



**MINUTES** of the meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 at 7.00pm in the Council Committee Room, 4 York Road, Torpoint.

**PRESENT:** - Councillor M J Spurling (Chairman), Councillor Mrs. J M Martin (Town Mayor), Councillor Mrs. C E Goodman (Deputy Town Mayor), Councillors Mrs. S G Bickle, Mrs. K Brownhill, S Clark and J Tivnan BEM plus the Town Clerk & RFO (Clerk) and Operations Manager were in attendance.

**ALSO PRESENT FOR AGENDA ITEMS: 1 – 5 which were referred to this committee meeting for council consideration:** Councillors Mrs. L Fellows, L Hogan, L J Keise and K J Moon.

	<b>ACTION</b>
<p><b>48-25F&amp;O Apologies for absence</b> Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G J Davis, Miss R A Evans BEM, S J Pike, Mrs. J L Reeves and C R Still.</p>	
<p><b>49-25F&amp;O Declarations of Interest relating to items on the Agenda</b> a) To receive any declarations from Members of any registerable (5A of the Code of Conduct) and/or non-registerable (5B) interests in matters to be considered at this meeting. i) An NRI (Non-Registerable Interest) was declared by: - Councillor Mrs. K Brownhill – Agenda item 12. Accounts for payment - as Treasurer of organisation for one of the payment recipients; Agenda 13.a. Report of Free of Charge use for Torpoint Town Partnership, as Treasurer for the organisation/applicant. ii) An NRI (Non-Registerable Interest) was declared by: - Councillor J Tivnan BEM - Agenda item 12. Accounts for payment - as Director of organisation for one of the payment recipients. iii) An NRI (Non-Registerable Interest) was declared by: - The Town Mayor (Councillor Mrs. J M Martin) – Agenda item 13.a. as Chairman of the Torpoint Town Partnership.  b) The Town Clerk to receive written requests for dispensations prior to the start of the meeting for consideration. None.  The Chairman (Councillor M J Spurling) announced the following two agenda items would be brought forward for consideration by all members' present.</p>	
<p><b>50-25F&amp;O Planning Applications.</b> a) PA24/03068 Kings Arms, Torpoint. Email received 16:39 26/08/25, from Cornwall planning: To consider and review the decision on this planning application (from information received and previously circulated from the Local Planning Authority on the matter).  Following in-depth and a very lengthy debate, it is unanimously <b>resolved</b> to: "1. Agree with your recommendation to refuse the planning application as there are factors identified that would make the proposed extension and alterations unacceptable in that location."</p>	

In addition the council unanimously **resolved** for this statement to be included in its response, confirming it is to be shared in the public domain: - This council has further concerns about the current development works, which are taking place on the land at the Kings Arms and encourage an Enforcement / Planning Officer from Cornwall Council to visit the site to view these works. This council expressed concern regarding the length of time it has taken for a decision to be taken by Cornwall Planning on this application.

**51-25F&O Items Referred to this Committee.**

a) To update and consider information on the Torpoint Christmas Lights 2025 -2028 (minute 36-25F&O (b) refers). Additional quotation information is expected and will be presented at the first committee meeting it is made available and considered as a council item (August '25 Council meeting refers).

The Operations Manager presented the information, with a detailed explanation for the council to consider engaging a contractor to erect and take down the Christmas Lights 2025/26, which will be the first time this council had paid for this service. Members' were reminded about the number of 'near-miss' incidents which had happened over recent years'. The Operations Manager summarised the 15 years' experience of the proposed contractor: MHLS Ltd. as well as feedback from the recent site meeting.

The Clerk answered some clarification questions, regarding the quotation for the supply of Christmas lights from The Festive Lighting Company, which included a quotation for the installation. The Clerk explained, this had been an estimate which was included in the initial tender response from The Festive Lighting Company. However, this fixed and firm quote does include delivery and collection and therefore, there will be an additional charge for this, from The Festive Lighting Company.

MHLS Ltd. include two callouts with the price and any additional callouts are charged as follows: £60.00 per hour, or part thereof (minimum 4 hours, includes travel time) + VAT. Before the vote was taken a question was posited and discussion had regarding whether there are any other alternatives to supply and installing Christmas lights for installation and erection on Fore Street.

Clerk explained that once the contract/purchase order is placed, MHLS Ltd. will produce the risk assessment and method statement and also explained this cost had not been included in the budget for 25/26.

Following due consideration it is **resolved** to appoint MHLS Ltd. to undertake the install and removal of Christmas lights, which will be hired, for one year only, at a cost of: -

8 Crossings @ £400.00 each = £3,200.00 + VAT

Christmas lights on 1 Christmas tree = £600.00 + VAT

**TOTAL = £3,800.00 + VAT.**

A councillor (Councillor K J Moon) requested the Clerk to record in the minutes: "at least one of the councillors voted against the proposal put because no other alternatives had been brought forward."

<p>Following consideration of the quotation, as previously received and shared, from The Festive Lighting Company, the one year quotation was initially discussed, which is significantly more expensive than a three year hire quotation (70% of the purchase price). The Clerk detailed the three year quotation, which had been previously shared. £3,193.50 + VAT for the hire charge, of 6 motifs and Accessories, per year, to include the storage and maintenance of the two council owned motifs and highlighted there would be an additional delivery/collection fee to be added to this price.</p> <p>It is subsequently <b>resolved</b> the council agrees to a three year hire contract with The Festive Lighting Company with a review to be carried out by [full] council within 6 months, should an alternative to the current Christmas lights be proposed; it is for quantity 6 motifs and Accessories for a three year hire, 2025 – January 2028, to include storage and maintenance of two council owned motifs, from The Festive Lighting Company, at a cost of £3,193.50 + VAT per year, plus annual delivery/collection charge.</p> <p>Councillors Mrs. L Fellows and K J Moon left the meeting at this point.</p>	
<p><b>52-25F&amp;O Minutes of the previous meeting</b></p> <p>It was <b>resolved</b> that the minutes of the Finance and Operations Committee meeting held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.</p>	
<p><b>53-25F&amp;O Matters arising</b></p> <p>a) To update on the disposal of Mountfield mower and open/consider any sealed bids received: -</p> <p>Pursuant to minute 36-25F&amp;O (a), the bids received were opened and will be responded to accordingly. The committee minuted thanks to all those who took the time to submit a sealed bid for the opportunity to purchase the Mountfield mower on a 'Sold as Seen' basis.</p> <p>b) To update on progress with funding to support CCTV proposals for Harvey Street: -</p> <p>Pursuant to minute number 36-25F&amp;O (c) the Clerk explained the council has contacted the local MP to ask for her support with this project. Funding opportunities via the Police and Crime Commissioner are coming online, hopefully by the end of September and any other funding opportunities are more complicated, as the town council does not meet the current guidelines to apply to Cornwall Community Foundation (<a href="https://cornwallcommunityfoundation.com/">https://cornwallcommunityfoundation.com/</a>) and therefore, consideration of an alternative constituted group to submit an application is needed. A suggestion was put that perhaps Torpoint Town Partnership could apply. The Clerk reminded members' that the council has not taken a vote on progressing and approving this project, to date.</p> <p>c) To consider the appointment of an Internal Auditor for financial year 2025/26: -</p> <p>Pursuant to minute number 39-25F&amp;O (d), the Clerk referred to previous correspondence as shared. In addition the Clerk had undertaken further research and based on this research, it is <b>recommended</b> to appoint Jamie Thomas - JT Audit and Accountancy - as the council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2025/26.</p> <p>d) To update on the opportunity for the council to take over the responsibility of the defibrillator at The Wheelers, Fore Street: -</p> <p>Pursuant to the July council meeting, minute number 81-25 (c), the Clerk will be making contact with the landlord of the The Wheelers.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p><b>Council</b></p> <p>Clerk</p>

e) To update on the Enhanced LMP Grant opportunity for 2025 – 2026: -  
Pursuant to the August council meeting, an application was submitted immediately following the meeting, to apply for funding from the Enhanced LMP grant opportunity, several questions have been answered and a decision is now awaited.

**54-25F&O To consider Policies referred to this Committee**

a) To consider whether a Sustainable Procurement Policy is required: -  
Pursuant to minute 37-25F&O (f) the draft Sustainable Procurement Policy was considered, from Belper Town Council, and it is **recommended** the Clerk produces a similar policy for the town council to adopt at the September council meeting, removing the word "emergency" from the final sentence.

From Personnel Committee meeting (outstanding actions).

a) To update on the Skills Audit for members'.

It is **resolved** to include in the September Personnel Committee meeting agenda, a reminder to those who have not yet completed the skills audit. Also, a reminder to complete Code of Conduct training within 6 months of taking office.

Clerk  
**Council**

**55-25F&O Civic Functions and other events**

a) RALEIGH to exercise its right to the Freedom of Torpoint, 28<sup>th</sup> September '25: -  
Invitations will be circulated within the next two weeks' for the civic event on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

**56-25F&O To consider the Council Risk Management**

a) Creditors/Debtors: -

The Clerk highlighted a couple of outstanding concerns, which have been recently chased, to being payments up to date.

b) Budget Variance – Finance and Operations Committee responsibilities (July 2025 Budget Variance Information): -

All committee income and expenditure was considered, with no immediate concerns. The Clerk highlighted the current underspend against the £7k budget on grant funding awarded.

c) Operations Report - Report on any matters relating to council assets, facilities and operations, including the Library and Christmas Lights.

FACILITY	PROJECT	STATUS
COUNCIL CHAMBERS	Survey of the sewerage system has taken place, awaiting final report.	Ongoing
	The hot water cylinder has been repaired	Complete
	Updated quote received from RB Windows for replacement Buller Road door.	Ongoing
LIBRARY & COM HUB		
PARKS	Awaiting quotations to service, repair or replace all items rated 12 or above as a result of this year's parks inspections.	Ongoing
	Updated signage for the Tennis Courts and Skate Park on order.	Ongoing

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES	Between opening and 11am, it was found that the waste pipes below the urinals on Antony Road had been loosened. Repaired in house. Excrement has been found on the toilet floor in Antony Road gents and disabled toilet on numerous occasions recently.	Complete	
TRAINING	A. Cannon has completed, Traffic Management and Lawn Mower training. Brushcutter training is booked for the first week in September. As part of the CLUP funding 2 road marshals volunteers have been put forward to attend the Traffic Management for Community Events training. The Town Clerk and Operations Manager have booked spaces on the SLCC Events Management training. The Town Clerk and Operations Manager attended the CALC/Clerks meeting in Saltash.		
BENCHES			
FOOTPATHS	A bid has been submitted to Cornwall Council to widen footpath 7, the Mill, and additional signage for this and footpath 4 Trevol Road to St John.		
JAPANESE KNOTWEED	New SLA for treatment has been received. First treatment delayed due to inclement weather.	Ongoing	
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS/ BUNTING	Awaiting final quotation for the installation of the Christmas Lights	Ongoing	
OTHER	The Operations Manager is continuing to liaise with Cornwall Council to ensure that elements of the CLUP Bid that are on their managed land. Safety meeting and walk through the town prior to this years' Freedom Parade is booked. Tamar Crossings staff will also attend. Support for additional labour in preparation for CLUP and LMP projects requested from HMS Raleigh holdover team. The Operations Team, supported the Civic Parade, the VJ 80 commemorations, Dog Show and continue to support the Pink Ladies' at the monthly Community Market.  Having contacted the Biffa street cleansing supervisor to request that the roadside is in the vicinity of Harvey St flats be weeded prior to the Civic Parade, the Operations Manager was informed that due to a change in operational procedures, no weeding outside of Fore St will be carried out by Biffa in the town. Safeguarding support given in July with a councillor to a resident.		
<p>The Operations Manager advised: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There have been ongoing issues with the hot water boiler at the Council Chambers, it is hoped these issues have now been resolved by the plumber.</li> <li>➤ The recent spate of poor weather, resulted in some flooding at the Council Chambers, measures have been put in place to prevent the leaks occurring again.</li> <li>➤ Following completion of the Annual Parks Inspection reports, before the summer, due to health and safety concerns with the play surface underneath the swings at Chestnut</li> </ul>			



Close play park, the swings were taken out of action. As the Clerk and Operations Manager are meeting with play park suppliers, as part of the Invitation to Tender for the accessible play equipment project, the suppliers are being given the opportunity to separately provide a quotation to replace the damaged surface. It is hoped that the swings will be made available for use again, as soon as a decision is made on replacing the surface.

- There has been an issue with one the door lock at the Room 1 York Road entrance, a repair has been made and this is being monitored.
- Public conveniences – Fixed wiring commercial testing is required. APEC rates are £22.50 per distribution board and £22.50 per circuit. Therefore, Antony Road appears to have 1 distribution board and 6 circuits, totalling £157.50 + VAT and Bénodet appears to have 3 distribution boards and 17 circuits, totalling £450 + VAT. Total therefore is £607.50+VAT, for both sites, Clerk to action.
- Training, as detailed in the report has been completed and further training booked. The Clerk highlighted PPE for the training had been purchased in advance from Mole Valley Farmers.
- Security to the Council Chambers continues to be a concern and a revised quotation for the entrance at Buller Road has been sought. The Clerk explained Financial Regulations would need to be waived, as one quotation (only) has been sought, for a local recognised supplier. It is **recommended** to waive Financial Regulations and to contract supplier RB Windows, who originally installed the door over 25 years ago, at a cost of £4,150.00 + VAT to include delivery and installation.
- Spraying of Japanese Knotweed has been delayed due to the poor weather.
- Weeding around Fore Street (i.e. street cleansing has been reduced, due to budget cuts). As a result of asking for the street to be weeded in advance of the Civic Parade, the Operations Manager was advised by Cornwall Council that it has reviewed street cleansing schedules to identify where adjustments could be made. Small sections have been removed from Zone 1 Cleansing in Torpoint which have been identified following discussions and monitoring with Biffa and the location along Harvey Street has been removed. Any issues regarding litter can be reported using this link for a response to cleanse within 24 hours: [Report a street that needs cleaning - Cornwall Council](#). Clerk to take this up further with [Cornwall] Councillor Rob Parsonage.
- St. James Church – bronze plaque WWI war memorial, an update from the council's insurer was given. Following this, it is **recommended** to correspond with Cornwall Council and St. James Church, seeking to enter into discussions to enable the WWI war memorial, to be recorded as an asset on the town council register, with appropriate insurance in place, enabling the plaque to be fully insured for theft and/or damage, on behalf of the residents' of Torpoint.
- Town Clock repairs, a meeting is being arranged in advance of budget setting discussions.
- Mayoress Chain – following a quick survey undertaken by Buck & Co. Jewellers, Bodmin, the Mayoress Chain is silver plate, not solid silver. A full valuation would be charged at £250 + VAT and due to its low value, it is not worth expending this. Therefore, the current insurance value of regalia @ £16k (excluding the Mayor's Regalia) is accurate. The Town Mayor (Councillor Mrs. J M Martin) provided some history regarding the Mayoress Chain, it was purchased by Mrs Miriam Williams, whilst

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<p>Mayoress to her husband former Town Mayor Bill Williams.</p> <p>d) To receive an update on the Asset Condition Survey.</p> <p>Having reviewed the quinquennial survey, the Operations Manager highlighted budget discussions next month will need to include: flooring, Council Chambers roof cleansing and repairs, as well as gas central heating boilers.</p> <p>e) To review current IT equipment and services (in advance of budget setting for 2026/27).</p> <p>The Clerk explained the Torpoint Town Council Support Officer / Assistant to the Town Clerk &amp; RFO current pc will need replacing in the next financial year (June 2018 purchased).</p> <p>f) To receive a verbal update from the Clerk, regarding existing Licence Holder – The Annexe.</p> <p>Members’ noted the verbal update from the Clerk.</p> <p>g) To consider: Maintenance Agreement 1<sup>st</sup> August '25 – 31<sup>st</sup> July '26, maintenance of commercial air conditioning equipment £309.24+ VAT, two visits per year. Resultant service works will be charged at £47.00 per hour &amp; £0.60 per mile, or a priced basis - Macwhirter Western Ltd.</p> <p>Clerk is directed to action renewal of the annual maintenance agreement with Macwhirter Western Ltd. for the maintenance of commercial air conditioning equipment.</p>						Clerk																																				
<p><b>57-25F&amp;O Health and Safety</b></p> <p>a) Reports and any new, proposed regulations/legislations and current issues.</p> <p>There are currently no areas for consideration.</p> <p>b) Fire Risk Assessment for all buildings.</p> <p>The 6 monthly fire evacuation of the Council Chambers has now been undertaken. Following a ‘flooding’ in the internal space near the main hall gents toilets, via the roof at the Council Chambers, the fire alarm became waterlogged, engineer callout required to revolve and fix accordingly.</p>																																										
<p><b>58-25F&amp;O Climate and Environmental Action Plan</b></p> <p>a) To consider the actions relating to this Committee: -</p> <p>No further update.</p>																																										
<p><b>59-25F&amp;O Accounts for payment</b></p> <table><tr><th>PAYEE</th><th>Invoice Number</th><th>Total (£)</th><th>TAX</th><th>NET</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>Macwhirter Western Ltd</td><td>009948</td><td>371.30</td><td>61.88</td><td>309.42</td><td>Air conditioning maintenance contract renewal 01/08/2025 - 31/07/2026</td></tr><tr><td>Cornish Tea &amp; Coffee</td><td>SL104729</td><td>133.23</td><td>0.00</td><td>133.23</td><td>Café Supplies Library</td></tr><tr><td>Bodyworx Fitness</td><td>003</td><td>225.00</td><td>0.00</td><td>225.00</td><td>Provision of wellbeing sessions (x3) at Torpoint Library</td></tr><tr><td>Kernow Training</td><td>8509</td><td>395.00</td><td>0.00</td><td>395.00</td><td>Lantra Training - Combined Mowers / Brushcutter &amp; Strimmer (Andrew Cannon)</td></tr><tr><td>WesternWeb Ltd</td><td>25082</td><td>18.00</td><td>3.00</td><td>15.00</td><td>Changes to Torpoint</td></tr></table>						PAYEE	Invoice Number	Total (£)	TAX	NET	Description	Macwhirter Western Ltd	009948	371.30	61.88	309.42	Air conditioning maintenance contract renewal 01/08/2025 - 31/07/2026	Cornish Tea & Coffee	SL104729	133.23	0.00	133.23	Café Supplies Library	Bodyworx Fitness	003	225.00	0.00	225.00	Provision of wellbeing sessions (x3) at Torpoint Library	Kernow Training	8509	395.00	0.00	395.00	Lantra Training - Combined Mowers / Brushcutter & Strimmer (Andrew Cannon)	WesternWeb Ltd	25082	18.00	3.00	15.00	Changes to Torpoint	
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					Town Council Website (Climate Emergency)	
Torpoint Community Events	Sponsorship	90.00	0.00	90.00	Maintenance of sponsored raised bed for x 9 months	
Francis Thomas	7925	930.00	148.80	781.20	Supply of Mobile Generator (CLUP funding)	
Cornish Tea & Coffee	SL104481	120.00	20.00	100.00	Coffee Machine Rental Library	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,282.53</b>	<b>233.68</b>	<b>2,048.85</b>		

### 60-25F&O Correspondence

a) To note: Free of Charge Use usage for Dog Show – Torpoint Town Partnership: - Noted.

b) To note: Market Report August 2025 – CCLA: - Noted.

c) To consider: Request for Operations Team support for 2<sup>nd</sup> Torpoint Scouts Bonfire and fireworks event Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November – 2<sup>nd</sup> Torpoint Scouts: -

The Operations Manager explained the request for support from the Operations Team is for the evening prior to Remembrance Sunday and explained that should the council agreed to the support, the Torpoint Scouts will be made aware that support this year would be less than the previous year. With this in mind, it is **recommended** to approve the provision of reduced support to 2<sup>nd</sup> Torpoint Scouts for the Bonfire and fireworks event on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

d) To consider: Grant application for Defibrillator battery replacement at Cremyll Road – Mr P Smith: -

Following consideration of the grant application, which although it has been applied for by an individual, is to enable the continued provision of a defibrillator to be provided for 24 hours public access on a property at Cremyll Road, it is **recommended** to award the funding amount of £282.00 to enable a replacement battery to be purchased from Duchy Defibrillators.

**Council**

**Council**

### 61-25F&O Date of next meeting

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

### 62-25F&O Any Business that has been disclosed to the Chairman and members prior to the meeting.

- The Chairman (Councillor M J Spurling) and Councillor Mrs. S G Bickle had recently attended Chairmanship training, delivered by CALC, in Saltash, feedback from the training is that it was very interesting and useful.

Meeting closed at 9.11pm \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman