

TORPOINT TOWN COUNCIL – BRIEFING

March 2026

Car Parks (Thanckes): I wrote to Dan Rogerson, Portfolio Holder for Transport, explaining in detail why Thanckes Car Park should not be included among those proposed for charging, yet I received no response to the questions I raised. He later visited Torpoint and viewed the car park with two members of the Town Council committee and me. Despite the discussion, his view on introducing charges did not change. That may have been influenced by the car park being full at the time, with other vehicles also looking to park, although it was clearly explained that many of the vehicles present were there because of overspill parking from the nearby school.

At Scrutiny Committee, I asked for the evidence and supporting data used to justify turning free car parks into paid ones. None was produced, because none exists. This exposes the proposal for what it is: not a policy based on evidence or local need, but a tax on local people designed to fill the gap created when the Liberal Democrat/Independent Administration, with great fanfare at its first Cabinet meeting, cancelled the ANPR scheme for car parks. They made that decision, and residents are now being asked to foot the bill.

I will now be writing to Dan Rogerson to place on record what was discussed at our meeting, together with the actions I outlined at Cabinet, so that a formal case can be built for Thanckes Car Park to be removed from the charging list in 2027.

King's Arms: No update will be provided on the King's Arms at this stage, as enforcement action is currently being taken.

Tamar Crossings: A meeting of the Tamar Crossings Joint Committee took place this month. We discussed the public consultation, and it was agreed that, in response to feedback, further consultation sessions should be held in additional locations rather than being limited to Torpoint and Saltash.

A letter has also been sent to Government requesting annual funding of **£499,000** to help meet the operating and maintenance costs of the Tamar Crossings, and a response from the Minister is awaited. During the meeting, I asked that all MPs likely to be affected by the bridge and ferry, including the MP for Torridge and Tavistock, be added to the list of stakeholders.

There were three public questions, one of which prompted further debate on whether tolls should continue to be collected in one direction only or whether charges should apply in both directions.

Under finance and the capital programme, I raised concerns about whether decarbonising a ferry between **2027 and 2029** represents the right financial decision. My concern is that this could increase debt by around **£3 million**, reduce operations to two ferries for a prolonged period, and lead to higher debt repayments, which could in turn place further upward pressure on tolls. Similar concerns apply to the introduction of ANPR, although it is understood that those costs may be recovered over time.

A study and options analysis is currently being developed in relation to the future of the ferry, with the preferred option at present being a battery-fitted ferry charged from shore.

Street Lighting: A recent press article highlighted significant safety concerns arising from Cornwall Council's assessment of switching off street lighting as part of its decarbonisation project. The Cornwall Council Decision Wheel used in that assessment was rated **RED**, which should have triggered appropriate mitigation measures. The information came to light through a **Freedom of Information request**, and I have now written to Cornwall Council asking for all relevant documents, together with any additional information, to be forwarded to me for analysis. This may help support a more robust case for the reinstatement of street lighting where it is needed.

YMCA – The BBC has contacted me regarding an article and speaking to key members impacted by the closure. I will be asking for volunteers to speak to the BBC with their views. A date for the YMCA's CEO to visit Torpoint will be agreed with the Major next week.