

Milly Southworth

From: Julie Calleya <Julie.Calleya@cornwall.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 August 2026 21:19
To: CornwallALC Enquiries
Cc: Training Cornwall ALC
Subject: CALC: Letter of Concern - University of Exeter
Attachments: University of Exeter letter of concern RTC.docx

Information Classification: CONTROLLED

Dear Members,

Please see attached a letter from Redruth Town Council regarding the proposed reduction of staff and services at the University of Exeter's Penryn Campus (Tremough).

At the Larger Councils Committee last month, CALC agreed to circulate correspondence of this nature to member councils so that each council can consider the information and determine its own response. CALC is not leading or participating in any campaign relating to this matter but is making information available to enable councils to engage with the issue as they see fit.

Given the potential significance of the proposals for Cornwall's economy, communities and higher education provision, CALC has sought to better understand the position. We have engaged with Cllr Hilary Frank and Cllr Tim Dwelly, whose portfolios include higher education. They advised that Cornwall Council's Cabinet is aware of the situation and is engaging with the University. We were also encouraged to seek information directly from the University of Exeter.

As a result, I spoke with Martin Siegert, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Cornwall), to obtain further detail regarding the proposed changes. The information relayed to CALC included the following:

- The University advised that a number of higher education institutions across the country are currently experiencing financial challenges, with some universities reporting significant deficits. Examples cited included Cardiff, Nottingham and East Anglia.
- We were informed that the University of Exeter itself is not currently operating at a deficit. However, the University considers it necessary to reduce costs in order to mitigate future financial risks and avoid the circumstances being experienced elsewhere in the sector.
- The proposed savings include staffing reductions across the University's campuses, with cuts being applied on a proportionate basis. We were advised that this could involve approximately 150 staff reductions across the University as a whole, initially through voluntary measures, with between 10 and 20 posts potentially affected at Tremough.
- We were informed that there are currently no proposed changes affecting the Camborne School of Mines.
- The teaching of Geography at Tremough may cease, with delivery potentially consolidated at the Streatham campus, while Environmental Sciences at Tremough may see modest growth.

The University further advised that:

- Student intake projections for Tremough remain broadly unchanged for future years.
- Despite the proposed staffing reductions, the staff-to-student ratio across the University is expected to remain above the Russell Group average.
- On this basis, the University anticipates that overall student capacity will remain largely unaffected.

The concerns raised by Redruth Town Council reflect the importance of the Penryn Campus to Cornwall's educational, economic and research landscape. Many councils may wish to consider the potential implications of any reduction in staffing, course provision or regional investment, alongside the information provided by the University regarding its rationale for the proposals.

CALC is not seeking to verify or endorse any of the statements above and is simply relaying information provided to us by the University.

Kind regards

Lee Dunkley BA (Hons), MPhil, FSLCC

County Executive Officer
Cornwall Association of Local Councils
01872 326969



The content of this email is intended for the named Council in membership of the Association and is based on the information provided at the time of the enquiry. The Association is neutral and unbiased and the advice given is for the benefit of the named council as a whole and the information provided is in line with current best practice. Details of the CALC Privacy Statement can be accessed from our website www.cornwallalc.org.uk.

This e-mail and attachments are intended for above named only and may be confidential. If they have come to you in error you must take no action based on them, nor must you copy or show them to anyone; please e-mail us immediately at enquiries@cornwall.gov.uk. Please note that this e-mail may be subject to recording and/or monitoring in accordance with the relevant legislation and may need to be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Security Warning: It is the responsibility of the recipient to ensure that this e-mail and any attachments are virus free. The Authority will not accept liability for any damage caused by a virus.

Redruth Town
Council



Consel An Dre
Resrudh

Redruth Civic Centre, Alma Place, Redruth, Cornwall TR15 2AT

Tel No: 01209-210038 e-mail: admin@redruth-tc.gov.uk

Town Mayor: Cllr A Biscoe

Town Clerk: Mrs C Williams

Support for Humanities, Social Sciences and Human and Physical Geography at the University of Exeter's Penryn Campus

Redruth Town Council wishes to express its serious concern regarding the University of Exeter's proposed redundancies and course closures affecting the Penryn Campus.

We understand that the University has announced plans that could result in approximately 150 job losses across the institution, with Humanities, Social Sciences and Geography facing particularly significant reductions. Reports indicate that around 31% of staff within these disciplines are at risk, including researchers and lecturers whose work is deeply connected to Cornwall's culture, history, communities, environment and future development.

Commented [LA1]: What is the proposed reduction?

The Council is also concerned about the potential impact on the Institute of Cornish Studies (ICS). We understand that if the proposed redundancies proceed, the Institute could be left without any paid staff, placing at risk an internationally recognised centre dedicated to the study, promotion and understanding of Cornwall, its people, language, heritage and identity.

For over two decades, The University of Exeter's Penryn Campus has played a vital role in Cornwall's educational, cultural and economic development. The establishment and expansion of higher education in Cornwall was supported by significant public investment, including European Objective One funding, with the intention of strengthening Cornwall's economy, widening access to higher education and supporting regional development.

Staff within the aforementioned departments have been integral to the successful establishment of the Penryn Campus and made substantial contributions to the objectives highlighted above. Their research and community engagement have helped deepen understanding of Cornwall's unique culture and heritage, informed public policy, strengthened civic participation, and contributed to debates on environmental sustainability, social justice and regional development. Their work has also supported local communities, organisations and public bodies across Cornwall.

The Council recognises that universities face financial and strategic challenges. However, we note concerns raised by staff regarding the scale of the proposed cuts, the speed at which these decisions are being made and the potential long-term consequences for Cornwall. We are particularly concerned that the loss of academic expertise may diminish the University's capacity to deliver teaching, research and public engagement that directly benefits Cornwall and aligns with wider regional and national priorities.

The Council resolves to share this statement with neighbouring town and parish councils, Cornwall Council, Cornwall's Members of Parliament, and the University of Exeter, inviting them to support efforts to safeguard the long-term future of humanities and social science teaching and research at the Penryn Campus.

Resolution:

"That this Council expresses its concern regarding the proposed redundancies and course closures at the University of Exeter's Penryn Campus, supports efforts to protect the Institute of Cornish Studies and other affected academic departments, and calls upon the University to work with stakeholders to safeguard the long-term future of higher education, research and community engagement in Cornwall."

Yours faithfully



Charlotte Williams

Town Clerk