

Cornwall Councillor Report – St Austell Bay Parish Council – June 2026

I hope you are all well as we go through June.

As part of the recent negotiations for Community Area Partnership Highways funding I was pleased secure every request from Parishes across my division, meaning that the improvements St Austell Bay Parish Council have asked for will now proceed forwards. Expect them to go to design now ahead of a public consultation prior to implementation later this year.

Over the past couple of months I have also attended and supported the parish council in planning meetings in neighbouring parishes around the development proposals for 325 houses by Persimmon on fields near Tregorrick.

It has been heartening to see the level of engagement from the public at these meetings and I have been pleased to see all parish and town councils who have been asked objecting strongly to these proposals.

Following St Austell Town Council's meeting on 15 June, I also wrote to Cornwall Council's planning department challenging the consultation response from highways on this application, which I believe is not fit for purpose.

In highways matters it's been good to see the resurfacing work continue on Duporth Road and in Ridgewood Close.

The team from Cormac successfully completed the installation of the Porthpean slipway on 20th May

They do not believe they could have done anything more to maximise the future longevity of the structure.

Following the reopening, some minor works will remain, including the removal of dumpy bags and other temporary shuttering, as well as repairs to voids within the sea wall which support the upper reaches of the slipway. These activities should not significantly impact access to, or use of, the beach.

The team involved in delivering these works have put in a significant effort, including long working days, particularly during the concrete pours. As is often the case with coastal projects, they have also had to contend with challenging tidal conditions and weather.

I'm sure you will join me in thanking them for their hard work and commitment.

Over the past couple of weeks I have been contacted by a number of coastguards who serve in the Mevagissey and St Austell units – both based in my division, with their considerable concerns about Government proposals to change their conditions.

The Government agency responsible for the Coastguard, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), is currently considering proposals to remove remuneration from Coastguard Rescue Teams and move to an entirely voluntary model from September.

Whilst this may appear to be an administrative or financial decision, I believe it has significant implications for public safety, responder safety, emergency service resilience and the ability of HM Coastguard to continue delivering an effective Category 1 emergency response capability.

There is a growing concern that the proposed changes could fundamentally undermine the sustainability of a service that has protected lives around our coastline for decades.

These proposals are being led by the Government, and it is for our MPs to engage with their local coastguard teams and act on their behalf. This is what I had been advocating those who contacted me do.

But this frustrated me and I wanted to do more. So after having worked with those coastguards who have contacted me, I have now put a motion to Cornwall Council's next Full Council – for 21 July which asks Cornwall Councillors to vote on the following:

'That in the light of recent proposals being considered by HM Coastguard following the Grom case, the Leader is mandated to write to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Aviation, Maritime and Decarbonisation, noting Cornwall Council's opposition to the proposed changes and asking whether a comprehensive assessment has been undertaken of the risks associated with these changes.'

Specifically:

- *What workforce modelling has been conducted to assess the likely impact on retention and availability?*
- *What operational safety assessment has been completed regarding the potential loss of experience, skills and leadership capability?*
- *What contingency plans exist if volunteer numbers or availability fall below expected levels?*
- *How has HM Coastguard satisfied itself that public safety and responder safety will not be adversely affected?*
- *Has an impact assessment been undertaken regarding the resilience of Coastguard Rescue Teams as a Category 1 emergency response capability?'*

The Government does have a history of changing its mind on difficult decisions, and who knows what will happen between now and July.

However I thought it was important to get this motion down as a marker now, and that Cornwall Council as an organisation be challenged to act on behalf of Coastguard teams in Cornwall and put their concerns to the highest level of Government.

As ever, should people need my assistance with any matter, please contact me at 07885277670 or via cllr.james.mustoe@cornwall.gov.uk and I will do my best to help.