

At a future meeting the Council will consider the accuracy of these minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes to that meeting to confirm whether or not they have been amended.

PRESENTATION BY THE DESALINATION INFORMATION GROUP

Three members of the Group attended the Environment Committee and gave the presentation on behalf of the Group, which included, inter alia, the following points:

- The Group had been formed as the eight members were concerned about SW Water's proposals for a desalination system in Par and the lack of public information available.
- St Austell Bay has the biggest seagrass area in England. Seagrass is an important carbon store.
- There are also extensive maerl beds – likewise an important carbon store but also exceptionally slow growing and easily destroyed.
- St Austell Bay is an SPA, a Special Protective Area for 3 types of seabird.
- The initial desalination proposal would involve two pipelines into St Austell Bay, one for abstraction of sea water and one to discharge the brine and other waste – the proposed routes coincide with the seagrass and maerl beds. The plant would generate 20MI of desalinated water per day although SW Water said they would only use the plant for 20% of the time (at times of need). This type of plant cannot be switched off and would have to be left running on tickover when not in active use.
- The proposed land pipeline would run from Par Docks to Restormel Treatment Works, a distance of 13.2 km through farmland, organic land and close to archaeological sites. It would require an extensive area of access road – at least 15m on either side of the pipeline, during construction.
- There is high rainfall in Cornwall and the SW Water projected figures are incorrect. The 2022 figures and drought projections are flawed – the Environment Agency stated SWW were 'not honest, open or transparent'.
- SW Water leakage figures are gradually increasing, not decreasing as SW are claiming; they leak 112.2MI every day with 20% of all water lost via leaks. The comparison here was 4 MI/D generated by the desalination plant (20% of 20MI/d) versus 12MI/d available by re-purposing Blackpool Pit and the amount leaked by SWW on a daily basis. SW Water have not shared any projections or research about the return of concentrated brine and waste products to the sea.
- In May following public objections SW Water changed plans and proposed a smaller phase 1 scheme at Par Docks with the waste products being sent to the sewage plant at Par Moor. The original scheme became 'Phase Two'. Cornwall Council said an EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) would not be required for this smaller scheme – this decision has been challenged by lawyers. On the basis of Cornwall Council's decision regarding an EIA, SWW have stated that the whole scheme could be treated as permitted development.
- An EIA screening request has been submitted to the Marine Management Organisation and a request for test drilling in connection with a phase 2 scheme. Unlike Cornwall Council the MMO has said a EIA must be completed. The request for test drilling received many objections and a decision has not been made.
- The Group was currently waiting an update from Cornwall Council following a request from the authority for further information from SW Water.
- Environmental Information Requests have been made to SW Water concerning chemicals, contamination and waste – and whether Phase One is economically viable as a standalone option or simply setting precedent as a gateway to full permission for Phase Two.
- Non Imerys users of Par Docks have been told they may have to vacate. SW Water has not confirmed or denied if they will be purchasing the Docks.
- SWW have said their plans and timelines are currently 'under strategic review'.
- The presentation acknowledged the value of desalination in hot, dry areas with plenty of funding, eg Saudi Arabia, but felt that Cornwall was rather different in its requirements.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOWEY TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD IN PAVILION HOUSE ON MONDAY 3rd 2025 @ 6.00pm.

Minutes taken by Cllr Mrs Frances Day

Present: The Mayor, Cllr Mrs Lynn Simms (Chair), Cllr Mrs Rhianna Cooke, Cllr Mrs Frances Day, Cllr Mrs Ruth Finlay and Cllr Alan Harris-Guerrero.

1} **To receive apologies for absence**

None.

2} **Declarations of interest**

- (a) **Pecuniary:** None
(b) **Non pecuniary:** None
(c) **Dispensations:** A dispensation had been extended to Cllr Finlay to participate in any discussion pertaining to the Fowey allotments.

3} **Public Participation/Questions**

One member of the public was present.

4} **Minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2024**

It was proposed by Cllr Finlay, seconded by Cllr Cooke and RESOLVED that the Minutes of the previous meeting be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

5} **Matters arising from the Minutes not on the Agenda**

There were no matters arising.

6} **To receive the report of the Tree Warden (Cllr Day)**

Cllr Day reported that “During the gales on 26th January a tree (probably an elder) fell across the path on St Catherine’s Parade. It completely blocked the path. Both a neighbour and I reported it the following day, and, all credit to Cormac, it was cleared the next day and the wood removed tidily.

During the same storm, the large conifer in Readymoney carpark suffered from some broken branches. I reported this to Cornwall Council too. A couple of days later, Jennifer from Cormac’s Environment department came out to inspect the tree. Cormac would tidy the branches, but she was confident that the tree was stable and no danger. It is a very big tree and very old.

Cornwall Council has a duty to manage and maintain trees in publicly maintained spaces and is committed to replacing trees that are lost as a result of actions taken to maintain public safety. In order to help achieve replacement planting targets, Cornwall Council was successfully awarded Forestry Commission funding under the Local Authority Treescapes Fund (LATF) designed to aid neglected or declining treescapes within our communities.

The first phase of funding received in time for the 2024 planting season enabled them to plant 172 standard size trees and 2000 whip size trees across Cornwall. As we approach Spring 2025, we aim to plant a further 135 light standard trees and an additional 1500 whips in our ongoing programmes.

The trees are intended for community-based areas where existing trees have undergone significant levels of tree management, felling, or to aid the re-population of unsuccessful tree planting in recent years.

Trees due for planting in the Fowey area.
Hanson Drive, Fowey
Verge At Junction to Hill Hay Close
Readymoney Carpark

That week an oak tree had been planted on the border of the Readymoney carpark. It had a good stake and wire mesh surround, and its arrival was most welcome.”

7} **Specific areas of responsibility**

Reports on the following specific areas of responsibility were received as follows:

- *Old Grammar School Gardens:* Cllr Finlay: Gardener Sally Pearce was to retire shortly. Discussions about how to maintain the garden following her retirement were deferred to the next meeting.

- *Piggy Lane Triangle: Cllr Finlay:* Sally Pearce's retirement would also have an impact upon the Piggy Lane Triangle.
- *Pretty Bus Stop: Cllr Day:* It was looking good and recent updating activity had been observed there.
- *Allotments: Cllr Finlay:* The Allotments' secretary had completed a form expressing concern about proposals for the future of the Readymoney carpark. An Annual General Meeting was to be held at the Galleon, which was good as a number of allotments had recently changed hands.
- *Local maintenance partnership (footpaths): Cllr Finlay:* The gold footpath no. 11 running from Passage Lane to Green Lane and including the Cinder Track had been downgraded by Cornwall Council without consultation. It was proposed by Cllr Finlay, seconded by Cllr Harris-Guerrero and RESOLVED that Cllr Finlay would contact Cornwall Council to find out the background to this decision.
- *Agency agreements, weed killing/grass cutting: Cllr Finlay:* Agency Agreement (Grass cutting): A Cornwall Council grant of £1,203 for 4 cuts had been received. FTC would pay for a further 5 cuts in the year ahead.
- *Squires Field green areas: Cllr Cooke* reported that the football goals had been installed. The benches and their plinths had been put in place and looked really good. Cllr Cooke and Cllr Harris-Guerrero were thanked for all their hard work in bringing this about.
- *Squires Field Children's playground: Cllr Cooke* reported that the MUGA should be in place in the next couple of weeks. Turf would be relaid and the new play area was progressing.

8} **Review Budget 2024-2025**

Cllr Simms was pleased to report that there was currently around £2,000 left in the budget for the current year, and it was likely that the year would finish within the designated budget.

8.1} Two quotes had been received to install a fence between the play area and pump track. A quote of £1,697 had been received from Andy Inglefield. Although it was £47 more than the other quote it was proposed by Cllr Cooke, seconded by Cllr Harris-Guerrero and RESOLVED that this quote should be accepted as Fowey Town Council had an excellent relationship with Andy and he often carried out minor repairs free of charge.

A quote for the hire of a mini digger from Jasper Flashman of £185 for the removal of an earth mound in Squires Field play area had been received and it was proposed by Cllr Harris-Guerrero, seconded by Cllr Finlay and RESOLVED that this should be accepted. Mr Flashman would carry out the required labour free of charge.

The costs involved in repairing the boat in the playground seemed likely to be higher than anticipated, so it was agreed to defer discussion of this to the next meeting.

9} **Squires Field Waste Management Services 2025/26**

Cornwall Council had quoted £3,572 to provide waste management services at Squires Field for a further year. As this was the same price as for the current year, it was proposed by Cllr Finlay, seconded by Cllr Day and RESOLVED that the quote be accepted.

10} **Hill Hay open spaces**

There were two open areas at Hill Hay which needed the vegetation clearing more regularly. Lanhydrock Garden Services were currently carrying this out. It was thought that more cuts might be needed and it was agreed that this should be considered at the next meeting, which would take place in the new financial year.

11} **Environmental Growth Plan**

- Trees had been ordered from the Woodland Trust; 105 medium saplings and 30 nursery saplings. These would include some hedging. Stakes and compost would be needed, costing £400. It was proposed by Cllr Cooke seconded by Cllr Day and RESOLVED that this expenditure should go ahead.
- Cllr Simms had not yet had an opportunity to speak to the Primary School about a poster competition promoting environmental growth, but would do so shortly.
- The Town Clerk had arranged for the troughs on Town Quay to be replanted.

12} **To Receive Reports from Members**

Cllr Harris-Guerrero was concerned that some trees planted at Squires Field were too near some water pipes, and requested that they be moved. A survey carried out by Jasper Flashman had brought this to light. It was agreed that the trees be replanted in more suitable areas.

13} **Proposed date of next meeting**

It was proposed that this should take place on **Monday 12th May 2025** at 6.00pm in Pavilion House.

There being no further business, the meeting closed @ 7.15pm.