

**St Mellion Parish Council
Annual Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 20th May 2025 at 6:15pm
St Mellion Church Hall
Minutes**

PRESENT:

Cllr. Hilary Gill (HG) Vice Chair
Cllr. Adam Sturtridge (AS)
Cllr. Ben Bryan (BB)
Cllr. Nick Habermehl (NH)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Parish Clerk Ren Jackaman (RJ).
No members of the public attended.

1. Councillor matters

1.1. To confirm signing of Declarations of Acceptance of Office:

All councillors present at the meeting duly signed their declarations of acceptance of office, as witnessed by RJ.

1.2. To note vacancy for co-option:

Following the uncontested election there is a vacancy for a Parish Councillor to be co-opted. The vacancy has been advertised on noticeboards, website and Facebook. One person has indicated an interest and if they choose to pursue co-option, this will be added to the agenda for the Ordinary Meeting on 10th June 2025.

1.3. To receive apologies for absences:

BK sent her apologies in advance as she is currently out of the country.

It was proposed by HG, seconded by NH and agreed to accept the apologies of BK for not attending this meeting, all in favour.

1.4. To receive declarations of pecuniary interests:

None.

1.5. To receive declarations of non-registerable interests:

None.

1.6. To approve written requests for dispensations:

None.

2. Current Chair's Annual Report

The Chairs report was sent out as pre-reading and read out by RJ. It appears below as Appendix 1.

3. Appointment of Chair for 12 months to May 2026

HG nominated BK in absentia for the position of Chair, AS seconded the nomination and it was RESOLVED that BK be appointed Chairman for St Mellion Parish Council for 12 months to May 2026, all in favour.

BK to sign the declaration of acceptance of office at next ordinary meeting on 10th June 2025.

4. Appointment of Vice Chair for 12 months to May 2026

BB nominated HG for the position of Vice Chair, NH seconded the nomination, and it was RESOLVED that HG be appointed Vice Chair for St Mellion Parish Council for 12 months to May 2026, all in favour.

HG then became acting chair for this meeting as BK absent.

5. Internal Audit Report for year ending 31st March 2025

The internal audit report was viewed onscreen and sent as pre-reading.

It was proposed by BB, seconded by NH and RESOLVED to approve the Internal Audit Report by Andrew Farr of Dawe, Hawken & Dodd, all in favour.

6. External Audit Submission for year ending 31st March 2025

The following documents had been pre-circulated and were reviewed on-screen:

- The Certificate of Exemption for year-end 2025.
- The completed Annual Governance Statement for year-end 2025.
- The Accounting Statements for year end 2025
- Bank reconciliation and Variance Analysis breakdown

6.1. Certificate of Exemption:

It was proposed by NH, seconded by AS and RESOLVED to exempt St Mellion Parish Council from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 because gross income and expenditure for year ending 31st March 2025 was below the £25,000 threshold, all in favour.

HG and RJ signed and dated the Certificate of Exemption on page 3 of the AGAR

6.2. Annual Governance Statement:

It was proposed by AS, seconded by NH and RESOLVED to answer 'yes' to statements 1 to 8 of Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2024-2025 with statement 9 marked as 'not applicable', all in favour.

HG and RJ signed and dated Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2024-2025 on page 5 of the AGAR.

6.3. Accounting Statements:

It was proposed by NH, seconded by BB and RESOLVED to approve the figures in Section 2 Accounting Statements, bank reconciliation and Variance Analysis breakdown for year ending 31st March 2025, all in favour.

HG and RJ signed and dated Section 2 Accounting Statements for 2024-2025 on page 6 of the AGAR.

6.4. Exercise of Public Rights

It was proposed by HG, seconded by BB and RESOLVED to set the public inspection period from Monday 2nd June 2025 to Friday 14th July 2025, being the earliest dates permitted, all in favour.

7. Review of Existing Parish Council's Policies and Procedures

7.1. Standing Orders

NALC Legal Team have updated Model Standing Order 14 & 18. Changes have been made to:

- Model Standing Order 18 further to the recent changes to procurement legislation and to ensure consistency with NALC's Model Financial Regulations. The changes are to 18.a.v, 18.c, 18.d and 18.f of the 2022 version.
- Model Standing Order 14 has also been updated to better reflect Code of Conduct requirements. MSO 14.a-c have been removed.
- NALC have also changed the language in the document, so it uses gender-neutral terms. This is in line with NALC policy and the Civility and Respect project.

N.B. It has been announced that there are some errors with gender neutral terms - NALC will rectify these errors in due course.

After discussion, it was decided to wait until these errors are rectified and then overhauling standing orders at a later date.

7.2. Financial Regulations:

The Financial Regulations were most recently updated and adopted in June 2024 following the issuing of new model Financial Regulations on Thursday 9th May 2024.

It was proposed by BB, seconded by NH and RESOLVED to continue with the current Financial Regulations, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.3. Payroll Signatories:

It was confirmed that the current procedure for payroll authorisation as follows:

- At month end, the Clerk emails hours, reimbursements sheet and receipts to the Chair, NH and HG for approval.
- Two of the three Councillors must approve the hours and reimbursements by return email.
- The email with approvals plus the reimbursement sheet is forwarded to the payroll agent for PAYE submission prior to the 5th of the following month.
- The payroll administrator processes the information and provides a payslip, RTI and Pension summary, then facilitates the Direct Debit payment to NEST for monthly employer and employee pension contributions.

It was proposed by NH, seconded by HG and RESOLVED to continue with the current payroll procedures, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.4. Bank Mandate:

Former councillor Pam Sambrook to be removed from the Bank Mandate.

NH, BK, HG and AS are on the mandate with permission to approve payments and changes.

RJ has payment setup approval but no authorisation approval

It was proposed by NH, seconded by BB and RESOLVED to continue with the current mandate signatories, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.5. Financial Risk Assessment

The Financial Risk Assessment was last altered to reflect the changes inherent in the transfer from Lloyds Bank to Unity Trust Bank and the adoption of online banking protocols in 2022, which version was adopted at the Annual Meeting on 10th May 2022 and was reviewed at the Ordinary Meeting on 9th April 2024 at which time suggestions for any changes were invited, no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by HG, seconded by NH and RESOLVED that no changes were required to the Financial Risk Assessment adopted on 10th May 2022, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.6. Insurance Cover and Renewal

Two quotes have been received for the period of insurance commencing 28th May 2025. The quotes are from Clear Council Insurance and Zurich Insurance. The quote documents were sent as pre-reading and a summary of both was viewed onscreen. Extensive discussion and comparison took place.

It was proposed by HG, seconded by BB and RESOLVED that the cover provided by Zurich Insurance in the Policy Schedule dated 2nd April 2025 is adequate and that consequently the renewal of this policy is authorised. Cover will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.7. Asset Schedule for Audit and Insurance and Checks Procedures:

Both asset schedules were viewed onscreen.

The Asset Schedule for Insurance purposes is based on the insurance schedule for the year ending 27th May 2025 in the Zurich Insurance Policy. It will now be updated to reflect the schedule outlined in the successful quote from Zurich Insurance as per 7.6 above and will be approved at the Ordinary Meeting on 10th June 2025.

The Asset Schedule for Audit purposes has been endorsed in the Internal Auditors report as appropriately gauged for the assessment of fixed assets.

It was proposed by HG, seconded by NH and RESOLVED that the asset schedule for audit purposes is an accurate reflection of current assets and will be updated if further assets are acquired or existing ones disposed of, and reviewed again at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

Asset checks are undertaken quarterly and reported on at ordinary meetings. The asset check spreadsheet was shown onscreen and the allocation of assets to councillors was reviewed.

It was proposed by NH, seconded by HG and RESOLVED that the asset checking procedures are fit for purpose and will be reviewed again at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

- 7.8. *Publication Scheme, including procedures for handling requests made under the Fol Act 2000 and GDPR:*
The Publication Scheme approved on 16th May 2017 was checked against the latest ICO model and updated to include any new policies, it was then adopted at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 14th May 2024. Suggestions for any changes were invited; no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by BB, seconded by NH and RESOLVED that the updated Publication Scheme be adopted, published on the Parish Council website and will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.9. *Policy for dealing with the press/media:*

The Media Policy is based on the NALC model and was adopted at the Ordinary meeting on 14th July 2015. It was reformatted in April 2024, but the content retained. It was reviewed at the Ordinary Meeting on 9th April 2024 at which time suggestions for any changes were invited, no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by BB, seconded by NH and RESOLVED that no changes were required to the Media Policy adopted on 14th July 2015, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.10. *Complaints Handling Procedure:*

The Complaints Handling Procedure was formally adopted at the Ordinary Meeting on the 9th March 2021. It was reviewed at the Ordinary Meeting on 9th April 2024 at which time suggestions for any changes were invited, no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by BB, seconded by NH and RESOLVED that no changes were required to the Complaints Handling Procedure adopted on 9th March 2021, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.11. *Dignity at Work Policy:*

The Dignity at Work Policy was formally adopted at the Ordinary Meeting on the 9th March 2021. Suggestions for any changes were invited; no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by HG, seconded by BB and RESOLVED that no changes were required to the Dignity at Work Policy, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.12. *IT & Cyber Security Policy:*

The IT & Cyber Security Policy was adopted at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 14th May 2024. Suggestions for any changes were invited; no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by NH, seconded by AS and RESOLVED that no changes were required to the IT & Cyber Security Policy, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

8. New Parish Council Policies for Adoption: None

9. Review of the Parish Council Community Grant Scheme:

This fund is from the S106 contribution relating to Newton Ferrers Solar Farm, £25K of which was assigned to a fund for the Community Benefit of St. Mellion, and which is available for local organisations and projects to apply for grants of up to £5000 in any one year.

Following many years of no applications for grants, 2025 saw two large grants.

St. Mellion PCC for Church Tower

Total project cost = £18900, total applied for £2969 to cover the cost of scaffolding.

Other funding so far is £1500 local donations and £3500 PCC funds, other fundraising is planned.

Power to spend: Section 82 of Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 and S137 of Local Government Act 1972. Total S137 limit for St. Mellion is £3366.27

It was resolved unanimously to approve the full grant of £2969 to pay for the scaffolding.

Cornwall Blood Bikes Charity

Amount requested £5000 towards maintenance and fuel for bikes.

Power to spend: Public Health Act 1936 S234 – Provision of Life Saving Appliances

It was resolved unanimously to approve the grant of £3000 towards the maintenance and fuel for Cornwall Blood Bikes.

The grant scheme is open for applications annually from 1st April to 1st August.

10. Subscriptions to other bodies:

St. Mellion Parish Council currently pays annually for membership of the Cornwall Association of Local Councils (through which the National Association of Local Councils is automatically accessible), the annual renewal of this membership cost £283.00 which payment was approved at the Ordinary Meeting on 8th April 2025.

The council also reimburses the clerk for a subscription to the Society for Local Council Clerks. This membership is renewed in October and the reimbursement of £144.00 was approved in the payment schedule of August 2024.

It was proposed by NH, seconded by AS and RESOLVED that the membership of CALC and payment of subscription to SLCC should be continued and will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2026 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

11. Representation on/work with other bodies and arrangements for reporting back

The current roles are as follows:

- Tamar to Moor Area Partnership (formerly Caradon Community Network Panel) – AS.
- Tamar Valley Natural Landscape (formerly TVAONB) – Currently open, pending co-option.
- St. Mellion Primary School – BB
- St. Mellion Golf & Country Club – HG
- Licensing – OPEN but unlikely to be relevant in the future.
- Police & Crime Commission – BB

12. Parish Council meeting schedule up to/including the 2026 Annual Parish Council Meeting

- 10th June 2025
- 8th July 2025
- August = Summer Recess
- 9th September 2025
- 14th October 2025
- 11th November 2025 (to include setting of annual budget and precept for next financial year)
- December = Christmas Recess
- 13th January 2026

- 10th February 2026
- 10th March 2026
- 14th April 2026
- 12th May 2026

13. Public comment: None.

14. Close:

HG Closed the Annual Parish Meeting at 7:03pm

APPENDIX 1 – CHAIR'S REPORT

This is the annual summary of activity from the St Mellion Parish Council for the year 2024 to 2025.

The site around the southerly bus shelter on the A388 in St Mellion village (heading towards Callington) is being regularly maintained and is looking so much better. We sought advice regarding the trees and it's likely that work will be needed in the coming year. We went out to tender for the work. This and the other bus shelters along the St Mellion part of the A388 are now on a regular cleaning contract and so the windows are looking much better.

We have had to make changes to the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) this year and following advice from Cornwall Council, this is now being presented as a more concise Neighbourhood Priority Statement, which goes through a similar validation process to the larger NDP and has similar influence in that planners will need to take this into account when considering planning and other matters in the future once it is ratified. The working group has been addressing key points raised and with any luck this will be completed in 2025.

As usual litter picks have been held and the most recent one collected over 20 bags of rubbish! A massive thanks to all who joined us and to those who pick up litter on their walks around the parish.

We have worked closely with Pillaton parish to try to minimise fly tipping around the parish but particularly at Clapper Bridge and the riverbank close-by. Please use the Cornwall Council interactive map to report fly tipping and let the clerk of the parish council know so that we can follow it up.

The bench marking the coronation of King Charles and the life of his mother Elizabeth II is now firmly in place in the churchyard and hopefully being enjoyed by many people. We have also supported the church in its quest to repair the tower; a grant was awarded that helped with some of the expenses associated with scaffolding etc. It's been so good to see the support given to the church appeal by so many people.

We are preparing for another year of work and will welcome any members of the public who would like to attend our monthly meetings in the church hall.

Since all the parish councillors are volunteers, once again I'd like to acknowledge their hard work and thank them for their service to the community. I'd also like to single out Ren, our Clerk to the Parish Council for thanks as she has supported and guided all the work of the Parish Council this year. We look forward to your continuing support this year.

Dr Bridie Kent
Chair, St Mellion Parish Council
May 2025