

## FALMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 7.00pm held in the Atherton Suite, The Old Post Office, The Moor, Falmouth. TR11 3QA

Present: Councillors A J Jewell (Town Mayor), G P Andrewartha, S R Carmichael, D E Clegg CC, D V Evans BEM CC, L E Howes, A D Munden, A L Rowe CC, D W Saunby CC, J A R Stowell, and J A Walkden.

In Attendance: A M Williams (Town Clerk)  
D C Shankland (Communications Officer)

### C6183 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Councillors Holbrook (ill), Konik (family commitments), Pearce (Mayoral duty), Robinson (away), and Stephens (child care).

### C6184 INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

None.

### C6156 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR EVANS – SOUTH WEST WATER

The Mayor advised that he had requested that the motion be considered at the next regular meeting of the Council however at the request of councillors he had agreed to call the special meeting to consider the matter.

The Town Clerk and Councillor Clegg noted that the Town Council were currently working with South West Water in the delivery of large multi-million pound infrastructure projects in Falmouth that would address these matters, several of these schemes on land owned and managed by the Town Council, based on modelling for 50 year demand, and that those works and the working relationship could be jeopardised. Councillor Walkden requested that this be recognised in the motion which was duly agreed by the proposer and seconder.

It was proposed by Councillor Evans, seconded by Councillor Carmichael and

#### **RESOLVED** that the Council

1. Formally declare a Vote of No Confidence in South West Water.
2. Writes to both the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Chief Executive of Ofwat (with copies to The Leader of Cornwall Council, and Jayne Kirkham MP) in the following terms:

Formal Vote of No Confidence in South West Water (SWW) and Petition for Special Administration.

At a meeting of the Falmouth Town Council on 11 May 2026 a vote of no confidence in the management of South West Water (SWW) was resolved. We are no longer requesting "improvements" or "consultations." South West Water has failed for more than a decade to show its capability and willingness to manage our water and sewage system. We are formally petitioning the Government and Ofwat to remove SWW from the management of the Cornish sewage and water systems

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and transfer the ownership and management of our sewage and water system to a publicly owned organisation, run as a public service.

Whilst the Council recognises the current infrastructure works being undertaken in Falmouth which are appreciated and much needed after many years of pollution problems, the Council's request is based on a systemic and catastrophic failure in the following three areas:

1. Failure of infrastructure and public health despite Cornwall's residents paying the highest water bills in the country, our coastline and rivers have become conduits for raw sewage. In 2025 and early 2026, we have witnessed unprecedented spill durations that have closed our beaches, impacted our tourism economy, and posed a direct threat to public health. The current management has proven incapable of maintaining a sewage system fit for the 21st century.
2. Financial mismanagement and breach of public trust while our residents face further bill increases this April, SWW continues to prioritise shareholder dividends and executive bonuses over essential capital investment. The "investment plans" touted by the company have repeatedly failed to yield results on the ground, leading to a total breakdown of trust between the utility provider and the Cornish people.
3. Inadequacy of governance, it is the view of the Council that SWW's leadership has lost the confidence of the Cornish communities and its "social license" to operate. The repeated fines and enforcement cases from Ofwat have acted as a "cost of doing business" rather than a deterrent. We believe the company is now structurally incapable of delivering the environmental protections required by law.

We call upon the Government to intervene and make this situation stop at once, using powers such as those granted by the Water (Special Measures) Act to remove the offending company from operating in Cornwall. We demand that South West Water be placed into Special Administration, stripping the current management of their mandate. We call upon the Government to transition Cornish sewage and water assets into a publicly owned organisation, run as a public service, answerable to elected representatives of Cornish voters, that will prioritise the Cornish environment and its people over private profit.

Cornish rivers and seas are the lifeblood of our economy and our identity. We will no longer stand by while they are managed into decline. We await your urgent response regarding the steps you will take to revoke SWW's licence in the Duchy.

There being no further business to transact the Town Mayor declared the meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

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