ↑	43.55% ↑
Recruitment	-	108.00	(108.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓	80.00	216.00	(136.00) ↓	-62.96% ↓
Rent / Room Hire	-	850.00	(850.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓	-	1,700.00	(1,700.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓
Repairs / Maintenance Premises	12,004.02	3,580.00	8,424.02 ↑	235.31% ↑	16,420.05	7,160.00	9,260.05 ↑	129.33% ↑
Repairs/ Maintenance-Vehicles/Plant	428.37	634.00	(205.63) ↓	-32.43% ↓	711.29	1,268.00	(556.71) ↓	-43.90% ↓

Budget Variance

	MAY 2025	MAY 2025 OVERALL BUDGET	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	APR-MAY 2025	APR-MAY 2025 OVERALL BUDGET	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %
Road Fund / Taxes	-	118.00	(118.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓	-	236.00	(236.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓
Salaries / Wages	62,446.31	66,158.00	(3,711.69) ↓	-5.61% ↓	123,122.53	132,316.00	(9,193.47) ↓	-6.95% ↓
Small Grants Scheme	150.00	667.00	(517.00) ↓	-77.51% ↓	450.00	1,334.00	(884.00) ↓	-66.27% ↓
Subscriptions	-	740.00	(740.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓	4,253.45	1,480.00	2,773.45 ↑	187.40% ↑
Training	130.00	417.00	(287.00) ↓	-68.82% ↓	130.00	834.00	(704.00) ↓	-84.41% ↓
Transport Insurance	-	350.00	(350.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓	-	700.00	(700.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓
Travel and Subsistence	-	71.00	(71.00) ↓	-100.00% ↓	42.88	142.00	(99.12) ↓	-69.80% ↓
Water	154.81	219.00	(64.19) ↓	-29.31% ↓	248.84	438.00	(189.16) ↓	-43.19% ↓
Total Operating Expenses	151,446.82	157,319.00	(5,872.18)	-3.73%	306,971.56	291,608.00	15,363.56	5.27%
Net Profit	(116,373.39)	(132,561.00)	16,187.61	12.21%	412,694.39	408,458.00	4,236.39	1.04%

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL

BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT:

31.5.25

	£	£
Business Current Account		135,462.63
Mayor's Charity Account		2,806.91
Business Direct Reserve Account		274,609.84
Treasury Deposit Account		200,392.49
Petty Cash		48.49
Library Float		100.00
Total in Bank		613,420.36

Total Unpresented Cheques	0.00
	613,420.36

Outstanding receipts

0.00
613,420.36

Accounting System Bank Balance:

Opening Bank Balance	114,995.35
Expenditure to date	754285.39
Income to date	1252317.91
	613,027.87

Accounting System Payment Recorded but yet paid

Treasury Account interest	392.49
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Accounting System Bank Balance

613,420.36

**0.00
balanced**

Note:

Attach Accounting Statement and remember to adjust for the Outstanding Accounting System Entries after balancing.

Reconciliation Completed:

Date: 3 6 25

Reviewed:

Date: 3 6 25

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

23rd JUNE 2025

REGULAR PAYMENTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To confirm and approve the current practice with regard to the use of BACS and direct debits for regular payments.

2. LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

It is a requirement of the Town Council's Financial Regulations that a report be made to the Finance and General Purposes Committee from time to time of regular payments being made by BACS and Direct Debit. The Town Clerk monitors all such payments regularly and ensures that they are properly accounted for and are within budget. All such payments are included in the payment schedules reported to the Council and checked by the Chairman of the Committee.

3. RESOURCE ISSUES

None outside of existing budgets. Generally direct payments and BACS payments are more efficient than traditional cheque payments.

4. EQUALITIES ISSUES

None.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Very minor benefits associated with automated payments.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members note and approve the attached payment lists.

Background

The Council's Financial Regulations include the following paragraphs:

- 7.8 With the approval of the Finance and General Purposes Committee in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed/approved online by two authorised persons. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee at least every two years.
- 7.9 Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the Finance and General Purposes Committee provided that each payment is approved by two authorised officers or councillors, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.10 If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two authorised persons, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee at least every two years.

In recent years there has been a move by suppliers towards the use of electronic payment systems and often the Council is required to set up direct debit facilities or to pay by BACS. In the case of direct debits all mandates are signed by two approved signatories and all payments are reported to the Council in the payment schedules considered at each Council meeting. For BACS payments two councillors sign lists of payments to be made or made and two officers are involved in the processing of payments to ensure a separation of duties and sufficient internal controls exist.

Lists of direct debits and regular BACS payments are attached for approval.

DAVID POOLEY
TOWN CLERK

APPROVED DIRECT DEBITS

<u>Company</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Allstar Business Solutions	Fuel	Ad hoc
Biffa	Wheelie bins	Stable Block
British Gas	Electricity	Feeder pillar, Fore Street
British Gas	Electricity	Public Convenience
BT	Internet	Monthly
Cobalt	Mobile phones	Monthly
Cornwall Council	Business rates (4)	Monthly
HMRC	VAT	Quarterly
Information Commissioners Office	Data Protection Registration	Annual
Initial	Feminine Hygiene	Stable Block
Nat West	Bankline	Monthly
Nat West	Credit card	Monthly
Screwfix	Various	Monthly
Worldpay	Credit/debit card service (2)	Monthly
Xero	Subscription	Monthly

REGULAR BACS PAYMENTS

Staff (20 No.)	Salaries	Monthly
HMRC	Income Tax and NI	Monthly
Cornwall Council	Pension contributions	Monthly
Standard Life	Pension contributions	Monthly
AIB Merchant Services	Car Park Charges	Monthly
APS Construction	Toilet Cleaning	Quarterly
Bemrose Mobile Limited	Transaction charges	Quarterly
BT	CCTV Line Rental	Annual
Enerveo	CCTV Maintenance	Quarterly
Engie Power Ltd	Street lights electricity	Monthly
G4S	Cash handling	Monthly
Garden Services SW	South Street maintenance	Monthly
Griggs	Grounds Maintenance supplies	Monthly
Hutchison 3G UK Ltd	WiFi Poltair Café	Monthly
ITEC	Telephones	Quarterly
ITEC	Printers/photocopiers	Monthly
Kent County Council	Gas/Electricity	Monthly
Mays Country Store	Grounds Maintenance supplies	Monthly
MRS	Radio rental	Quarterly
Newquay Town Council	CCTV Monitoring	Quarterly
Objective IT Services	Computer support	Monthly
SWW Source for Business	Water charges	Monthly
Vision ICT	Website	Annual
Young People Cornwall	Grants	Quarterly
Zurich	Insurances	Annual

17th June 2025

**ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

23rd JUNE 2025

CCTV MAINTENANCE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To agree to proceed with a tender process in partnership with Newquay Town Council for the repair and maintenance of CCTV cameras and infrastructure.

2. LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The Town Council and Newquay Town Council operate the CCTV systems in Newquay and St Austell as a partnership. The service is highly regarded by Newquay and St Austell Police who have access to the cameras, footage and operators almost 24/7.

The use of CCTV is highly regulated and sufficient controls and an experienced contractor are essential to comply with the legislation governing CCTV.

3. RESOURCE ISSUES

None outside of existing budgets. Annual maintenance costs for St Austell cameras and infrastructure are approximately £10,000. The joint procurement should ensure co-ordination of CCTV system maintenance across Newquay and St Austell and economies of scale.

4. EQUALITIES ISSUES

None.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

None.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members authorise the Town Clerk to proceed with a tender exercise in partnership with Newquay Town Council for the repair and maintenance of CCTV systems.

Newquay Town Council are keen to seek tenders for CCTV system repair and maintenance. Existing contracts end later this year. There is an opportunity to do this jointly with Newquay Town Council as the lead body. As our systems are integrated this makes absolute sense. It is recommended that Members authorise the Town Clerk to proceed with a tender exercise in partnership with Newquay Town Council for the repair and maintenance of CCTV systems.

DAVID POOLEY - TOWN CLERK

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

23rd JUNE 2025

ELECTRONIC AGENDAS AND REPORTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To offer Members the option of receiving agendas electronically only and to consider the costs and benefits of managing meetings without paper.

2. LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

By law, the Town Clerk must issue a summons to Councillors for meetings. Councillors can opt to receive this summons and agendas/reports electronically rather than in paper form. Paper agendas offer a lower risk solution and will operate when electricity and/or Wi-Fi is not available. In any case, some paper agendas will always be required for members of the public and/or Committee Chairs.

3. RESOURCE ISSUES

The approximate cost of printing and posting out agendas is as shown in the attached appendix. Postage costs are approximately £3.60 per envelope.

4. EQUALITIES ISSUES

Some Members may not have the IT skills to utilise the electronic systems provided and will wish to retain paper copies of their agendas. Equally electronic agendas may be better for people with some disabilities. There are good arguments for retaining both forms of agendas to maximise accessibility.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The paper sourced by the Town Council meets the EU Ecolabel criteria.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

1. Note the content of this report;
 2. If they do not wish to receive agendas in paper form and are prepared to use their own computer equipment advise the office to only supply future agendas and reports in electronic form.
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Background

The cost of posting agendas to Councillors has increased significantly in recent years. The attached workings identify the cost associated with printing and postage for agendas and reports in 2019/20 when last reviewed and for the 2025/26 year.

It is acknowledged that not all councillors will be able to afford appropriate IT equipment and/or feel confident using it to follow the business of a Council meeting.

In the past some Councillors have opted to receive agendas electronically only. If members would prefer not to receive paper copies of agendas they are asked to contact the office.

DAVID POOLEY
TOWN CLERK

St Austell Town Council



Lone Working Policy for Town Councillors

Introduction

St Austell Town Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of its Councillors whenever they are required to undertake Council business alone. This policy outlines the procedures and responsibilities to minimise risks associated with lone working.

This policy applies to all Councillors who may work alone either within Council premises, in the community or travelling to or from Council business.

Definition of Lone Working

Lone working refers to situations where Councillors work alone without direct supervision or immediate assistance. This can occur during site visits, community engagements, Councillor surgeries or when travelling to and from meetings.

Risk Assessment

In certain circumstances, a risk assessment should be conducted to identify potential hazards and implement measures to control risks. This includes:

- Assessing the environment where lone working will occur
- Identifying potential risks such as personal safety, health emergencies, or accidents
- Implementing control measures to mitigate identified risks
- Risk to reputation should be considered (e.g. individual members of the Planning and Regeneration Committee meeting with potential developers)

St Austell Town Council



Safe Working Practices

To ensure safe lone working, Councillors should:

- Inform a designated contact person of their location and expected duration of lone working
- Carry a mobile phone at all times for emergency communication
- Avoid high-risk areas and situations where possible
- Use personal safety devices if necessary
- Unless absolutely necessary, Councillors should not meet with people in their home
- Be aware of surroundings when travelling to and from Council engagements or meetings.

Reporting and Monitoring

Councillors must report any incidents or concerns related to lone working to Town Council officers. Regular reviews of lone working practices will be conducted to ensure ongoing safety and effectiveness.

Responsibilities

- **Councillors:** Follow the lone working policy and procedures, report incidents, and participate in training;
- **Town Council:** Provide necessary training, support, and resources to ensure safe lone working practices

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and relevant to the needs of the Councillors and the Council.

June 2025

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
23rd JUNE 2025**

WORK VEHICLES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the purchase of a tipper truck.

2. LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The Council currently owns a Citroen van, Peugeot tipper truck and two Ford tipper trucks.

In order to maintain the horticultural services, it is essential that the Town Council has a fleet of fit for purpose vehicles that are resourced in the most economically advantageous way.

One of the Ford tipper trucks is nearing end of life and needs replacing over the coming months.

3. RESOURCE ISSUES

The 2025/26 budget makes provision of £22,000 for the purchase of a replacement vehicle for the grounds maintenance service.

Either a trade in or sale of the existing vehicle will be sought.

4. EQUALITY ISSUES

None.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

At the present time, the market does not provide for a commercial electric truck to the standard that the Town Council requires. The positive climate and environment initiatives that the Town Council undertakes on an annual basis mitigates the negatives of the diesel emissions from the Town Council's vehicles.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED that a maximum budget of £22,000 be approved and the Town Clerk be authorised to acquire a second-hand tipper truck in the most economically advantageous way.

DAVID POOLEY
TOWN CLERK

ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST OF PAPER AGENDAS AND REPORTS

	Number of Meetings		Av Agenda pages		Agendas copied		Agendas Posted		Paper Cost		Copying cost		Post Cost		Staff Processing		Total	
	No.		No.		No.		No.		£		£		£		£		£	
2019/20 Cost																		
Council Meetings	10		50		20		20		29.30		45.97		300.00		46.12		421.39	
F & GP Committee	5		66		12		12		11.60		18.20		90.00		23.06		142.87	
Climate and Environment Committee	2		18		12		12		1.27		1.99		36.00		9.22		48.48	
Community Committee	5		68		12		12		11.95		18.76		90.00		23.06		143.77	
Planning & Regeneration	11		15		12		12		5.80		9.10		198.00		50.73		263.64	
Staffing	2		14		6		6		0.49		0.77		18.00		9.22		28.49	
									60.42		94.79		732.00		887.20		1713.99	
2025/26 Cost																		
Council Meetings	10		50		25		20		45.00		28.99		720.00		65.31		859.30	
F & GP Committee	5		66		18		14		21.38		13.78		252.00		32.65		319.82	
Climate and Environment Committee	2		18		10		7		1.30		0.84		50.40		13.06		65.59	
Community Committee	5		68		18		14		22.03		14.20		252.00		32.65		320.88	
Planning & Regeneration	11		15		18		12		10.69		6.89		415.80		71.84		505.22	
Staffing	2		14		8		6		0.81		0.52		37.80		13.06		52.19	
									101.21		65.21		1728.00		1894.42		3687.63	

