

St Austell Town Council



Finance and General Purposes Committee

To: All Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

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

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend a **Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee** to be held in **Chi Austel, White River Place, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5AZ** on **Monday 22nd June 2026 at 6pm.**



David Pooley
Town Clerk

15th June 2026

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).

3. Dispensations

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

4. Minutes of meeting held on 26th February 2026

**Pages
1 - 4**

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

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. Town Councillor Vacancy – Bethel & Holmbush Ward

**Pages
5 - 6**

(Purpose: To receive an update on a vacancy within the Bethel & Holmbush Ward). (Notice attached).

8. Register of Interest

**Pages
7 - 10**

(Purpose: To receive an update on new legislation with regard to the publication of a Councillor's home address). (Report attached).

9. Vexatious Complaints Policy

**Pages
11 - 18**

(Purpose: To review and approve a Policy for dealing with Abusive, Persistent or Vexatious Complaints and Complainants). (Attached).

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- 10. Member-Officer Relations Protocol** **Pages 19 - 24**
(Purpose: To review and approve a Member-Officer Relations Protocol). (Attached).
- 11. Budget Monitoring Report** **Pages 25 - 30**
(Purpose: To review the Town Council's budget monitoring report for the period 1st April 2026 to the 31st May 2026). (Report attached).
- 12. Member Training – 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026** **Pages 31 to 32**
(Purpose: To note the Member Training record for the 2025/26 financial year). (Attached).
- 13. Members Allowances**
(Purpose: To review and approve the Members Scheme of Allowances). (To follow)
- 14. Library**
(Purpose: To receive an update on the activities of St Austell Library). (To follow).
- 15. Dates of Next Meetings**
(Purpose: To note the date of next meeting – 28th September 2026).

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MINUTES of a MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 16th FEBRUARY 2026 in Chi Austel, White River Place, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5AZ at 6pm.

Present: Councillors: Brown, Clemo, Cohen, Gray (Chair), Hamilton, Lanxon, Marshall, Preece, Thompson and Whitehouse.

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

Also in attendance: Councillor Pearce (TEAMS)

F/25/49) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Kimber and Young.

F/25/50) Declarations of Interest

None.

F/25/51) Dispensations

None.

F/25/52) Minutes of meeting held on 3rd November 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd November 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

F/25/53) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that the licencing consultation was submitted (F/23/43), the Office/Depot lease has been finalised and is ready for signature by two Councillors (F/25/47) and Cornwall Council has agreed to reimburse the Town Council in respect of the telecommunication costs incurred in accordance with the lease dated 11th December 2028 (F/25/47).

F/25/54) Public participation

There were no members of the public present.

F/25/55) Insurance Renewal

The Clerk advised that the Town Council went out to tender for insurance in 2023 and appointed Zurich Municipal based on price and experience for 3 years and the policy awarded provided a clause permitting a one-year extension.

The Clerk further advised that new reinstatement valuations have been sought for Priory toilets, Poltair café and The House which reflect increased building costs and are reflected within the following options received from Zurich:

- 1 year extension - £12,304.09
- New 1 year policy - £12,959.56
- New 3 year long term agreement - £11,711.75

The Clerk recommended that the Town Council should accept the one-year extension option and seek tenders for up to 3 years with effect from April 2027.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept a one-year extension in the sum of £12,304.09 with Zurich Municipal and seek tenders for up to 3 years with effect from 1st April 2027.

F/25/56) CCTV

The Clerk advised that an offer of a grant from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has been received in the sum of £10,000 towards an investment of £21,700 for 3 additional fixed CCTV cameras and a re-deployable or mobile CCTV camera. He further advised that the Polkyth area is not currently covered by the Town Council's CCTV system and has been identified as an area that would benefit from CCTV coverage. The Clerk added that the area would need to be assessed to ensure that it is technically possible to link cameras at that site to the monitoring suite at Newquay Policy station.

The Clerk advised that Young People Cornwall are supportive of the proposal and, if Members are mindful to support the installation of cameras at Polkyth he would consult Cornwall Council's wellbeing team who are re-locating to The Registrars Office, the leisure centre and the Doctors surgery.

During discussion, Members raised the following:

- Whether a contribution towards the costs could be obtained from service providers on the site;
- The costs associated with the maintenance of the new cameras.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk be authorised to consult organisations based in the Polkyth area and, subject to the outcome of this exercise and there being no technical barriers to connecting further cameras to the existing system, acquire CCTV cameras to a value of approximately £21,700.

F/25/57) Budget Monitoring Report

The Clerk explained the key variations in the report for the current financial year to 31st January 2026 and raised no concerns.

Members noted that the car park income is performing well against budget and the Election re-charge from Cornwall Council was significantly lower than budgeted.

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

F/25/58) Information Technology Policy

The Clerk advised that it is good practice to have an Information Technology Policy and that he had adapted the model policy promoted by NALC for consideration.

During discussion, Members raised the following:

Paragraph 1.1.7

It was suggested that this section should read:

*"Staff and other authorised users are not to purchase any computer or mobile equipment (including software) **to connect into the Council's networks unless previously authorised**"*

Page 33

Delete the following bullet point:

"Contacts by the media relating to the council, should be referred to the Town Clerk or Mayor"

Paragraph 9.1.4 and 9.1.5

It was suggested that these paragraphs should be made more understandable.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the policy document should be supported with the amendments suggested above and to further amendments to improve paragraphs 9.1.4 and 9.1.5 in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

F/25/59) Risk Management

The Clerk advised that the Risk Management Strategy has been reviewed with no amendments required.

The Clerk highlighted the amendments made to the Risk Register and the high-risk (red) items identified.

During discussion, Members suggested that the loss of space for the Grounds Team should be incorporated into the register as a high risk and the risks associated with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor should be reviewed.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the updated Risk Management Strategy and the Strategic Risk Register be approved subject to the amendments suggested being incorporated/reviewed.

F/25/60) Treasury Management

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

F/25/61) Library

Members noted the update from the Library Manager.

It was **RESOLVED** to thank the Library Team for their excellent work and the Library Manager for her excellent report.

F/25/62) Dates of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee will be a full Council meeting, scheduled to take place on Monday 13th April 2026.

The meeting closed at 7.19pm.

NOTICE OF VACANCY IN OFFICE OF COUNCILLOR

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL – BETHEL AND HOLMBUSH WARD

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

pursuant to Section 87(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 that, due to the resignation of Crystal Pearce, a vacancy has arisen in the Office of Councillor for the above Town Council.

If by 23 June, 2026 (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Good Friday and Bank Holidays, after the date of this notice) a request for an election to fill said vacancy is made in writing (by hand or post) to the Proper Officer at the address below by TEN electors* for the said Town Ward, an election will be held to fill the said vacancy, otherwise the vacancy will be filled by co-option.

If an election is called, it will take place not later than 25 August, 2026.

Dated 3 June, 2026

Proper Officer
Electoral Services
0E
County Hall
Treyew Road
Truro
TR1 3AY

*If you add your name to a petition, or write to us to request an election, please be aware that election petitions are public documents and are available for inspection. Please see our privacy notice for more information.

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/the-council-and-democracy/elections/town-and-parish-council-vacancies/>
<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/y5oo0ybg/by-election-request-privacy-notice.pdf>

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

22nd JUNE 2026

REGISTER OF INTEREST

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with an update on new legislation with regard to the publication of a Councillor's home address.

2. LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

As part of the legislation which underpins the Code of Conduct, town and parish councillors and co-opted members, must register their disclosable pecuniary interests, including their home address. Any new interest should be registered within 28 days. The requirement to publish a Councillor's home address has now been removed.

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 guidance and complete revised register of interest forms when supplied.

Background

As part of the legislation which underpins the Code of Conduct, town and

parish councillors and co-opted members, must register their disclosable pecuniary interests, including their home address. Any new interest should be registered within 28 days.

Following a recent change by the Government, a Councillor's home address will no longer appear on the published Registers of Interests – unless you request otherwise. Instead, it will be replaced with a note stating that there is an interest under this section, which is withheld under Section 32(2) of the Localism Act 2011.

Due to the format of existing records, Cornwall Council cannot easily update over 2,000 forms or identify members who wish to keep their home address public. Therefore all current Registers of Interests will be removed from the Cornwall Council website on 29 June 2026. The records will still be held by the Monitoring Officer.

Members should then submit a new Register of Interests form, confirming whether they want their address published or withheld.

New forms will be distributed shortly. Councillors are asked to complete them as soon as possible and return them to the office for publication in the appropriate format.

From 29 June 2026:

- The Monitoring Officer will hold the Register of Interest form which contains your home address.
- Register of Interest forms published online will not include your home address, unless you request otherwise in writing.
- Where your address is withheld, it will be replaced with the standard note stating you have registered an interest under this section, but is withheld under Section 32(2) of the Localism Act 2011.

- At meetings where the matter under discussion may have an effect on your home address, you will be required to state you have an interest in the matter under discussion, but not what that interest is.
- If your home address is a disclosable pecuniary interest for the purpose of the matter under discussion, you must leave the meeting for that issue in line with standard procedures.

DAVID POOLEY - TOWN CLERK

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL



POLICY FOR DEALING WITH ABUSIVE, PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS AND COMPLAINANTS

Responsible Officer
Date approved
Date of review

Town Clerk
June 2026
May 2030

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy identifies situations where a complainant, either individually or as part of a group, or a group of complainants, might be considered to be habitual or vexatious and ways of responding to these situations.
- 1.2 In this policy the term habitual means '*done repeatedly or as a habit*'. The term vexatious is recognised in law and means '*denoting an action or the bringer of an action that is brought without sufficient grounds for winning, purely to cause annoyance to the defendant*'. This policy intends to assist in identifying and managing persons who seek to be disruptive to the Town Council through pursuing an unreasonable course of conduct.
- 1.3 The term complaint in this policy includes requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018 and reference to the Complaints Procedure is, where relevant, to be interpreted as meaning a request under those Acts.
- 1.4 Habitual or vexatious complainants can be a problem for Town Council staff and members. The difficulty in handling such complainants is that they are time consuming and wasteful of resources in terms of Officer and Member time. While the Town Council endeavours to respond with patience and sympathy to the needs of all complainants there are times when there is nothing further which can reasonably be done to assist or to rectify a real or perceived problem.
- 1.5 Raising of legitimate queries or criticisms of a complaints procedure as it progresses, for example if agreed timescales are not met, should not in itself lead to someone being regarded as a vexatious or an unreasonably persistent complainant. Similarly, the fact that a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint and seeks to challenge it once, or more than once, should not necessarily cause him or her to be labelled vexatious or unreasonably persistent.
- 1.6 The aim of this policy is to contribute to the overall aim of dealing with all complainants in ways which are demonstrably consistent, fair and reasonable.

2. Habitual or Vexatious Complainants

- 2.1 For the purpose of this policy the following definition of habitual or vexatious complainants will be used:

The repeated and/or obsessive pursuit of: -

- (1) *unreasonable complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes; and or*
- (2) *reasonable complaints in an unreasonable manner*

- 2.2 Prior to considering its implementation the Town Council will send a summary of this policy to the complainant to give them prior notification of its possible implementation.
- 2.3 Where complaints continue and have been identified as habitual or vexatious in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 3, the Town Clerk will convene a panel of three members to including the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor) the Chairman (or Vice Chairman) of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and one other member to seek agreement to treat the complainant as a habitual or vexatious complainant and for the appropriate course of action to be taken. Section 4 details the options available for dealing with habitual or vexatious complaints.
- 2.4 The Town Clerk on behalf of the Town Council will notify complainants, in writing, of the reasons why their complaint has been treated as habitual or vexatious and the action that will be taken. **The Cornwall Councillor for that area will also be informed that a constituent has been designated as a habitual or vexatious complainant.**
- 2.5 The status of the complainant will be kept under review. If a complainant subsequently demonstrates a more reasonable approach, then their status will be reviewed.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 St Austell Town Council define unreasonably persistent and vexatious complainants as those complainants who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the Town Council, hinder the Town Council's consideration of their or other people's complaints. The description '*unreasonably persistent*' and '*vexatious*' may apply separately or jointly to a particular complainant.
- 3.2 Examples include the way in which, or frequency with which, complainants raise their complaint with staff or how complainants respond when informed of the Council's decision about the complaint.
- 3.3 Features of an unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainant include the following (the list is not exhaustive, nor does one single feature on its own necessarily imply that the person will be considered as being in this category):

An unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainant may:

- Have insufficient or no grounds for their complaint and be making the complaint only to annoy (or for reasons that he or she does not admit or make obvious)
- Refuse to specify the grounds of a complaint despite offers of assistance
- Refuse to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved
- Refuse to accept that issues are not within the remit of the complaints policy and procedure despite having been provided with information about the scope of the policy and procedure
- Refuse to accept that issues are not within the power of the Council to investigate, change or influence.
- Insist on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice (e.g. insisting that there must not be any written record of the complaint)
- Make what appear to be groundless complaints about the staff dealing with the complaints, and seek to have them dismissed or replaced
- Make an unreasonable number of contacts with the Council, by any means in relation to a specific complaint or complaints
- Make persistent and unreasonable demands or expectations of staff and/or the complaints process after the unreasonableness has been explained to the complainant (an example of this could be a complainant who insists on immediate responses to questions, frequent and/or complex letters, telephone calls or emails)
- Harass or verbally abuse or otherwise seek to intimidate staff dealing with their complaint, in relation to their complaint by use of foul or inappropriate language or by the use of offensive and racist language
- Raise subsidiary or new issues whilst a complaint is being addressed that were not part of the complaint at the start of the complaint process
- Introduce trivial or irrelevant new information whilst the complaint is being investigated and expect this to be taken into account and commented on
- Change the substance or basis of the complaint without reasonable justification whilst the complaint is being addressed
- Deny statements he or she made at an earlier stage in the complaint process
- Electronically record meetings and conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of the other person(s) involved
- Adopts an excessively 'scattergun' approach, for instance, pursuing a complaint or complaints not only with the Council, but at the same time with, for example, a Member of Parliament, other Councils, elected Councillors of this and other Councils, the Council's Independent Auditor, the Standards Board, the Police or solicitors.
- Refuse to accept the outcome of the complaint process after its conclusion, repeatedly arguing the point, complaining about the outcome, and/or denying that an adequate response has been given
- Make the same complaint repeatedly, perhaps with minor differences, after the complaints procedure has been concluded and insist that the

- minor differences make these 'new' complaints which should be put through the full complaints procedure
- Persistently approach the Council through different routes about the same issue
 - Persist in seeking an outcome which Council has explained is unrealistic for legal or policy (or other valid) reasons
 - Refuse to accept documented evidence as factual
 - Complain about or challenge an issue based on an historic and/or an irreversible decision or incident
 - Combine some or all of these features

4. Imposing Restrictions

- 4.1 The Town Council will ensure that the complaint is being, or has been, investigated properly according to the adopted complaints procedure
- 4.2 In the first instance the Town Clerk will consult with the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor) and Chairman (or Vice Chairman) of the Finance and General Purposes Committee prior to issuing a warning to the complainant. The Town Clerk will contact the complainant in writing, or by email, to explain why their behaviour is causing concern and ask them to change their behaviour and outline the actions that the council may take if they do not comply.
- 4.3 If the disruptive behaviour continues, the Town Clerk will issue a reminder letter to the complainant advising them that the way in which they will be allowed to contact the Town Council in future will be restricted. This decision will be made following the Town Clerk consulting with a panel of three members to include usually the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor) and Chairman (or Vice-Chairman) of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. This letter will inform the complainant in writing of what procedures have been put in place and for what period.
- 4.4 Any restriction that is imposed on the complainant's contact with the Council will be appropriate and proportionate and the complainant will be advised of the period of time that the restriction will be in place for. In most cases restrictions will apply for upto 12 months, but in exceptional cases this may be extended. In such cases the restrictions would be reviewed on a quarterly basis.
- 4.5 Restrictions will be tailored to deal with the individual circumstances of the complainant and may include:
- Banning the complainant from making contact by telephone except through a third party e.g. a solicitor, a Councillor or a friend acting on their behalf
 - Banning the complainant from sending emails to individual and/or all Council Officers and insisting they only correspond by letter
 - Requiring contact to take place with one named member of staff only

- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and/or times and/or duration
 - Requiring any personal contact to take place in the presence of an appropriate witness
 - Letting the complainant know that the Town Council will not reply to or acknowledge any further contact from them on the specific topic of that complaint (in this case, a designated member of staff will be identified who will read future correspondence)
- 4.6 When the decision has been taken to apply this policy to a complainant, the Town Clerk will contact the complainant in writing to explain: -
- Why the decision has been taken
 - What action is being taken
 - The duration of that action
- 4.7 The Town Clerk will enclose a copy of this policy in the letter to the complainant.
- 4.8 Where a complainant continues to behave in a way that is unacceptable, the Town Clerk, in consultation with a panel of three Members to include the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor) and Chairman (or Vice Chairman) of the Finance and General Purposes Committee may decide to refuse all contact with the complainant and stop any investigation into his or her complaint.
- 4.9 Where the behaviour is so extreme or it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, other options will be considered, e.g. the reporting of the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, the complainant may not be given prior warning of that action.
- 5. New complaints from complainants who are treated as abusive, vexatious or persistent**
- 5.1 New complaints from people who have come under this policy will be treated on their merits. The Town Clerk, in consultation with a panel of three Members to include the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor) and Chairman (or Vice Chairman) of the Finance and General Purposes Committee will decide whether any restrictions that have been applied before are still appropriate and necessary in relation to the new complaint. A blanket policy is not supported, nor ignoring genuine service requests or complaints where they are founded.
- 5.2 The fact that a complainant is judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious and any restrictions imposed on Council's contact with him or her, will be recorded and notified to those who need to know within the Council.

6. Review

- 6.1 The status of a complainant judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious will be reviewed by a panel of three members to include the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor) and the Chairman (or Vice Chairman) of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, after three months, and at the end of every subsequent three months within the period during which the policy is to apply.
- 6.2 The complainant will be informed of the result of this review if the decision to apply this policy has been changed or extended.

7. Record Keeping

- 7.1 The Town Clerk will retain adequate records of the details of the case and the action that has been taken. Records will be kept of: -
- The name and address of each member of the public who is treated as abusive, vexatious or persistent
 - When the restriction came into force and ends
 - What the restrictions are
 - When the person and Council were advised
- 7.2 The Finance and General Purposes Committee will be provided with an annual report giving information about members of the public who have been treated as vexatious/persistent as per this policy.

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL



MEMBER-OFFICER RELATIONS PROTOCOL

Responsible Officer	Town Clerk
Date approved	June 2026
Date of review	May 2030

1 Background

- 1.1 This protocol is intended to assist Councillors and the Town Clerk, in approaching some of the sensitive circumstances which arise in a challenging working environment.
- 1.2 The reputation and integrity of the council is significantly influenced by the effectiveness of Councillors, the Town Clerk and other staff working together to support each other's roles.
- 1.3 The aim is effective and professional working relationships characterised by mutual trust, respect and courtesy.

2. Roles of Councillors and Employees

- 2.1 The respective roles of Councillors and employees can be summarised as follows:

Councillors and Officers are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one another, but their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Officers are responsible to the council. Their job is to give advice to Councillors and to the council, and to carry out the council's work under the direction and control of the council and relevant committees.

2.2 Councillors

- 2.2.1 Councillors have four main areas of responsibility:
- To determine council policy and provide community leadership;
 - To monitor and review council performance in delivering services;
 - To represent the council externally; and
 - To act as advocates for their constituents.
- 2.2.2 All Councillors have the same rights and obligations in their relationship with the Town Clerk and other employees, regardless of their status or political party, and should be treated equally.
- 2.2.3 Councillors should not involve themselves in the day to day running of the Council. This is the Town Clerk's responsibility, and the Town Clerk will be acting on instructions from the Council or its Committees, within an agreed job description.

- 2.2.4 Individual Councillors cannot commit the Council to expenditure or a particular course of action.

2.3 Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees

Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs have additional responsibilities. These responsibilities mean that their relationships with employees may be different and more complex than those of other Councillors. However, they must still respect the impartiality of Officers and must not ask them to undertake work of a party political nature, or to do anything which would prejudice their impartiality.

2.4 Officers

The role of Officers is to give advice and information to Councillors and to implement the policies determined by the Council.

In giving such advice to Councillors, and in preparing and presenting reports, it is the responsibility of the Officer to express his/her own professional views and recommendations. An Officer may report the views of individual Councillors on an issue, but the recommendation should be the Officer's own. If a Councillor wishes to express a contrary view they should not pressurise the officer to make a recommendation contrary to the officer's professional view, nor victimise an officer for discharging his/her responsibilities.

3. Expectations

3.1 All Councillors can expect:

- A commitment from Officers to the Council as a whole, and not to any individual Councillor, group of Councillors or political group
- A working partnership
- Officers to understand and support respective roles, workloads and pressures
- A timely response from Officers to enquiries and complaints
- Officer's professional advice, not influenced by political views or personal preferences
- Regular, up to date, information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities or positions that they hold on behalf of the Town Council

- Officers to be aware of and sensitive to the public and political environment locally
- Respect, courtesy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality from Officers
- Training and development opportunities to help them carry out their role effectively
- Not to have personal issues raised with them by Officers outside the council's agreed procedures
- That Officers will not use their contact with Councillors to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly
- That Officers will at all times comply with the relevant code of conduct as far as it applies
- If on an outside body to be required to provide update reports in a timely manner with an appropriate level of detail.

3.2 Officers can expect from Councillors:

- A working partnership and to be treated in a professional manner
- An understanding of, and support for, respective roles, workloads and pressures
- Leadership and direction
- Respect, courtesy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality
- Not to be bullied or to be put under undue pressure
- That Councillors will not use their position or relationship with officers to advance their personal interests or those of others or to influence decisions improperly
- That Councillors will at all times comply with the council's adopted Code of Conduct; bullying and harassment and dignity at work policies.

3.3 Some General Principles:

- Close personal relationships between Councillors and Officers can confuse their separate roles and get in the way of the proper conduct of Council business, not least by creating a perception in others that a particular Councillor or Officer is getting preferential treatment.
- Special relationships with particular individuals or party political groups should be avoided by officers as it can create suspicion that an employee favours that Councillor or political group above others.
- It is accepted that officers may have to communicate with an individual or a number of Councillors on specific items of business between meetings.

4. Political Groups

- 4.1 The Council does not operate on the basis of political groups.
- 4.2 Party political groups, if formed, will have no power to require the Town Clerk or any other employee to attend group meetings or to prepare written reports for them, and employees can legitimately refuse to do so. The Town Clerk and other Officers are responsible to the council as a whole and should not take action under instructions from any individual Councillor.
- 4.3 If the council adopts party political groupings, the Town Clerk should ensure that any reports or advice offered to a political group are statements of relevant facts, with an appraisal of options. It is not the Town Clerk's role to make recommendations to a political group but may do so if in the public interest.
- 4.4 If a report is prepared for one political group, the Town Clerk should advise all other political groups and non-aligned Councillors that the report has been prepared and make it available if requested.

5. When things go wrong

- 5.1 From time to time the relationship between Councillors and the Town Clerk (or other employees) may break down or become strained. Whilst it is always preferable to resolve matters informally or through conciliation by an appropriate third party, it is important that the council adopts a formal grievance protocol or procedure.
- 5.2 Cornwall Council's Monitoring Officer may be able to offer a mediation/conciliation role or it may be necessary to seek independent advice. Alternatively, the Cornwall Association of Local Councils or the Society of Local Council Clerks may be able to provide an independent person. The Mayor should not attempt to deal with grievances or work related performance or line management issues on their own. In line with the grievance policy, the Town Council should delegate authority to a small group of councillors made up from the staffing committee to deal with such personnel matters.
- 5.3 The law requires all employers to have disciplinary and grievance procedures. Adopting a grievance procedure enables individual employees to raise concerns, problems or complaints about their employment in an open and fair way.

- 5.4 The Town Council will maintain and regularly review separate disciplinary and grievance procedures and ensure that they comply with good practice.
- 5.5 If a Councillor is dissatisfied with the conduct, behaviour or performance of the Town Clerk or another employee, the matter should be raised with the Town Clerk and/or the Mayor in the first instance. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, it may be necessary to invoke the council's disciplinary procedure.

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

22nd JUNE 2026

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with an update on income and expenditure to the 31st May 2026 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 2026 and the financial year to the 31st May 2026 is attached for information. Income and expenditure is generally within acceptable limits.

Significant variances are explained below:

- **Other income** – Cornwall Council recharges re: telecommunications and footpaths
- **IT/Communications** – a number of annual licence fees paid
- **Miscellaneous expenses** – less project and events expenditure than anticipated
- **Miscellaneous grants** – grants to BID and Mayor’s charities
- **Other transport/plant expenses** – new vehicle not yet purchased.
- **Play equipment** – Delayed projects underway
- **Repairs/Maintenance Premises** – Priory Car Park wall repairs
- **Salaries and Wages** – pay award pending

DAVID POOLEY - TOWN CLERK

Budget Variance

St Austell Town Council

For the month ended 31 May 2026

	MAY 2026	MAY 2026	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	APR-MAY 2025	APR-MAY 2026	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %
		OVERALL BUDGET				OVERALL BUDGET		
Trading Income								
Car Park Income	22,691.23	22,083.00	608.23	2.75%	44,756.15	44,166.00	590.15	1.34%
Interest Income	4,386.73	3,167.00	1,219.73	38.51%	5,085.46	6,334.00	(1,248.54)	-19.71%
Library Income	391.02	467.00	(75.98)	-16.27%	1,305.79	934.00	371.79	39.81%
Other Income	1,069.01	212.00	857.01	404.25%	18,553.66	424.00	18,129.66	4,275.86%
Precept Payments	-	-	-	-	710,300.00	710,300.00	-	-
Public Convenience Charges	-	200.00	(200.00)	-100.00%	243.02	400.00	(156.98)	-39.25%
Rent Received	-	870.00	(870.00)	-100.00%	625.00	1,740.00	(1,115.00)	-64.08%
Total Trading Income	28,537.99	26,999.00	1,538.99	5.70%	780,869.08	764,298.00	16,571.08	2.17%
Gross Profit	28,537.99	26,999.00	1,538.99	5.70%	780,869.08	764,298.00	16,571.08	2.17%
Operating Expenses								
Books and Publications	-	-	-	-	-	50.00	(50.00)	-100.00%
Cleaning & Domestic Supplies	1,779.02	1,858.00	(78.98)	-4.25%	1,789.85	3,716.00	(1,926.15)	-51.83%
Contract Hire and Operating Leases	-	83.00	(83.00)	-100.00%	-	166.00	(166.00)	-100.00%
Contract Payments	19,123.28	16,121.00	3,002.28	18.62%	32,676.91	32,242.00	434.91	1.35%
Election Expenses	-	1,000.00	(1,000.00)	-100.00%	-	1,000.00	(1,000.00)	-100.00%
Electricity	1,554.15	3,070.00	(1,515.85)	-49.38%	3,228.14	6,140.00	(2,911.86)	-47.42%

Budget Variance

	MAY 2026		MAY 2026		APR-MAY 2026		APR-MAY 2026		VARIANCE %	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %
	OVERALL BUDGET	OVERALL BUDGET	OVERALL BUDGET	OVERALL BUDGET	OVERALL BUDGET	OVERALL BUDGET	OVERALL BUDGET	OVERALL BUDGET			
Fuel	1,631.10	1,082.00	549.10	↑	50.75%	↑	2,941.76	2,164.00	777.76	↑	35.94%
Gas	408.89	350.00	58.89	↑	16.83%	↑	414.16	700.00	(285.84)	↓	-40.83%
Grounds Maintenance Supplies	1,028.53	2,208.00	(1,179.47)	↓	-53.42%	↓	2,438.82	4,416.00	(1,977.18)	↓	-44.77%
Insurances	-	-	-	-	-	-	12,304.09	12,695.00	(390.91)	↓	-3.08%
IT / Communications	1,023.87	2,048.00	(1,024.13)	↓	-50.01%	↓	8,171.13	4,096.00	4,075.13	↑	99.49%
Mayors Allowances	99.81	62.00	37.81	↑	60.98%	↑	99.81	124.00	(24.19)	↓	-19.51%
Members Allowance	90.00	-	90.00	↑	-	-	186.35	-	186.35	↑	-
Miscellaneous Expenses	4,310.79	6,868.00	(2,557.21)	↓	-37.23%	↓	5,857.22	13,736.00	(7,878.78)	↓	-57.36%
Miscellaneous Grants	16,578.68	6,229.00	10,349.68	↑	166.15%	↑	45,789.00	12,458.00	33,331.00	↑	267.55%
Office Supplies	324.89	248.00	76.89	↑	31.00%	↑	443.01	496.00	(52.99)	↓	-10.68%
Other Transport/plant expenses	-	2,434.00	(2,434.00)	↓	-100.00%	↓	158.33	4,868.00	(4,709.67)	↓	-96.75%
Play Equipment	20,784.96	4,167.00	16,617.96	↑	398.80%	↑	20,784.96	8,334.00	12,450.96	↑	149.40%
Printing and Stationery	110.53	342.00	(231.47)	↓	-67.68%	↓	263.97	684.00	(420.03)	↓	-61.41%
Protective Clothing	40.82	249.00	(208.18)	↓	-83.61%	↓	88.81	498.00	(409.19)	↓	-82.17%
Publicity	225.00	285.00	(60.00)	↓	-21.05%	↓	231.00	570.00	(339.00)	↓	-59.47%
Rates	5,049.00	6,918.00	(1,869.00)	↓	-27.02%	↓	10,098.15	13,836.00	(3,737.85)	↓	-27.02%
Recruitment	-	108.00	(108.00)	↓	-100.00%	↓	-	216.00	(216.00)	↓	-100.00%
Rent / Room Hire	810.40	980.00	(169.60)	↓	-17.31%	↓	2,431.47	1,960.00	471.47	↑	24.05%
Repairs / Maintenance Premises	3,391.88	3,938.00	(546.12)	↓	-13.87%	↓	14,290.85	7,876.00	6,414.85	↑	81.45%
Repairs / Maintenance-Vehicles/Plant	38.00	666.00	(628.00)	↓	-94.29%	↓	155.44	1,332.00	(1,176.56)	↓	-88.33%

Budget Variance

	MAY 2026	MAY 2026	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	APR-MAY 2026	APR-MAY 2026	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	
	OVERALL BUDGET	OVERALL BUDGET			OVERALL BUDGET	OVERALL BUDGET			
Road Fund / Taxes	-	124.00	(124.00)	↓	362.50	248.00	114.50	↑	46.17%
Salaries / Wages	65,495.88	73,316.00	(7,820.12)	↓	132,351.52	146,632.00	(14,280.48)	↓	-9.74%
Small Grants Scheme	-	833.00	(833.00)	↓	250.00	1,666.00	(1,416.00)	↓	-84.99%
Subscriptions	-	775.00	(775.00)	↓	4,505.72	1,550.00	2,955.72	↑	190.69%
Training	170.38	404.00	(233.62)	↓	1,940.38	808.00	1,132.38	↑	140.15%
Transport Insurance	-	419.00	(419.00)	↓	-	838.00	(838.00)	↓	-100.00%
Travel and Subsistence	89.19	82.00	7.19	↑	149.62	164.00	(14.38)	↓	-8.77%
Water	170.11	441.00	(270.89)	↓	312.53	882.00	(569.47)	↓	-64.57%
Total Operating Expenses	144,329.16	137,708.00	6,621.16	↑	304,715.50	287,161.00	17,554.50	↑	6.11%
Net Profit	(115,791.17)	(110,709.00)	(5,082.17)	↓	476,153.58	477,137.00	(983.42)	↓	-0.21%

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL

BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT:

31.5.26

	£	£
Business Current Account		100,896.68
Mayor's Charity Account		1,828.68
Business Direct Reserve Account		281,866.92
Treasury Deposit Account		455,311.80
Petty Cash		92.52
Library Float		100.00
Total in Bank		<u>840,096.60</u>

Total Unpresented Cheques		<u>0.00</u>
		840,096.60

Outstanding receipts		
Unprocessed DD		26.40
		<u>0.00</u>
		840,123.00

Accounting System Bank Balance:

Opening Bank Balance		312,827.41
Expenditure to date		771867.24
Income to date		<u>1299162.83</u>
		840,123.00

Accounting System Receipt not recorded

Accounting System Bank Balance	<u>840,123.00</u>	0.00
		balanced

Note:

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

Reconciliation Completed: Date: 1.6.26

Reviewed: Date: 1.6.26

1. Includes NW Treasury account (investment)
2. Adjusted for NW treasury account transfer and interest

Members Training**1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026**

	Date	Training
Brown, Malcolm	Jul-25	Effective Chairing training
Brown, Malcolm	Mar-26	National Planning Policy Framework Reforms
Brown, Malcolm	Dec-25	Code of Conduct Training
Bull, Jackie		
Clemo, Richard		
Cohen, Anita		
Gray, Mark		
Hamilton, Colin	Jul-25	Effective Chairing training
Hawken, Maggie		
Kimber, Oliver		
Lanxon, Andrea	Jul-25	Effective Chairing training
Lingham, Jenny	Jul-25	Code of Conduct training
Marshall, Sean		
Pearce, Crystal		
Preece, Jeremy	Jul-25	Chairmanship Skills Training
Rowse, Jordan		
Stephens, Ethan	Jul-25	Effective Chairing training
Taylor, Tina	Oct-25	Code of Conduct Training
Thompson, Mike		
Whitehouse, Richard	Jul-25	Code of Conduct Training
Williams-Pears, Richard		
Young, Julian		
All Councillors	May-25	Role of a Councillor (External Training - Simon Fann)
All Councillors	Jul-25	Effective Chairing Training (External Training - Simon Fann)
All Councillors	Nov-25	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training (External Training - Simon Fann)

