

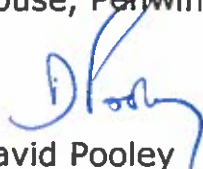
St Austell Town Council



To: All Members of the Staffing Committee

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend a meeting of **the Staffing Committee** to be held on **Tuesday 27th October 2026** at **6pm** at The Stable Block, Pondhu House, Perwinnick Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5DP.



David Pooley
Town Clerk

19th October 2026

Tel 01726 829859
e-mail: david.pooley@staustell-tc.gov.uk
Website: www.staustell-tc.gov.uk

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**

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

- 3. Minutes of meeting held on 30th March 2026**

**Pages
1 - 6**

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

- 4. Matters to note**

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

5. Public Participation

(Purpose: To invite members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be carried out at the meeting).

Each person addressing the Council will be allocated a maximum of 3 minutes.

6. Dignity at Work Policy

(Purpose: To receive an update on the composition of a grievance hearing (Finance and General Purposes Committee dated 28th September 2026 refers). (Verbal update).

7. Local Government Pension

**Pages
7 - 14**

(Purpose: To review and approve policies required as a member of the Cornwall Council Pension Fund). (Attached).

8. To consider excluding the press and public.

Under Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it is proposed that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the business specified for the following item:

Items 9, 10 and 11 are confidential because they contain personal data.

9. Staffing Review

**Pages
15 - 22**

(Purpose: To provide an update on staffing for the office staff, grounds maintenance team and library service. (Attached).

10. Staff Development Reviews

**Pages
23 - 48**

(Purpose: To note the Staff Development Reviews for the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Operations Manager and Library Manager). (Attached).

11. Staff Sickness

**Pages
49 - 50**

(Purpose: To review Staff Sickness for the period 1st April 2026 to 16th October 2026). (Attached).

12. Date of Next Meeting – to be confirmed

To be confirmed.

MINUTES of a MEETING of the ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL STAFFING COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 30th MARCH 2026 at 6pm in the Stable Block, Pondhu House, Penwinnick Road, St Austell, PL25 5DP.

Present:

Councillors: Brown, Hamilton, Lanxon, Pearce and Young.

In attendance:

David Pooley (Town Clerk), Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Town Clerk) and Mark Mitchley (Senior Projects Officer).

S/25/21) Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Bull.

S/25/22) Declarations of Interest

None.

S/25/23) Minutes of meeting held on the 2nd December 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 2nd December 2025 should be approved and signed as a correct record.

S/25/24) Matters to Note

The Clerk advised that the Regeneration Officer's contract expires on the 31st March 2026 which coincides with the end of the Government funding streams. The final claim form for the TRIP projects has been submitted to Cornwall Council and the Regeneration Officer has offered to come in for a few hours, if required, to clarify any last-minute queries to satisfy the grant claim process.

The Committee expressed their gratitude to the Regeneration Officer for his excellent project work over the last few years.

S/25/25) Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

S/25/26) Staffing Policies

The Senior Projects Officer advised that the 11 policies for consideration are a suite of policies connected to the employment of staff and will be appendices to the staff handbook. He added that they are mainly model policies from either South-West Councils or NALC and that they should be consistent and complement each other as well as reflect known changes in legislation. As and when employment law changes, the policies will be updated and brought back to Members for consideration.

The Senior Projects Officer advised that the Flexible Working Policy, Leave Policy, Menopause Policy and Staff and Elected Member Training Policy are all new policies.

Once the policies are approved and published they will include a review date which is considered good practice.

Bullying and Harassment Policy

The following amendments were suggested:

Page 2 – Paragraph 4

Last Line:

Change “You” to “Employees” and “you” to “they”

Page 7 – 7.2 Town Clerk

First Line change to read:

“some or all of which they may delegate to the Deputy Town Clerk”

Last bullet point change to read:

“Reviewing this policy regularly and **advising members of amendments to ensure that it remains effective**”

Page 7 – 7.4 Members

Add a bullet point

- Reviewing the policy when necessary

Page 8

First sentence to read

“This procedure is designed to explain what you need to do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed”

Last paragraph to read as follows:

“Some acts of harassment may also amount to a criminal offence. In this situation we will speak to you about whether you wish for the matter to be reported to the police and support you to do so **or the Town Council may consider reporting the matter to the Police**”

Page 9

First sentence to read as follows:

“In this case you will need to put your complaint in writing to the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk to the **Chair of the** Staffing Committee) giving details of the specific actions/incidents about which you are complaining.

Seventh paragraph to read:

It should be noted that if disciplinary action is taken against the alleged bully/harasser, you will be informed that disciplinary action is being taken but **due to employment law** will not be informed of the outcome of this or have a right of appeal against the decision of the disciplinary panel. Nor do you have the right to raise a grievance about any decision affecting the alleged bully/harasser following a disciplinary hearing or investigation.

Page 10

To read as follows:

9. Support and Advice for Employees Affected by Bullying and Harassment, including Sexual Harassment

If you would like further information about support and advice services available to you as the complainant or alleged harasser, you can contact **the Deputy Town Clerk**.

It was **RECOMMENDED**, subject to the above amendments, to approve the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Capability Procedure

Page 5

Last paragraph to read:

Two members of the **Staffing** Committee will hear the appeal, **with the Deputy Mayor**, providing they have had no previous involvement in the matter. They will be assisted by an independent adviser.

It was **RECOMMENDED**, subject to the above amendment, to approve the Capability Procedure.

Disciplinary Procedure

Page 3

3.3 Personnel Committee

Should read

3.3 Staffing Committee

Page 4

Should read

3.6 Note Taker

During each stage of the disciplinary procedure, it is recommended that a note taker is present to **record the key circumstances and decisions**.

Page 5

Second paragraph, last sentence should read:

Records of informal advice/counselling should be kept **on the employee's personal file.**

Page 6

Last sentence should read:

Details of **the representative and** any witnesses the employee intends to call and a copy of all documents that the employee may wish to refer to at the hearing must be submitted to the Hearing Chair at least 3 working days prior to the hearing.

Page 11

Last paragraph should read:

Training

Appropriate training will be given to the **Town** Clerk or any Members who might be involved in disciplinary or appeals meetings to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities under this procedure.

It was **RECOMMENDED**, subject to the above amendments, to approve the Disciplinary Procedure.

Flexible Working Policy

Page 2

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Second paragraph should read:

If the request is being made by the Town Clerk, this should be referred to the Staffing Committee, who **may** set up a panel to consider the request and a separate panel to consider any appeal.

It was **RECOMMENDED**, subject to the above amendment, to approve the Flexible Working Policy.

Guidance on Gifts and Hospitality Policy

It was **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Guidance on Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

Grievance Policy

Page 2

1. Policy Statement

Last paragraph should read:

This policy and the following procedure will be the subject of periodic review. Responsibility for conducting this review will rest with the Town Clerk, **reporting to the Staffing Committee.**

It was **RECOMMENDED**, subject to the above amendment, to approve the Grievance Policy.

Leave Policy

It was **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Leave Policy.

Maternity and Parental Leave Policy

It was **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Maternity and Parental Leave Policy

Menopause Policy

It was **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Menopause Policy.

Staff and Elected Member Training and Development Policy

It was **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Staff and Elected Member Training and Development Policy.

Arising from the above, the Deputy Clerk **AGREED** to review the Staff and Member training logs and report them to an appropriate committee.

Whistleblowing Policy

It was **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Whistleblowing Policy.

It was **FURTHER RECOMMENDED** that each policy should be reviewed every three years unless a change in legislation dictated otherwise.

S/25/27) To consider excluding the press and public

It was **RESOLVED** that under Section 1 (ii) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the business of the meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

S/25/28) Staff Sickness

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Staff Sickness records for the period 27th September 2025 to 23rd March 2026.

Arising from the above, the Deputy Clerk advised that the Staff Absence Policy is being reviewed and will be considered at the Council meeting on Monday 13th April 2026.

S/25/29) Date of Next Meeting

Date to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 7.23pm

ST AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL

STAFFING COMMITTEE – 27TH OCTOBER 2026

CORNWALL COUNCIL PENSION FUND

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To review and approve policies required as a member of the Cornwall Council Pension Fund.

2. LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The Local Government Pension Scheme was significantly altered with effect from April 2014. Included within the regulations are a number of employer discretions for payment of benefits and, as an employer, the regulations require the Town Council to prepare a written statement of policy on how it intends to exercise these discretions. The Town Council is then obliged to tell Cornwall Council how it wishes to deal with these matters. Cornwall Council have provided a template to be completed by the Town Council.

3. RESOURCE ISSUES

The Council's budget is formulated on the basis that the Employer's contributions will be the minimum amount specified by Cornwall Council. Some of the discretions could have cost implications depending on the decisions made by Members.

4. EQUALITIES

The Council is an equal opportunity employer. It needs to bear in mind equalities issues in determining the responses to the discretions identified within this report.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

None

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the responses in the attached template be approved and that the Town clerk be re-confirmed as the person who will receive and deal with stage 1 formal complaints under the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) for pension matters.

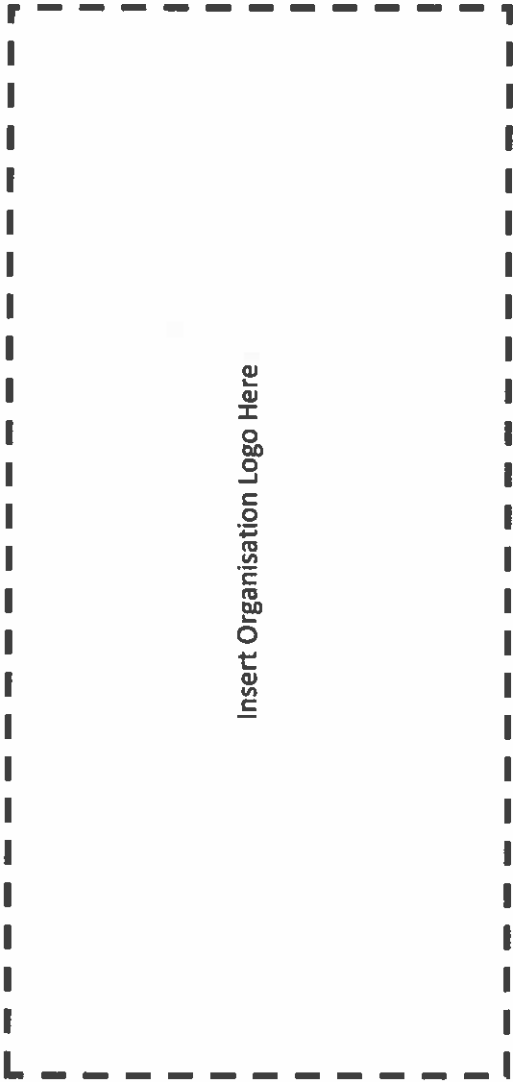
Background

The Local Government Pension Scheme was significantly amended with effect from April 2014. Included within the regulations amending the scheme were a number of employer discretions for payment of benefits and, as an employer, the Town Council is required to prepare a written statement of policy on how it intends to exercise certain discretions and to review those discretions from time to time. This policy has to be communicated to Cornwall Pension Fund. A template has been provided for completion.

Cornwall Pensions Team recently issued a reminder to employers to review the discretions adopted. Members are asked to re-confirm the policies previously approved which are set out in the template attached.

There is also a need to identify a person to deal with stage 1 complaints under the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) required in relation to decisions made in connection with Cornwall Pension Fund. It is suggested that the Town Clerk be nominated for this role.

DAVID POOLEY
TOWN CLERK



Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) – Discretions Policy for Cornwall
Pension Fund

Title:	
Author(s):	David Pooley
Implementation date	
Next review date:	

Discretion	Regulation reference	Employer discretions policy
<u>Discretions relating to current contributing employees and leavers after 31/03/2014</u>		
Whether, how much, and in what circumstances to contribute to a shared cost APC scheme	R16(2)(e) & R16(4)(d)	The Council will only contribute to a shared cost APC scheme when unpaid leave is due to illness or injury, relevant child-related leave or reserve force service leave.
Whether to extend 30 day deadline for member to elect for a shared cost APC upon return from a period of absence from work with permission with no pensionable pay (otherwise than because of illness or injury, relevant child-related leave or reserve force service leave).	R16(16)	St Austell Town Council will not extend the 30 day deadline for a member to elect for a shared cost APC upon return from a period of absence from work with permission with no pensionable pay (otherwise than because of illness or injury, relevant child-related leave or reserve force service leave).
Whether, at full cost to the Scheme employer, to grant extra annual pension, up to the LGPS additional pension limit (reviewed annually), to an active member or within 6 months of leaving to a member whose employment was terminated on the grounds of redundancy or business efficiency	R31	St Austell Town Council will allow employees made redundant to have the option of converting any compensation payment in to additional pension. The Council will not purchase additional pension under any other circumstances.

Discretion	Regulation reference	Employer discretions policy
Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial reduction on benefits which a member voluntarily draws before normal pension age	R30(8)	St Austell Town Council will only allow the waiving of actuarial reductions for early retirements where it is deemed to be in the interests of the employer both financially and operationally.
Whether to waive any actuarial reduction on pre and/or post April 2014 benefits paid early on compassionate grounds	TP3(1), TPSch 2, paras 2(1)	St Austell Town Council will only allow the waiving of actuarial reductions for early retirements where it is deemed to be in the interests of the employer both financially and operationally.
Whether to "switch on" the 85-year rule for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.	TPSch 2, paras 1(2) and 2(2)	St Austell Town Council will not "switch on" the 85 year rule for early retirement.
Whether all or some benefits can be paid if an employee over 55 reduces their hours or grade (flexible retirement)	R30(6) & TP11(2)	St Austell Town Council will only permit flexible retirement where it can demonstrate that it is in the interest of the employer both financially and operationally.

Discretion	Regulation reference	Employer discretions policy
Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial reduction on benefits paid on flexible retirement	R30(8)	St Austell Town Council will consider waiving any actuarial reduction only where it can be demonstrated that it is in the interest of the employer.
Extend normal time limit for acceptance of a transfer value beyond 12 months from joining the LGPS.	R100(6)	St Austell Town Council will not extend the 12-month time limit for employees to request Cornwall Pension Fund to investigate the option of transferring any pension benefits from previous employments into the Cornwall Pension Fund.
<u>Discretions relating to leavers 01/04/2008 to 31/03/2014</u>		
Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to deferred benefits paid early under B30	B30(5), TPSch 2, para 2(1)	St Austell Town Council will not waive the actuarial reduction under these circumstances.
Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to benefits paid early under B30A for a suspended tier 3 member.	B30A(5), TPSch 2, para 2(1)	St Austell Town Council will not waive the actuarial reduction under these circumstances.

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Discretion	Regulation reference	Employer discretions policy
Whether to "switch on" the 85-year rule for a deferred member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.	TPSch 2, paras 1(2) and 1(1)(c)	St Austell Town council will not "switch on" the 85-year rule under these circumstances.
Whether to "switch on" the 85-year rule for a suspended tier 3 member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60	TPSch 2, paras 1(2) and 1(1)(c)	St Austell Town council will not "switch on" the 85-year rule under these circumstances.
<u>Discretions relating to leavers 01/04/1998 to 31/03/2008 and councillors</u>		
Waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to deferred benefits paid early.	31(5) & TPSch 2, para 2(1)	St Austell Town Council will not waive the actuarial reduction under these circumstances.
Whether to "switch on" the 85-year rule for a deferred member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.	TPSch 2, para 1(2) & 1(1)(f) & R60	St Austell Town Council will not "switch on" the 85-year rule under these circumstances

Grant application for early payment of deferred benefits on or after age 50 and before age 55.	31(2)	St Austell Town Council will not grant applications for early payment of deferred benefits on or after age 50 and before age 55.
Optants out only to get benefits paid from NRD if employer agrees. No longer required – please see 'Understanding Discretions in the LGPS' guide for more information.	31(7A)	N/A
<u>Discretions relating to leavers before 01/04/1998</u>		
Grant application for early payment of deferred benefits on or after age 50 on compassionate grounds.	TL4, L106(1) & D11(2)(c)	St Austell Town Council will not grant applications for early payment of deferred benefits on or after age 50 on compassionate grounds for leavers before 01/04/1998.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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