

Town Clerk C W Drake  
Telephone 01566 773693  
[admin@launceston-tc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@launceston-tc.gov.uk)  
[www.launceston-tc.gov.uk](http://www.launceston-tc.gov.uk)



Launceston Town Council  
The Town Hall  
Launceston  
Cornwall PL15 7AR

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**held on TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2026 at 7.00pm in the Town Hall**

- PRESENT** Cllrs Gilbert (Mayor), Conway (Deputy Mayor), Anston-Race, Bullen, Gordon, Harris, Heaton, Hogan, Lankston, O'Brien, Soanes, Tremain and Young  
In attendance: Cornwall Cllrs Dennis and Paynter  
Christopher Drake (Town Clerk)  
3 x public
- 2603/35 Apologies for absence**  
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bailey and Green
- 2603/36 Declarations of Interest**  
There were no declarations of interest
- 2603/37 Public Representation Session**  
There were no representations made
- 2603/38 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the last meeting, previously circulated**  
It was **resolved** to confirm and sign the minutes previously circulated;  
(i) Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 17 February 2026 at 7.00pm
- 2603/39 To receive and adopt the minutes of committees and sub-committees, previously circulated**  
It was **resolved** to receive and adopt the minutes of the following committees and sub committees:  
(i) Finance and General Purposes held on Wednesday 4 February 2026 at 7.00pm  
(ii) Planning and Economic Development held on Thursday 19 February 2026 at 7.00pm  
(iii) Library, Arts, Business and information held on Tuesday 3 March 2026 at 7.00pm  
(iv) Finance and General Purposes held on Wednesday 4 March 2026 at 7.00pm
- 2603/40 Reports from Cornwall Councillors**  
**Cornwall Cllr Dennis** provided an update regarding works at Race Hill and advised that a timeline for the project had been agreed. In regards to the issue of moss on pavements making them hazardous, the matter had been raised with Biffa to undertake removal works. The footpath leading to Coronation Park was identified as forming part of a future replacement scheme subject to budget allocations. Cllr Dennis also advised that the Police and Crime commissioner had confirmed that the front desk at Launceston police station would not be re-opening due to budget limitations and also aiming to maintain current policing levels within current and future budget constraints. Cllr Dennis concluded by stating that Cllr Preece, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Localism and Planning would visit Community Area Partnership locations in the future.  
  
**Cornwall Cllr Paynter** stated that Cornwall had been allocated £1.5 million as part of the Government's support package for heating oil users. He also advised that the Cabinet

were looking at proposals regarding strategic partnerships for areas that did not have an elected Mayor.

**Cllr Young** raised the issue of the footpath leading to Broad Park garages as there appeared to be no ownership of the site and it was in very poor condition

**Cllr Conway** raised concern about long term parking at Riverside and the area being used for camping. **Cllr Paynter** stated that the matter had been reported and vehicle users had been visited. Cllr Conway also raised his concerns regarding Cornwall being joined with any other region as part of any Strategic Partnership. Cllr Paynter confirmed that Cornwall Council were not seeking to tie Cornwall to any other region but were considering Strategic Partnership options

**Cllr Tremain** thanked Cllr Dennis for his update in regards to the future of a front desk at Launceston police station

**Cllr Heaton** thanked Cllr Dennis for his work on a range of projects affecting the town

**2603/41**

#### **Reports and Questions from Town Councillors**

**Cllr O'Brien** spoke about the Community Area Partnership and the works to improve the Plusha junctions and that he was pleased with the response and hoped that there would be future consultation on the scheme and works proposed

**Cllr Heaton** provided an update from the Patient Participation Group (PPG) meeting on 9 March and the challenges being faced by local pharmacies as there was no electronic prescription system currently in place, but lobbying for funding was ongoing. There had been an increase in call volumes to the local surgery and the Health Hub was working with veterans as well as seeing the site used by a number of different organisations

**Cllr Tremain** provided a written update on the recent Cornwall Council training session regarding changes to the planning framework (copy attached)

**2603/42**

#### **Report from the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor**

The Mayor provided a verbal update on the Mayoral Engagements

**2603/43**

#### **Report from the Town Clerk**

Members considered Report 07/26 concerning the above (previously circulated)

It was **resolved** that;

- i) the update of the library hub building tender for the required works be noted
- ii) the update regarding Lawrence House be noted
- iii) the details regarding the grounds compound be noted
- iv) the update on works on site at the Town Hall be noted
- v) the details regarding repair works to Southgate Arch and Cllr Tremain's verbal update on the meeting held with the Project Manager be noted
- vi) the update regarding repair works to damage at the multi storey car park be noted

**2603/44**

#### **Mayor and Deputy Mayor Elect 2026/27**

Members considered Notices of Motion received for the above

- i) It was **resolved unanimously** that Cllr Nicola Gilbert be elected Mayor of Launceston for 2026/27
- ii) It was **resolved unanimously** that Cllr John Conway be elected Deputy Mayor of Launceston for 2026/27

2603/45

**Council Policies**

It was **resolved** to agree the following Council policies;

- i) Museum Procurement Policy
- ii) Grants Policy
- iii) Financial Regulations
- iv) Management and Safekeeping of Money Policy
- v) Statement of Internal Control
- vi) Investment Strategy
- vii) Operational and Financial Risk Assessment
- viii) IT Policy

2603/46

**Staff Handbook**

It was **resolved** to agree the Staff Handbook

2603/47

**BT Public Payphone Removal Consultation**

It was **resolved** to agree to the removal of the telephony mechanism within the boxes at Race Hill and Newport Hill and for the boxes to be sealed

2603/48

**Correspondence and Matters to Note**

It was **resolved** to;

- i) note the venue usage

2603/49

**Urgent Items**

There were no matters for consideration

2603/50

**Exclusion of members of the press and public**

It was **resolved** that under s1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of confidential information

2603/51

**Staffing Committee Minutes**

It was **resolved** to agree the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 9 March 2026

**Date of the next meeting of the Council**

The next Full Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 21 April 2026

The meeting ended at 8.00pm

Signed ..... Date .....

**Agenda item: 8**

**Committee: Full Council**

**Date: Tuesday 21 April 2026**

**Subject: Clerk's Report**

**Summary: To note and agree the details on a range of the Council's projects and other updates**

---

**Recommendations.**

**The Council is recommended to:**

- i) note the update of the library hub building tender**
  - ii) note the details regarding repair works to Southgate Arch**
  - iii) note the update regarding repair works at the multi storey car park**
  - iv) note the staffing update**
  - v) agree the actions for the implementation of the Council's Strategic Plan**
- 

**1 Library Hub**

- 1.1 The Council has received the full draft tender documents for the appointment of contractors and for a Project Manager and these have been agreed and the advertisement for the tenders is due to go live week commencing 6 April. Open days for site visits have been arranged for 20 and 21 April.
- 1.2 The tender packs are being issued by Trevor Humphreys Associates who will keep track of interest and manage any amendments. The tender was not placed with the advert on the tenders portal.

**2 Southgate Arch**

- 2.1 Work is now ongoing at the site and scaffolding is now being erected to the exterior of the Arch. A timeline for works is estimated to run until the end of June and the appointed contractors will undertake all exterior works and will start once scaffolding is completed.

**3 Multi storey car park**

- 3.1 Officers are seeking quotes to undertake surface repairs to the worst areas of damage at the site. To date two quotations have been received and officers are chasing a third quotation in line with its Financial Regulations.
- 3.2 Officers received an email from PCA Consulting Engineers on 2 April, apologising for the delays in responding and advising that they are working to produce a specification for repairs that the contractors can accurately price from and will aim to update the Council again very soon.

**4 Staffing Update**

- 4.1 The new staff handbook has now been issued to all colleagues. The handbook has been updated to include all new legislation introduced from 6 April 2026. New NALC contracts will be issued with the relevant legislative changes in force from 6 April as soon as they have

been received. All colleagues are aware of the process following a staff meeting and update in the most recent staff newsletter.

- 4.2 Lauren Greene has taken up her post as the Council's Project Support Officer and will be based at the Town Hall for her induction period, which will also allow for works to be undertaken at the VIC site, where Lauren will be based in the future. Zoe La Roache will be stepping into Lauren's vacated role and interviews for the vacancy at the Vic are being held on 10 April
- 4.3 Effective from 1 April, there have been changes to the staffing structure, with Helen Gribble now responsible for management of the Stewards team and Office Administrator roles. Martin Cornish will still be responsible for the management of the Grounds Team and will also manage the Project Supports Officers role. This change means that the management of staff between colleagues is better shared with both Senior Managers now responsible for five colleagues each.

## **5 Strategic Plan**

- 5.1 To ensure that the Council is fulfilling its responsibilities to the town and directing actions to future goals and ambitions, a fully agreed strategic plan needs to be in place. To achieve the ambitions will require engaging with residents and this combined with the Council's agreed objectives will allow us to develop strategic priorities, each with a set of actions.
- 5.2 The Mayor spoke about the need for a plan and requested resident input at the recent Annual Town Meeting. An information board has been prepared for use at the councillor surgery on 14 April as part of the Priory Park play area opening, and the Council is recommended to agree further consultation events in order to start compiling the required objectives.

Contact officer: Christopher Drake – Town Clerk  
Wednesday 9 April 2026



**An Open Letter to Members of Parliament and the Press    11/3/26**  
**Regarding the Debate: "Extreme Climate and Weather Events: National Resilience" (10/3/26)**

Dear Members of Parliament and Members of the Press,

I am writing to congratulate **Jayne Kirkham MP** for securing and leading the recent parliamentary debate on *Extreme Climate and Weather Events: National Resilience* on 10 March 2026. The debate highlighted the urgent need to strengthen the United Kingdom's preparedness for increasingly frequent and severe climate impacts.

I would respectfully ask fellow MPs to support this agenda by helping to secure or table a parliamentary question to the Government on a specific issue of national importance: the use of the **Adaptation Reporting Power under the Climate Change Act 2008**.

By way of background, I hold two degrees in climate change and have spent the past fifteen years working in climate risk, flooding, and community resilience, including contributing to two Defra Pathfinder projects. Through my **Climate Skills through Creativity Programme (2024–2026)**, I have been developing practical and accessible ways to help individuals and communities build resilience to climate impacts, such as preparing simple emergency kits and developing household heat and flood plans, in ways that are engaging, positive and empowering.

Alongside this work, I have served in several resilience and environmental roles, including with the South West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, the Cornwall Strategic Resilience Board, the Cornwall Catchment Partnership, and the Cornwall Community Flood Forum. A full report from the Climate Skills through Creativity Programme will be available on 31 March, and I will be offering this toolkit to Government as a contribution to strengthening national resilience.

The debate itself clearly demonstrated the breadth of the challenge and the need for a more coordinated approach across Government, **that my question will address**.

*Rachel Gilmour MP highlighted the need "to embed a truly comprehensive climate resilience strategy across all Government Departments and agencies at the heart of decision making -one that shifts our posture as much as possible from reaction to prevention."*

*Jayne Kirkham MP noted that the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee currently has "an ongoing inquiry into climate and weather resilience."*

*Tessa Munt MP captured the practical reality faced by many communities when she observed that "what we need is for the pumps to be there already, so that they can start to pump water away as the storms come in."*





Andrew George MP reflected on the cultural barriers that can exist within institutions, describing *"the culture that exists among service providers, and indeed Government Departments, of always seeking to reassure Ministers that everything is under control and presenting a very different picture from the one that I was seeing on the ground."*

Members also highlighted the specific vulnerabilities of rural and coastal regions. Perran Moon MP pointed out that *"all six Cornish constituencies appear at the bottom of the rankings in terms of mobile connectivity,"* highlighting the communications challenges that can arise during extreme events.

Jayne Kirkham MP also drew attention to the economic consequences of infrastructure disruption, recalling that the Valentine's Day storm of 2014 left the far south-west cut off for eight weeks, with estimated losses of between £60 million and £1.2 billion according to the Devon Maritime Forum.

She further highlighted the structural challenges faced by rural communities adapting to climate change, including the high proportion of homes off the gas grid in Cornwall and the barriers residents sometimes face when seeking permission for renewable energy installations. Importantly, she also emphasised the importance of preparedness at the household level, noting that *"there is a conversation to be had about personal resilience. We all need to be more prepared. Having a basic emergency kit sounds simple, but it makes a big difference."*

In response to the debate, the Minister of State, Dan Jarvis MP, stated that the Government recognises the Climate Change Committee's assessment of the third National Adaptation Programme and is *"not simply relying on short-term measures."*

A key legislative mechanism already exists that could significantly strengthen Parliament's understanding of the nation's preparedness: the **Adaptation Reporting Power (ARP)** established under the Climate Change Act 2008. This power was designed to allow Government to require critical infrastructure providers to report on how they are assessing and preparing for climate risks.

Yet the power has only once been used as originally intended.

For this reason, I respectfully ask that MPs consider supporting or tabling the following parliamentary question:

***Given that the Climate Change Act 2008 established the Adaptation Reporting Power to assess how well critical infrastructure is preparing for climate risks, and noting that it has only once been used as originally intended, will the Government now commit to exercising this power on a mandatory basis to ensure Parliament has a complete and transparent picture of the UK's resilience to climate impacts?***

Strengthening transparency in this way would support the very goal articulated during the debate: shifting our national approach from reactive crisis management towards proactive resilience.

I recognise that Members of Parliament face difficult decisions and competing priorities. However, transparency and public engagement on this issue are essential. In my experience working across resilience partnerships and community flood initiatives, the cultural challenge described during the



debate - where reassurance can sometimes take precedence over honest assessment is real, and it must change if we are to prepare effectively for the impacts that are already unfolding.

I hope this letter contributes to a constructive public conversation and encourages meaningful action in support of the legislation and the resilience of communities across the United Kingdom.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luci Isaacson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Luci Isaacson BEM, Truro  
Climate Risk and Resilience Practitioner  
07909 530 730

Sent to:

Jayne Kirkham MP  
Perran Moon MP  
Ben Maguire MP  
Anna Gelderd MP  
Noah Law MP  
Andrew George MP  
Rachel Gilmour MP  
Tessa Munt MP  
Dan Jarvis MP





To:  
Community Area Partnerships &  
Town and Parish Councils

**Your ref:** Recipients reference  
**My ref:** Public Realm  
Improvement & re-  
introduction of Weed  
Treatment.  
**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Dear Community Area Partnerships & Town and Parish Councils,

### Public Realm Improvement and Re-introduction of Weed Treatment

Cornwall Council's Cabinet has instructed Cornwall Highways & Environment Services to begin a new programme of weed treatment and public realm improvements across Cornwall. This decision follows evidence of declining standards since routine weed management stopped in 2013, resulting in increasing complaints, narrowing footways, damaged surfaces, and perceived reduced community pride.

We have reviewed options and have directed Cormac Solutions Limited to carry out the following on the adopted highway network:

- **Targeted manual and mechanical weed removal** on the very worst-affected estates (one per CAP)
- **Carefully controlled, limited chemical treatment** only on the urban highway network where weeds are present, using modern Controlled Droplet Application methods to minimise quantity and footprint.
- **Improvements to amenity and environmental areas**, including enhanced cutting and better management of urban verges.
- **Partnership working with local councils and volunteers**, supporting local pride and community involvement.

Please note this directive does not apply to private areas or areas maintained via the waste contract.

The aim of this recovery programme is to restore safe, accessible streets and deliver consistent standards across Cornwall. We want to support strong, safe, clean and well-maintained communities and to ensure Cornwall's neighbourhoods reflect the pride residents have in where they live.



The default position is that all Cornwall Council maintained areas are opted in, this will include all adopted highway within urban areas as it was in 2013. An opt-out option is available for Town and Parish Councils that wish to manage their areas without chemical treatment, provided they can meet the required standards and protect asset integrity.

In the first instance Town and Parishes should send responses and Opt-out forms before the 20<sup>th</sup> of April 2026 to your Community Link Officers (CLO) who will collate responses and feed this information through to Cornwall Highways who will then pick up further contact.

We appreciate this is short notice, given the operational need to commence weed treatment at the beginning of May. However, if meeting this deadline is not possible because you will not be able to consider this at a council meeting before this date, please can you let your CLO know the earliest you will be able to make a decision.

Please disregard this correspondence if you already undertake weed management on behalf of Cornwall Council under a previous agreement.

Please find enclosed (in suggested order of review):

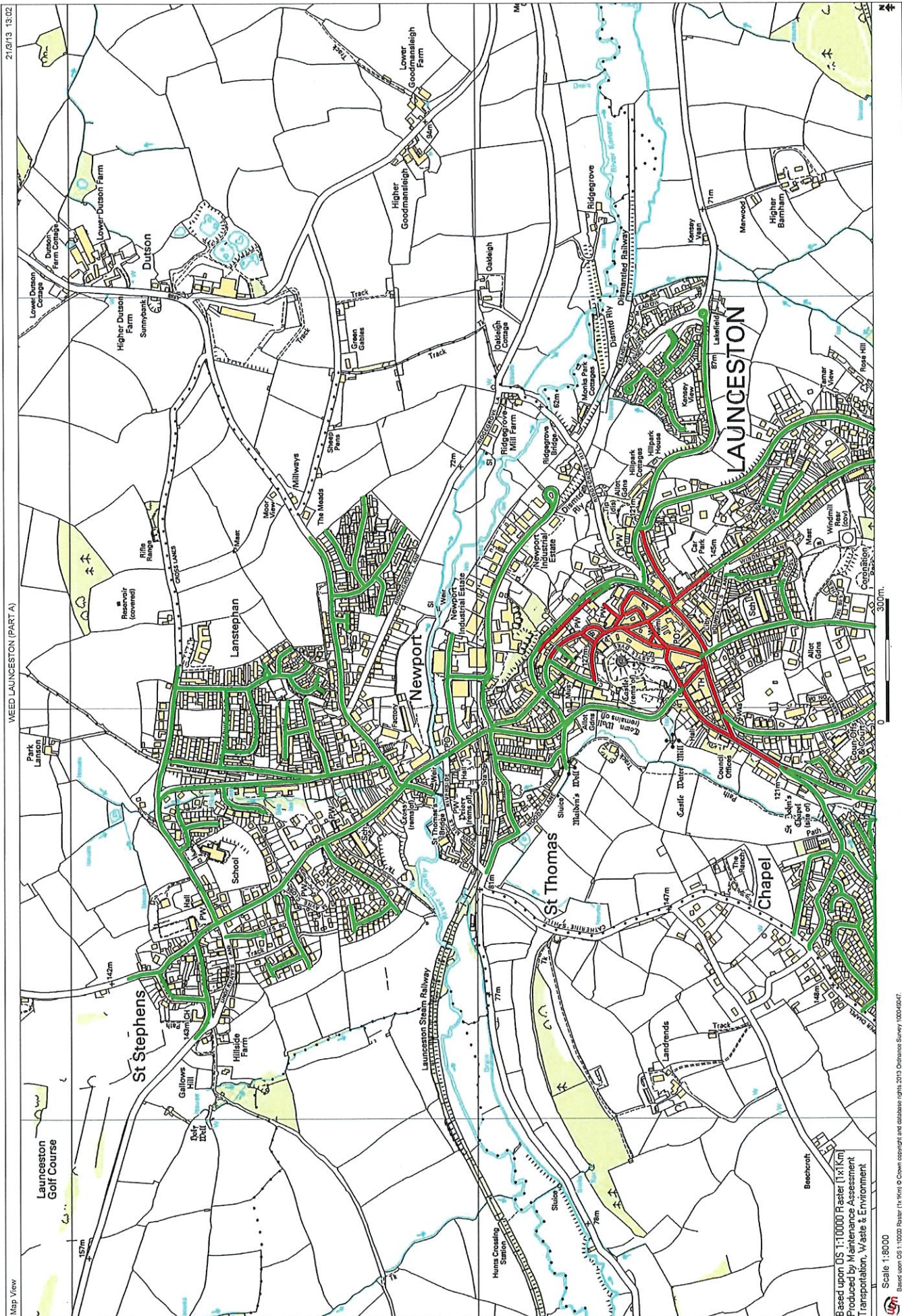
1. The all-member briefing provided to members on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2026.
2. The Public Realm Improvement and Weed Management FAQ
3. The 2013 maps which will be used for the first treatment (NOTE: **Green** = new treatment area, **Red** = area as treated via the Waste contract in 2013.)
4. A draft copy of the Town and Parish Council Opt-Out Agreement
5. Town and Parish Council Opt-Out Guidance
6. Town and Parish Council Opt-Out Form

Yours sincerely  
Dhywgh hwi yn hwir

Cornwall Council

**Connectivity and Environment Service**



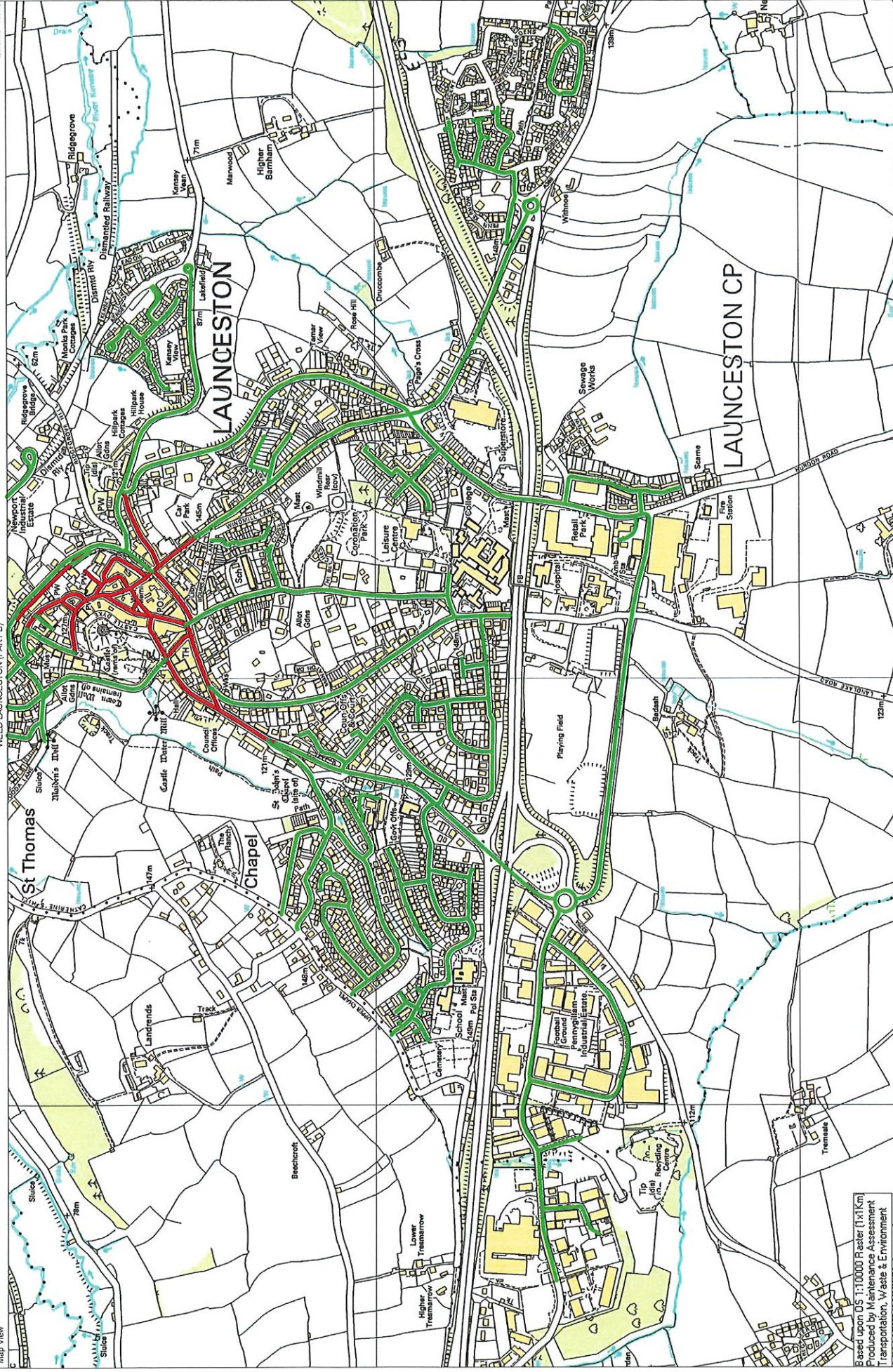


Scale 1:8000

Based upon OS 1:10000 Raster (1x1 Km)  
Produced by Maintenance Assessment  
Transportation, Waste & Environment

Based upon OS 1:10000 Raster (1x1 Km) © Crown copyright and database rights 2013. Ordnance Survey 10004047.





Based upon OS 1:100000 raster (1x1km)  
Produced by Maintenance Assessment  
Transportation, Waste & Environment

Scale 1:8000

Based upon OS 1:10000 Raster (1x1km) © Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey 100040647





## **Public Realm Improvement & Weed Management FAQ**

### **Why are weeds a problem in the public realm?**

- Weeds damage paved surfaces, allowing water penetration and long-term deterioration.
- They block drainage channels, increasing flooding risk.
- Overgrowth narrows footways and harms resident perception of care, safety, and amenity.

### **What is Cornwall Council legally required to do about weeds?**

Cornwall Council must:

- Maintain safe and serviceable highways.
- Control noxious weeds under the Weeds Act 1959.
- Prevent spread of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

### **Didn't Full Council ban glyphosate in 2016? How can Cabinet now approve its use?**

No—Full Council did not introduce an absolute ban. The 2016 motion required glyphosate use to cease *as funding for alternative treatments became available*, and this funding has never become available.

It also allowed continued use where needed to control Schedule 9 invasive plants **or** to reduce material risks to asset integrity.

Because unmanaged weed growth since 2013 is now causing kerb, drainage and footway deterioration, the targeted use of diluted glyphosate on the urban highway network is required to reduce material risks to asset integrity.

### **Why did routine weed treatment stop after 2013?**

Routine highway weed spraying ceased in 2013 as a budget saving measure, not for ecological, legislative or safety reasons.

### **Why is chemical treatment being reintroduced now?**

Cornwall Council's modern strategy complies with the 2016 decision while recognising operational realities:

- The proposal for targeted, minimal glyphosate use on highways is to reduce material risk to asset integrity.



- Benchmarking with 70 authorities shows no alternative is as cost effective for killing roots in hard surfaces.
- Manual methods alone cannot maintain 1,700+ km of urban highway after 13 years without treatment.
- Glyphosate approval remains in place nationally

Chemical use is intended to be tightly controlled, targeted only at visible weeds, and limited to the three-year recovery phase.

### **Why can't Cornwall Council just use non-chemical methods and avoid glyphosate entirely?**

Extensive trials by Cornwall Council and benchmarking with around 70 other local authorities showed that non-chemical methods such as hot water, foam, acetic acid, powered brushes and electrical devices are significantly more expensive, often less effective at root-kill, and can cause infrastructure damage on weakened surfaces.

Non-chemical options alone cannot maintain Cornwall's 1,700+ km of urban network to the required standard. Chemical treatment is therefore required in a limited, targeted way alongside manual/mechanical clearance.

### **Is glyphosate safe to use in public spaces?**

Cornwall Council will use a highly diluted glyphosate mixture (1:40) that is approved by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) for use on public highways, amenity areas, private land and gardens.

Application is carried out using Controlled Droplet Application (CDA), which produces large droplets, minimises drift, and targets only the weeds growing in the kerbline and channel.

National regulatory approval for glyphosate remains meaning it continues to be assessed as safe for its permitted uses under UK law.

Cornwall Council does not and will not use neonicotinoids and does not plan to use glyphosate in grassed verges, planted areas, or wider greenspace except to prevent spread of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

Planned use will be limited, highly controlled, and restricted to hard-surface locations where weeds pose structural and safety risks.

## **Why will operators wear PPE if glyphosate is safe?**

PPE is required because all herbicides—whether permitted, diluted, or low-toxicity—must be applied in line with product labels, HSE requirements, and best-practice safety procedures.

The PPE worn by staff protects them from:

- Accidental splashes during mixing, handling, or equipment maintenance.
- Prolonged contact when working at close range.
- Exposure during decanting or refilling, which carries higher concentration risk than the applied spray.

Cornwall Council's operators also use PPE because:

- The Council must comply with herbicide label instructions and operator-safety rules enforced nationally.
- All treatment is delivered by trained and certified staff using BASIS-advised methods, as required in the Council's own weed-treatment policies.

PPE is therefore a standard professional safety measure, not an indication that the public is at risk. It ensures compliance with legislation and protects staff who handle the product directly.

## **What treatment will be carried out?**

- The treatment of urban highways only, and only where weeds are present.
- Excludes Zone 1 streets (waste contract) and excludes verges/landscaped areas.
- Two treatment windows: May–June and Aug–Sept.
- Manual/mechanical clearance on worst estates before chemical treatment.
- Application via Controlled Droplet Application (CDA) using diluted glyphosate.

## **How will chemical treatment be applied?**

- Precise CDA low-drift method.
- Applied at 1:40 dilution, meeting the legal requirement of 25 ml active ingredient per litre of water.
- Only the kerb-to-channel hard surface is treated.
- This is not blanket spraying.

### **How much will treatment cost?**

Based on two annual treatments across 1,515 km:

- Total annual estimated cost circa £520,000
- Equivalent to £343.45 per km per year.

### **What trial of purely mechanical treatment has been undertaken?**

A trial was recently undertaken in Treverbyn Parish, St Austell this showed:

- Significant waste was generated - over 14 tonnes of waste removed.
- Manual works alone produce quick improvements but weeds rapidly regrow.
- Tap-root species require follow-up chemical treatment otherwise they quickly grow back.

### **What options were presented to Cabinet?**

Cabinet asked for "costed options with different levels of ambition".

Options ranged from doing nothing to full recovery.

Cabinet selected the comprehensive recovery option, combining enhanced maintenance, hotspot manual removal, and targeted chemical treatment.

### **How does the opt-out scheme for Town & Parish Councils work?**

T&PCs are opted in by default, but may opt out if they can:

- Maintain equal or better standards than the Council.
- Prevent asset deterioration and keep kerb lines clear.
- Handle all weed-related complaints.
- Provide a full-season delivery plan and maps.
- Hold appropriate public liability insurance.

Opting out also means losing access to targeted estate-clearance work.

### **How much funding will opt-out councils receive?**

Only the pro-rata chemical-treatment value (approx. £343.45/km/year) is contributed, and only if a plan is in place to deliver equivalent standards to the Council. No additional labour, manual-clearance or waste collection funding is provided.



### **What happens if an opted-out council cannot maintain standards?**

The Council will offer support.

If standards are still not met, the opt-out is withdrawn for the next season and the area returns to the Council programme.

### **How are noxious and invasive weeds treated?**

- Japanese Knotweed and Schedule 9 species continue under multi-year specialist programmes, with controlled-waste requirements.
- BASIS-qualified adviser involved for method selection and compliance.

### **How does this policy support environmental commitments?**

This policy will:

- Continue biodiversity-focused verge management and supports the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Chemical use remains minimal, targeted, and time-limited.

### **How will residents benefit?**

Residents can expect:

- Clearer, safer footways and kerb lines.
- Improved drainage performance.
- Better appearance and community pride.
- More consistent standards across the network.

### **How will you ensure chemical use is kept to a minimum?**

Chemical treatment is restricted to:

- urban highways only,
  - reduced-speed areas,
  - locations where weeds are actually present,
  - two tightly controlled windows per year,
  - application via low-drift Controlled Droplet Application (CDA).
- There is no blanket spraying, and untreated/weed-free roads are skipped entirely.

### **Will residents see dead brown weeds left in place for long periods?**

After treatment, weeds die back over several weeks. Their removal is coordinated with Biffa through routine street cleansing cycles to avoid unsightly detritus. Timing is aligned so that cleansing follows treatment runs.

### **Are there any risks to children, pets, or wildlife from the diluted glyphosate solution?**

When used correctly, the risk to children, pets, and wildlife is very low.

Cornwall Council will use an HSE-approved glyphosate product at a highly diluted 1:40 ratio and apply it using Controlled Droplet Application (CDA), which produces large droplets and minimises spray drift.

Treatment is targeted only to kerb lines and hard surfaces where weeds are present.

Glyphosate continues to have national regulatory approval, and its use is tightly controlled under UK law to ensure it is applied safely and in a way that reduces exposure to people and animals.

### **Who decides which streets get treated?**

Route selection is based on:

- the 2013 network maps (for the first application),
  - updates for newly adopted roads and Waste Zone 1 boundaries (for the second application),
  - visual inspection confirming weed presence.
- Weed-free roads are *not* treated.

### **How long will the recovery phase last?**

The recovery phase is expected to take a minimum of three years, after which weed growth should be at a manageable baseline for ongoing non-chemical maintenance.

### **What happens if weather conditions prevent scheduled treatment?**

Exact dates cannot be guaranteed in advance because herbicide requires dry, still conditions with appropriate drying time. Treatments may be adjusted or rescheduled to ensure legal and safe application.

### **Why can't Town or Parish Councils opt out of only *some* streets?**

Opt-outs must be for whole areas, not individual streets, to ensure consistent asset protection, clear responsibility, and enforceable performance monitoring. Partial or street-by-street opt-outs introduce safety, liability, and inspection challenges.

### **How does this link to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and pollinator commitments?**

Chemical use remains minimal and targeted, only on hard surfaces where weeds pose structural or safety risks. The programme sits alongside biodiversity-focused verge management, "cut and collect" operations, and the Pollinator Action Plan endorsed since 2016. No use of neonicotinoids is planned and the impact on flowering weeds and therefore pollinators will be minimal and should be more than offset through the improved environmental maintenance.

### **How will the public be kept informed?**

Public-facing communication will explain:

- treatment windows,
- what to expect visually,
- why some roads are skipped,
- how dead weeds will be removed,
- options for Town and Parish Councils to opt out.

This supports transparency and helps manage expectations.



# **Opt-out Guidance for Town and Parish Councils**

## **1. What's happening?**

Cornwall Council's Cabinet has instructed the Highways and Environment Service to improve weed management and the overall condition of the public realm. Over the next three years, our contractor, Cormac Solutions Ltd, will deliver a recovery programme that includes:

- Spot mechanical or hand clearance in areas with significant weed growth
- Enhanced environmental maintenance to better manage urban green spaces within housing developments
- Targeted, carefully controlled chemical treatment on urban highways only, and only where weeds are present

Further details are provided in the enclosed Member Briefing and FAQ document.

All town and parish councils are 'opted in' by default unless an opt-out application is submitted.

## **2. Can we opt out of Cornwall Council's treatment programme?**

Yes — but only for whole parish areas and where a town or parish council can demonstrate that it can maintain standards equivalent to or better than those planned by Cornwall Council.

Councils choosing to opt out will need to enter into an agreement similar to existing grass-cutting agreements.

Please note opting out of chemical treatment also means opting out of the proposed spot mechanical clearance & enhanced environmental maintenance.

### 3. Will funding be provided if we opt out?

Cornwall Council will provide funding equivalent to the cost of chemical treatment that would otherwise have been applied locally — provided the Town or Parish council demonstrates through the application process that it will deliver an equivalent level of treatment and customer complaint management.

For 2026/27, the expected contribution is £343.45 per km.

Additional costs, such as increased manual clearance, must be funded by the Town or Parish Council.

Please note that if councils intend to deliver a lower standard than Cornwall Council (2 effective treatments per year and arising waste collected) they will not receive funding.

### 4. How do we apply to opt out?

We recognise that time is limited ahead of the planned start date. For this reason, we propose an initial notification with a temporary hold, followed by a formal agreement process.

**Initial notification** – due by 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026: submitting the enclosed opt-out form by this date will place a temporary hold on Cornwall Council carrying out treatment in your area.

**Formal agreement** – due by 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026: to confirm the opt-out for the 2026/27 financial year, councils must submit an operational plan by this date including:

- a marked-up plan showing streets that will be maintained by the Town/Parish
- proposed method(s) of treatment
- expected frequency of visits – minimum of 2
- how weed-related complaints will be managed
- how promptly issues will be addressed
- evidence of trained staff or contractors
- appropriate insurance
- details of safe working procedures

Submitting this information will extend the temporary hold while both parties work to finalise the agreement.

Following review, we will draft the formal opt-out agreement. An example draft is attached, though still subject to legal review. Once signed, the agreement will apply to the full financial year.

## **5. What if we cannot deliver what we are committed to?**

We will work with councils to help improve performance where needed.

However, if standards fall below the agreed level and do not improve despite support, the opt-out will be withdrawn for the following season and the area will return to Cornwall Council's treatment programme.