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**Town Clerk – Mrs Milly Southworth**

Press Release for immediate inclusion – November 2018

### **TORPOINT TOWN COUNCIL PLANS TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF THE TOWN'S LIBRARY**

Torpoint Town Council has taken a step forward in securing the future of the town's library by agreeing to enter into talks with Cornwall Council about taking over management of the Fore Street building. Following a briefing session and subsequent council meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018 councillors unanimously agreed to support the vision, aims and objectives of a community hub incorporating the Library and Information Service at the existing library building. As part of the arrangement it is anticipated the Torpoint Archives will relocate from the existing town council offices and a small café will operate from within the building.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Lambert Keise, stated: "The Town Council is continuing its negotiations with Cornwall Council to take over the provision of this vital service, with the inclusion of Torpoint Archives and a small café, accompanied by extended opening times, it is hoped the facility will see an increase in visitors. Provisional financial support from Shevioc Parish Council, subject to approval from its parishioners, to support the future of Torpoint Library has been offered. Negotiations are anticipated to be completed by the beginning of March 2019 and a launch event will be planned once renovations are completed, more details on this will follow."

Under the proposals, Torpoint Library and Information Service will remain part of the countywide library service, meaning customers will keep their existing library cards and will still be able to visit, borrow and order books online from other libraries in Cornwall. Cornwall Council will continue to provide and maintain the library's public computers and resources, including replenishing books. Torpoint Library and Information Service is currently open between 9.30am and 5.00pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday and it is also open on a Saturday between 10.00am and 1.00pm, there are plans to expand the opening times when negotiations are completed.

In these challenging financial times, Cornwall Council - like all local authorities throughout the UK - has had some tough decisions to make when faced with massive cuts in funding from central Government, explained Edwina Hannaford, Cornwall Council Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods. "We want to safeguard the future for libraries across Cornwall and this is why we have been working closely with town and parish councils and community organisations to find the best custodians," she said. "I welcome the decision from Torpoint Town Council – we look forward to working with them over the next few months on transferring the library to their very capable management."

**About Cornwall Council's devolution programme:** Cornwall is the first rural authority to agree a Devolution Deal with the Government. The Cornwall Devolution Deal provided powers for Cornwall to have more say on transport, energy, health and social care, and heritage. As well as having powers devolved to Cornwall from Whitehall, Cornwall Council is also devolving services and assets to local councils, groups and organisations within Cornwall. This gives local communities more say on how local assets are used and managed. Cornwall is one of the few areas in the country where double devolution is actively being put into practice. There are over 300 new schemes already in place in the county keeping communities clean, parks open and maintained, libraries open and open-air swimming pools in full use.

