

# CORNWALL COUNCILLOR UPDATE FOR JANUARY 2026



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## Cornwall Council

January was a busy month for all things Cornwall Council. Starting at the beginning of the month, we had a constitution and governance meeting where we discussed, amongst other things, the way that Full Council meetings are run. As a backbench Councillor, it is frustrating that we are never permitted to discuss issues that are relevant and frustrating to residents. Issues that Cornwall Council has power and control over, such as my housing motion, are referred to the relevant cabinet member as they have they executive decision making power. So we end up discussing issues, where our only "power" is to write a strongly worded letter to Government. In the 4 and a half years since I have been a councillor, many letters have been written and Councillors who bring the motions get their 5 inches of column space in the local papers and then nothing happens. A number of us, as group leaders, suggested that instead we be allowed to debate in the council chamber issues that are important to the people of Cornwall, so that the leader and his cabinet are informed as to the views of the wider council before making their executive decisions. To be fair to this administration, they were also backbench councillors 6 months ago and share our frustrations and were supportive of this change.

January also saw a meeting of the Together for Families Scrutiny Committee which I chair, this was a wide ranging meeting where we discussed and scrutinised children's dentistry (or lack thereof), educational attainment (school grades), antenatal and postnatal and first few years care across Cornwall and the "Right on Survey" which is a survey of thousands of young people voices across Cornwall.

The following week saw us back at County Hall for Full Council, where we voted to support hospitality and jury trials - both things that we have no power over but a strongly worded letter was sent and we approved the change to the constitution as set out above. I hope to see Full Council become more effective and Cornwall focused with these changes now made.

Finally, we had our last Budget Scrutiny meeting before budget setting in a few weeks time (24<sup>th</sup> Feb). This was the first actually useful meeting of budget scrutiny there has been, where we actually got to look at lines in the budget. Cornwall has received a 27% increase in core spending power in this financial year as well as a move to multiyear settlements making it easier to plan and budget. But, as ever, the administration has set their political priorities and much of this seems to be reserves for future spending before the next election cycle.

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## Continued:

### Tamar Crossings

You will all be aware that the joint committee of the Tamar Crossings met again in early January and decided to overturn their previous decision to increase the admin costs of the TamarTag, this is welcome news, but it will now go out to public consultation and come back again, perhaps as a reduced increase. I will be keeping an eye on this of course.

### Flooding and Weather

January has been utterly brutal in terms of the weather we have suffered. We have seen up to triple the amount of rain fall across the county, which means that the land is completely water logged and run off into the roads is severe. Drains are being cleared, but they just simply can not keep up with the quantity of water that is coming through them and get backed up. This on top of horrendous storm damage, flooding to properties and cars and more has meant a very stressful January for all. This is the reality of climate change unfortunately, and something we will experience more of as the years go by. Everything that folk send to me, I do report but I would like to remind everyone that anyone can report flooding, damage to roads etc by using the report an issue function for Cornwall Council, <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/report-something/>

Marker with Rame Parish Council are running their flood resilience meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> Feb between 10am and 2pm, at the Community Hall in Kingsand - I would encourage attendance.

Let's hope that February is a bit drier and a bit calmer for all of us.