



MINUTES of the meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee held on Monday 3rd November 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, Miss R A Evans BEM, L Hogan, S J Pike and J Tivnan BEM plus the Town Clerk & RFO (Clerk) and Operations Manager were in attendance. The Town Council Support Officer was also in attendance.

ALSO PRESENT: - Councillors G J Davis, K J Moon, L E Keise, Mrs. J L Reeves and C R Still were present for agenda items as detailed.

	ACTION
78-25F&O Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs. L Fellows.	
79-25F&O Declarations of Interest relating to items on the Agenda 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: - The Town Mayor (Councillor Mrs. J M Martin) – (Agenda item 4. Hiring and Letting Charges as a relative of the proprietor of the Coppola School of Performing Arts, also Andy Martin Production Support. Also, Agenda item 5, as the recipient of the Mayoral Allowance. Also Agenda item 14, Accounts for Payment). ii) An NRI (Non-Registerable Interest) was declared by: - Councillor Mrs. S Bickle (Agenda item 15e, as a member of Friends of Thanckes Park, application for free of charge use). iii) An NRI (Non-Registerable Interest) was declared by: - Councillor Mrs. K Brownhill – (Agenda item 4. Hiring and Letting Charges as a Member of the RBL and as a hirer for and on behalf of U3A). iv) An NRI (Non-Registerable Interest) was declared by: - Councillor J Tivnan BEM – (Agenda item 4. Hiring and Letting Charges as Treasurer of the Royal British Legion [Storage Room York Road] and anything related to Remembrance.) b) The Town Clerk to receive written requests for dispensations prior to the start of the meeting for consideration. None.	
80-25F&O To update on progress with funding to support CCTV proposals for Harvey Street (This agenda item was brought forward, in advance of the budget discussions.) Members' considered the Project Initiation Document (PID), as previously circulated, for the CCTV proposals on Harvey Street. The Clerk acknowledged the current costs included in the PID, are nearly 12 months old and need to be updated. There was much debate around whether this council should include an amount, to financially support the installation of CCTV at Harvey Street, in the budget setting discussions for 2026/27, about to be had. Comments regarding the town council endeavouring to ensure that key stakeholders in the project	

financially support the project, were balanced against providing support for the local residents' who have sought the support of the council over the last 12 months. In advance of the budget setting discussion, it is recorded in the minutes that no budgetary figure will be included in the calculations for next years' precept / budget discussions. However, should it need to be added during the financial year, the amount of £1,200 of an overall precept of £500k+ is considered to be de minimis and therefore the council could likely afford this expenditure.	
81-25F&O Prior to commencement of the discussions, the Town Clerk reminded members: Under Section 106 of the Local Government Act, any Member who has unpaid council tax over 2 months old, must declare the fact at the meeting and is not allowed to vote on budget/council tax setting agenda item.	
82-25F&O To consider the Hiring and Letting Charges for the 2026-27 financial year. The Clerk detailed, the information from Cornwall Council regarding the council tax base for the 2026-27 financial year, is expected to be officially circulated to all councils by the end of the week. Therefore, the Excel spreadsheet, being used for this evening's budget discussions is incorrect, but can be used as a guideline. The Clerk reminded members' about the council tax base received from Cornwall Council, which enables Town and Parish Councils, to use the Excel spreadsheet (Council Tax Calculator) having input the proposed precept first, to display the annual council tax charge that residents in the parish will pay in 2026-27 for the parish council element, based on the proposed precept figure that has been input. This is shown for all of the different property bands. The spreadsheet then displays the increase or decrease in charge per band from 2025-26 to 2026-27 in pounds (£) and percentage (%) terms. The Clerk had circulated in advance an initial budget/precept proposal for council to consider and review at this meeting, which suggested that there should be a slight increase in the room hire charges for the Council Chambers and Bénodet Park for 2026/27. Members also considered these proposals to increase the licence fees for the licensees at a rate of 3%. It is recommended that the notes appended to these minutes containing the proposed hiring and licensee charges at <i>Appendix 1</i> are as follows from 1st April 2026: - Council Hall – £20.00 per hour Committee Room – £14.00 per hour Mayor's Parlour - £10.00 per hour. Bénodet Park tea hut and Park Hourly charge – £14.00 per hour Half day charge - £40.00 Full day charge - £80.00 for the 2026-27 financial year. All licensees charges for 2026/27 are as per <i>Appendix 1</i> with the Clerk delegated to review and increase the service charges applied to Room 1 and the Annexe from 1st April 2026.	Council

83-25F&O To consider the Council Budget for the 2026-27, 2027-28 and 2028-29 financial years.

The Chairman (Councillor M J Spurling) explained that preparatory work had been undertaken to prepare a draft budget, as previously circulated, for the 2026-27 financial year, with hard copies available at the meeting.

The Clerk highlighted the proposed salaries expenditure for 2026/27, which had been calculated and discussed at an earlier meeting of the council Chairman plus committee Chairmen. This would result in the salaries expenditure budget increasing from £356,019 in 2025-26, to £379,339 in 2026-27, an increase of £23,320 (6.55% increase).

Using the draft budget, applying a standard 2.0% increase to expenditure (unless where updated manually) members debated at length where savings could be made and income could be generated.

It is agreed to include the following additional projects in the budget:

- Council Chambers Flooring Repairs and Roof Clean £4,000.

All income amounts were reviewed, as well as the planned allocated Reserves considerations for 2026-27, copied here for clarity.

Reserves	Budget £	Actual £	Var GBP £	Var %	2026-27 RESERVES NOTES	£
Reserves - Accessibility Improvements	7000.00	23.00	6977.00	99.67%	USE ALL FOR ACCESSIBLE PLAY EQUIPMENT 25/26 PROJECT & THEN ALLOCATE £0	0.00
Reserves - Accessible Play Equipment donations	4651.00	0.00	4651.00	100.00%	USE ALL FOR ACCESSIBLE PLAY EQUIPMENT 25/26 PROJECT & THEN ALLOCATE £0	0.00
Reserves - CIL	5999.00	0.00	5999.00	100.00%	USE ALL FOR ACCESSIBLE PLAY EQUIPMENT 25/26 PROJECT & THEN ALLOCATE £0	0.00
Reserves - Defibrillator Donation	3150.00	2670.00	480.00	100.00%	ADD ANY ADDITIONAL DEFIB DONATIONS & ALLOCATE TO DEFIBRILLATOR	1000.00
Reserves - Election Expenses	10000.00	0.00	10000.00	100.00%	ANY REMAINING INCOME AFTER 25/26, RETURN TO GENERAL RESERVES & THEN ALLOCATE £0 (use revenue expenditure if needed)	0.00
Reserves -	3000.00	1946.00	1054.00	100.00%	£1,000 per year -	0.00

Freedom Parade					TOTAL COST 2025 = £2,000 - REMOVE THIS NOW IN MARKETING	
Reserves - MUGA/Other	10000.00	0.00	10000.00	100.0%	£10,000 remains for 26/27	10000.00
Reserves - NDP Improvements	4046.00	1665.00	2381.00	58.8482%	ANY REMAINING INCOME AFTER 25/26, RETURN TO GENERAL RESERVES & THEN ALLOCATE £0	0.00
Reserves - Play Areas and Tennis Courts	15614.00	0.00	15614.00	100.0%	ANY REMAINING INCOME AFTER 25/26, REMAINS IN ALLOCATED RESERVES - PLAY AREAS & TENNIS COURTS	3000.00
Reserves - RIBA3 Good Growth Shared Prosperity Fund	10000.00	2691.00	7309.00	73.09%	WILL BE SPENT IN 25/26. ANY REMAINING INCOME AFTER 25/26, RETURN TO GENERAL RESERVES & THEN ALLOCATE £0	0.00
Reserves - Skate Park Improvements	20000.00	0.00	20000.00	100.0%	REMAIN AT £20,000	20000.00
Reserves - Tennis Courts Sinking Fund	4000.00	0.00	4000.00	100.0%	ADD ADDITIONAL £3,000 IN LINE WITH LTA (from Tennis courts 25/26 income)	7000.00
Reserves - Town Accelerator Fund (website)	6250.00	14685.00	-8435.00	-134.96%	NO BUDGET REMAINING PROJECT COMPLETE	0.00
Reserves - Town Clock	10000.00	0.00	10000.00	100.0%	ADD ADDITIONAL £10,000 for COUNCIL PROJECT 27/28	20000.00
Reserves - Vision Projects	10000.00	5480.00	4520.00	45.2%	ANY REMAINING INCOME AFTER 25/26, REMAINS IN ALLOCATED RESERVES - VISION PROJECTS	4520.00
Reserves - 3 G Pitch Donations	2671.00	0.00	2671.00	100.0%	REMAIN AT £2,671	2671.00
Reserves - 3G Pitch Project	80000.00	0.00	80000.00	100.0%	REMAIN AT £80,000	80000.00
Total Reserves	£206,381.00	£29,160.00	£177,221.00	85.8708%	TOTAL 26/27	148191.00

Using the existing precept calculation using the Cornwall Council Excel spreadsheet, which amounts to a 7.51% increase, for a Band D property, to the precept for 2026-27. Following a proposal by the Chairman (Councillor M J Spurling), which was seconded by the Vice Chairman (Councillor Mrs. S Bickle) it is recommended that the notes appended to these minutes containing a balanced Council budget for the financial year 2026-27 at <i>Appendix 2</i> are approved by the Town Council. Based on the proposed budget, this would result in an increase from the existing precept of £499,466, rising to a proposed precept of £536,332, an increase of £36,866, using the INCORRECT tax base this is approximately a 7.51% increase, with the monthly charge of £226.76 for a Band "D" property, which is an increase of £15.84. Members' highlighted that in the 2027/28 budget, £20k will be included for improvements to Thanckes Park Play Park. <i>(Prior to the voting on the proposed council budget / precept for the financial year 2025-26. Members were asked by the Town Clerk: Under Section 106 of the Local Government Act, any Member who has unpaid council tax over 2 months old, must declare the fact at the meeting and is not allowed to vote on budget/council tax setting agenda item.)</i> (Councillors G J Davis, K J Moon, L E Keise, Mrs. J L Reeves and C R Still left the meeting at this point.)	Council
84-25F&O Minutes of the previous meeting It was resolved that the minutes of the Finance and Operations Committee meeting held on Monday 29th September 2025 were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.	
85-25F&O Matters arising from the minutes a) To update on Torpoint Christmas lights 2025 – 2028: - Pursuant to minute number 66-25F&O (a), the Clerk and Operations Manager explained: - ➤ Permission from one property owner has not been given, unfortunately the owner was away when the letters were distributed and this permission was missed. Subsequently, the fixing bolt has been tested and replaced without their permission. The Clerk and committee Chairman are working with the property owner to try to find a solution to the issue, this includes contacting the lights installation contractor, the town council insurer plus the agent for the property next door. ➤ The bolt testing is completed. ➤ Contractor MHLS Ltd has agreed an installation date for the Christmas lights and all local traders and residents' have been advised of the same. ➤ The Operations Team will support the installation and take down. ➤ The Christmas tree is being put up the Sunday before and will be decorated at the same time as the Christmas lights are put up. b) To update on progress with funding to support CCTV proposals for Harvey Street: - Pursuant to minute number 66-25F&O (c), committee members' reviewed the PID for the CCTV proposals and with this in mind, it is recommended this council adopts the Project Initiation Document for the installation of CCTV proposals at Harvey Street, in the knowledge that once updated costs and funding bid outcomes are known, the document will be revised.	Council

c) To update on Enhanced LMP Grant opportunity for 2025 – 2026: -
Pursuant to minute number 66-25F&O (e), the Operations Manager explained this is on the programme of works for the Operations team.

d) To update on progress with the proposed 'transfer of the asset' WWI memorial on St. James Church: -
Pursuant to minute number 56-25F&O (c), correspondence have been sent on the matter and responses are awaited.

86-25F&O To consider Policies referred to this Committee
None.

87-25F&O Civic Functions and other events

a) Remembrance Sunday – Sunday 9th November 2025: -
Clerk to email all members' with Parade details for Remembrance Sunday.

The Town Mayor is organising a Christmas Civic Service Tuesday 16th December, 7.00pm at Cornerstone Church.

88-25F&O To consider the Council Risk Management

a) Creditors/Debtors: -

The Clerk is pleased to advise the debtors list is now improving.

b) Budget Variance – Finance and Operations Committee responsibilities (September 2025 Budget Variance Information).

All committee income and expenditure was considered, with no immediate concerns.

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 an ongoing issue with the extraction system. Has been resolved.	Complete
	Purchase order issued for RB Windows for replacement Buller Road door.	Complete
	Annual gas safety checks booked.	Complete
	Temporary fix of the floor in room one.	Complete
	Heating engineer booked to replace TRV on room 1 radiator	Ongoing
LIBRARY & COM HUB	Loose panel on the south side, exposing the insulation behind, reported to Cornwall Council.	Ongoing
PARKS	Awaiting quotations to service, repair or replace all items rated 12 or above as a result of this year's parks inspections.	Ongoing
	Issue with synchronisation with the Parks inspection app, Android 16 not working with the new version of the app. New shed has been put up in Bénodet, with support from HMS Raleigh to prepare footings. All benches in Bénodet have been refurbished.	Ongoing

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES	Fixed wiring survey of both sets of conveniences carried out. This has picked up some issues at Bénodet, these will be resolved as part of the CLUP infrastructure improvements. Further investigation is needed of the Antony Road conveniences earth readings.	Ongoing	
TRAINING	As part of the CLUP funding 2 road marshals volunteers have completed the Traffic Management for Community Events training The Town Clerk and Operations Manager have booked spaces on the SLCC events management training and have attended a webinar on Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, Martyn's Law.	Complete Complete	
BENCHES	2 x new Solar powered charging and WiFi benches have been installed at the Library and Bénodet. Benches will be reinstalled beside the former St John Ambulance Hall site before Christmas.	Complete	
FOOTPATHS	New signage for paths 4 and 7 has been delivered. 2 nd cut and trim has taken place Path 7; Path 4 will be done asap.	Ongoing	
JAPANESE KNOTWEED	Despite SLA being in place Cornwall Council operative visited Thanckes Park to carry out herbicide application.		
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS/ BUNTING	Christmas Lights fixing test has been carried out, some fixtures replaced. Purchase orders issued for Christmas light hire and installation.	Ongoing Complete	
OTHER	The Operations Manager is continuing to liaise with Cornwall Council regarding elements of the CLUP Bid that are on their managed land. Due to the slow responses and the proposed costs of installing utilities at The Lawn, a revised shopping list has been forwarded to the CLUP coordinator.		
The Operations Manager advised: - ➤ A summary of the Operational update. Following receipt of a quotation for £862.00 + VAT, from Safelincs Fire and Safety Solutions, for purchase of 4 x P50 fire extinguishers for the library and community hub, Clerk to proceed with ordering, as within limits of delegation.			Clerk
89-25F&O Planning Applications. a) PA25/07511 Proposed storage compound with variation of condition 4 of decision notice PA24/03149 dated 07.08.2024. Land at Trevol Business Park, Trevol Road, Torpoint. It is resolved there are no observations or objections.			
90-25F&O Items Referred to this Committee. a) None.			
91-25F&O Health and Safety a) Reports and any new, proposed regulations/legislations and current issues. There are currently no areas for consideration. Clerk and Operations Manager have attended			

a national online briefing regarding Martyn's Law.

b) Fire Risk Assessment for all buildings.

No areas of concern.

92-25F&O Climate and Environmental Action Plan

a) To consider the actions relating to this Committee: -

Nothing further to report.

93-25F&O Accounts for payment

PAYEE	Invoice Number	Total (£)	TAX	NET	Description
Cornwall Council	8100621501	97,711.97	72.00	97,639.97	Salaries July to September '25 & Mayoral Allowance
Mole Valley Farmers	IN210089485	378.43	63.08	315.35	Shed Materials / Parks Improvements
Torpoint Town Council	INV-1685	320.42	48.67	271.75	Room Hire for Public Consultations x 2 – RIBA3 Funding
Mrs J M Martin	ND70 UMA	71.40	0.00	71.40	Mileage Claim Torpoint - Falmouth Return With Parking - CALC Meeting
Biffa	522C83820	33.82	5.64	28.18	Recycling Collection Library
Biffa	522C83821	51.58	8.60	42.98	General Waste Collection Library
Biffa	522C83822	33.82	5.64	28.18	Recycling Collection Chambers
Biffa	522C83823	67.34	11.22	56.12	General Waste Collection Chambers
Complete Weed Control	SW3920	1,812.00	302.00	1,510.00	Supply and Application of Herbicide for Weed Control - Spring 09/06/2025
Complete Weed Control	SW4020	1,812.00	302.00	1,510.00	Supply and Application of Herbicide for Weed Control - Autumn 18/10/2025
Penny Madge	Out With Friends	75.00	0.00	75.00	Community Bus Provision
Print Options	INV-15392	395.2	39.20	356.00	Display Boards and Hard Copies of NDP
Print Options	INV-15416	504.00	84.00	420.00	Large Vinyl Banners for NDP
Mike Harding Lighting Solutions	4057	2,676.00	446.00	2,230.00	Stress Testing of Anchor Points, inc fitting new plates (CLUP funding)
TOTAL		105,942.98	1,388.05	104,554.93	

94-25F&O Correspondence

a) To note: Donation of £520.27 towards the maintenance of the public access defibrillators in Torpoint – Torpoint Group Community First Responders: -

Thank you to Torpoint Group Community First Responders for their donation of £520.27 towards the maintenance of the public access defibrillators in the town, which is very much appreciated.

b) To consider and note: Correspondence regarding "Grave concerns over the unsafe steps

betwixt Mr Spurrell's home and the new build" on Marine Drive – Mr M Watkiss: - Clerk to direct the correspondence to the landowner, Antony Estate and advise the correspondent accordingly. c) To consider: Understanding Cornish Places – new information tool about towns and communities in Cornwall, developed in collaboration with Cardiff University <u>Understanding Cornish Places</u>. Please tell us key data that you would like to be included in future versions, Cornwall Council: - Noted. d) To consider and note: Digital Landline Switchover – Free training and resources for rural areas – via Rural Services Network: - Noted. e) Free of charge use application for two events – Friends of Thanckes Park: - It is resolved to grant free of charge use to Friends of Thanckes Park, for two forthcoming events. (Councillor Mrs. S Bickle abstained from voting.) f) To note: Correspondence from Cornerstone Church representative pertaining to the recently awarded grant of £500.00 – Cornerstone Church: - Noted. g) To note: Employer Newsletter October 2025 - Cornwall Pension Fund: - Noted.	Clerk
95-25F&O Date of next meeting Monday 1st December 2025.	
96-25F&O Any Business that has been disclosed to the Chairman and members prior to the meeting. ➤ The temporary mast at Antony Road, is there any further update on its removal? Clerk to action correspondence to chase up when it is likely to be removed. Meeting closed at 9.18pm _____ Chairman	Clerk