

Responsible Financial Officer Reports (9-13)

9. RFO Report - (for information – bank balances, internal controls, Cornwall Pension Fund triennial valuation 2025)

- **Bank balances** - as at 31 October 2025 are as follows:

HSBC	43,882.04
Lloyds Debit card	334.51
Cornwall Council deposit	968,417.89
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>£1,012,634.44</u>

- **Internal Controls** – The new Internal Auditor made their first visit on 17 November for the interim review. The report will follow in due course.
- **Cornwall Pension Fund triennial valuation** – The triennial valuation of the pension fund and review of employer contributions has just been completed, and the RFO met with the actuaries on 5 November. While employer monthly contributions will increase from 19.6% to 19.7% there will not be an annual contribution (currently £4,900) which will more than offset the increase in monthly contributions. The new rates will apply from 2026 until 2029.

10. Schedule of Payments - To receive and approve the schedule of payments totalling £97,286.65 gross

Attachment: 10. Schedule of Payments

Recommendation: to approve the schedule of payments totalling £97,286.65 gross

11. Budget Monitoring 2025/26 – To receive and accept a budget report to 31 October 2025 for monitoring purposes

Attachment: 11. Budget Monitoring to 31 October 2025

On target spend should now be at 58.33%

The following points should be noted on the Administration (101) budget (other budgets monitored within the relevant committees):

- PAYE & NI (4010) shows only six month's expenditure (50%) as this is paid a month behind until year end.
- Pension (4020) includes the annual lump sum contribution of £4,900
- Mayoral Allowance (4340) paid via payroll and £945 is included in the salary line

Recommendation: to note and approve the budget monitoring report

- 12. Budget Setting 2026/27** – To consider the draft budgets from the committees
Attachments: 12i. Admin Draft Budget 2026/27, 12ii. C&E Draft Budget 2026/27, 12iii. Facilities Draft Budget 2026/27, 12iv. Facilities Budget Summary 2026/27, 12v. Budget Summary, 12vi. Reserves, 12vii. 5 Year Capital Plan, 12viii. CONFIDENTIAL Regalia report

Administration Budget Notes

- Equipment & IT Purchase (4230) – Over the last 2 years two phases of computer upgrades have taken place. There remains further equipment to update, including the office copier which is no longer supported by updates.
- Civic Duty & Member Exp (4350) – A regalia specialist has reviewed the current condition of the Town Council's regalia (Mayor's chain, Mayoresses chain, Deputy Mayor's ribbon, Mayor's Consort ribbon, and Deputy Mayor's Consort ribbon). Essential repairs are recommended totaling £11,790, plus non-essential repairs of £8,030 – confidential report attached. In addition, they will be producing designs for a new Deputy Mayor's chain, as requested by Council, making use of the existing medallion which may be in the region of £10,000. This could be phased over 3 years. Also urgently recommended are custom made storage rolls for transportation, or a hard Peli case, to avoid further damage. It was suggested the Deputy Mayor's medallion could be mounted on a collar like those used by organisations such as the Freemasons, as an interim measure. These could be achieved from the remaining £761 in the current year budget. Samples have been obtained for Deputy Mayor's name boards which could be provided at a cost of £60 – 70 per board. These will be available to view at the meeting.
- CCTV (4360) – There is still a lack of reliable cost information for the monitoring of the town CCTV cameras, and the establishment of the new East Cornwall monitoring hub, for both the current financial year and the new one. It would be prudent for any underspend in the current year to be transferred to the EMR.

5 Year Capital Plan

Earlier this year the Council resolved to adopt a 5-year capital plan, to prepare for devolution and large proposed projects and assist in securing grant funding. A moderate proposal has been put forward for consideration.

Council Review – Consultant's Recommendations

In August, the Council instructed the Local Council Consultancy to undertake a review. The final report is due in December, to inform the final budget and precept setting. However, in the interim it is expected that it will recommend some additional hours and regradings as a minimum, and therefore a modest amount has been included in preparation for this.

Tax Base

The tax base has increased this year by only 0.99% which generates an additional £6,958 of precept income without increasing the charge to householders. With the next phase of house building locally to be in Menheniot parish, it is unlikely there will be increases over at least the next 2 years.

Budget and Precept

The budget and precept for 2026/27 must be set, and the precept amount notified to Cornwall Council by 31 January 2026 (this includes allowable time extensions).

The draft net budgets submitted by the committees for 2026/27 are as follows:

Committee	Net Budget
Administration	284,588
Communications & Engagement	119,133
Facilities	387,267
5 Year Capital Programme	125,000
Consultant's Recommendations	50,000
Total / Precept Requirement	965,988

This would equate to a band D precept of £261.48 pa, an increase of £70.45 or 36.9%, but Liskeard Town Council is starting from a low base. While band D is the required comparison, almost 80% of Liskeard households are in bands A to C, with band B being the most popular. A band B property (assuming no entitlement to Council Tax Support which is available for low-income families) will pay an additional £54.79 per annum or £1.05 per week.

The table below shows a breakdown for each council tax band.

<u>Council Tax Projections 2026/27</u>				
	Council Tax	Council Tax	Assuming no CTS	
Band	2025/26	2026/27	Annual Inc	Weekly Inc
A	£127.35	£174.32	£46.97	£0.90
B	£148.58	£203.37	£54.79	£1.05
C	£169.80	£232.43	£62.63	£1.20
D	£191.03	£261.48	£70.45	£1.35
E	£233.48	£319.59	£86.11	£1.66
F	£275.93	£377.69	£101.76	£1.96
G	£318.38	£435.80	£117.42	£2.26
H	£382.05	£522.96	£140.91	£2.71
Total				

Liskeard is currently spending well below the county average for town councils. In 2025/26 the 24 largest towns in Cornwall range from a band D precept of £167.05 (Penryn) up to £444.06 (Falmouth) with Liskeard ranked 23rd. Assuming a 0% increase for all other towns, Liskeard would move to 16th position with the proposed increase.

Reserves

The general reserve currently stands at £328,265 which is below the level currently considered appropriate in the Reserves policy.

A General Reserve covering 6 months revenue expenditure (approx. £330,000 in 2023/2024) is considered appropriate for Liskeard Town Council.

It is possible for larger councils to operate on a reserve of between three and six months expenditure, dependant on individual risk, and therefore the policy could be reviewed, however this may limit the Council's ability to undertake larger projects in the future.

A list of all reserves is attached, and these have been considered by committees in setting budgets.

Recommendation - To provide feedback to the committees for review of the budgets before final agreement and precept setting in January

13. Community Highways Improvement Programme – a). to approve the submission of a Town Council expression of interest for improvements on New Road
Attachment: 13ai. Guidance Note, 13aii. Appendix 1 Best Practice

Programme Overview

- **Funding:** South East Cornwall CAP £134,659 per year from 2026/27 to 2028/29. There is an opportunity for Town & Parish Councils to make contributions to local schemes where they are in a position to do so.
- **Eligible Improvements** (key points):
 - Schemes must support Local Transport Plan (LTP) goals and relate to the local highway network (carriageways, verges, footways — excluding trunk roads).
 - Public rights of way improvements are eligible where they enhance everyday access and connectivity.
- **Key exclusions:**
 - Isolated on-street parking restrictions (e.g. yellow lines); such restrictions will only be considered as part of a wider scheme.
 - Feasibility studies, for value for money reasons. However, options appraisals may be considered if they clearly define the issue and location.
 - Residents' parking schemes, due to their strategic nature and complexity.

Process and Timeline for first round:

- **w/c 3 November 2025** Programme will be launched to CAP members.
- **By 31 December 2025:** Each CAP member (Cornwall Councillors and Town/Parish Councils) may submit one Expression of Interest (EOI) via an online form.
- **By early February 2026:** Cornwall Councillors in each CAP will make a final decision on which EOIs should be developed and costed
- **By end of March 2026:** Cornwall Councillors will recommend budget allocations.
- **By April 2026:** Final programme signed-off
- **Ongoing:** CAPs will receive monthly monitoring reports on scheme progress through to completion.

One of the goals of the Cornwall Transport Plan is to Support Community and Road Safety. Suitable schemes for this include reducing speed or traffic volumes, e.g. town gateways or vehicle activated signs. In Appendix 1 Best Practice examples are shown in St Austell and Trevarrian.

Concerns are regularly raised by residents using New Road about traffic speeds. There is not a continuous footway into town. It is necessary to cross the road twice to remain on the footway, and both crossing points are on bends. Furthermore, families walking to Hillfort School from the Lanchard area need to cross this road.

This is included in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan as Route 9 where findings included narrow footways (limited to one side of the carriageway) and no cycle provision in a residential area parallel to a busy B road with large vehicles, and uncontrolled/poor crossings. Recommendations included introduction of a 20 mph zone, improved footway widening, pedestrian crossing facilities, traffic calming and continuous raised footways at crossings.

The road did not meet the criteria for a reduction to 20 mph as part of the recent rollout and remains at 30 mph until the junction with Varley Lane. The Community Speed Watch recently monitored New Road and recorded 4 vehicles exceeding the 30mph speed limit doing speeds between 35 & 38 mph between 08:30 and 09:30 on one morning.

While this scheme cannot address all the recommendations of the LCWIP, some simple cost-efficient measures could be requested to reduce speeds and improve community and road safety.

Recommendation - To support the submission of an expression of interest for improvements on New Road