

Saltash Town Council

BUSINESS PLAN

2024-2027



Saltash Town Council
**BUSINESS
PLAN**
2024-2027



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Welcome from the Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer



Saltash Town Council began developing the Business Plan in August 2023, for the three year period from April 2024 to March 2027. The Business Plan was recommended by the Town Vision Sub Committee and adopted by Full Council on 7th March 2024.

The overarching vision is:

'By 2030 Saltash will be an envied riverside town, being greener, more inclusive and prosperous in all aspects with a reinvigorated Town Centre and Waterfront, award-winning new housing, a diverse economy and an excellent quality of life and lifestyle for all ages.'

Both Councillors and Town Council staff are looking forward to delivering the six strategic priorities within the plan with a determination to ensure that Saltash continues to be a town that delivers high quality services with, and for, residents and visitors alike.

Over the next three years, implementing the plan will be both exciting and challenging. Collaboration and consultation will be key to its success to ensure Saltash can prosper and achieve its full potential.

Sinead Burrows

Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SB' with a flourish.

Chairman's Introduction

Saltash Town Council is responsible for a significant number of services and areas of land within boundaries that stretch from the River Tamar to Notter Bridge, to the west and Moditonham Quay further up the Tamar estuary. The beautiful surroundings encompass both town and rural areas with a diverse range of residents, businesses and voluntary organisations.

Significant portions of land and responsibility still lies with the parent authority of Cornwall Council, with whom we work closely, but Saltash Town Council is the closest local authority to Saltash residents, operating key day to day services such as Public Toilets and the town's Library Hub, amongst others. Saltash Town Council provides grants to organisations and festivals throughout Saltash via Grant Funding schemes and provides significant financial support for youth organisations delivering professional support and creative activities for young people.

Saltash continues to grow, with a new large residential development at Treledan to the west of the town. As the population pushes towards 20,000 with the delivery of these new houses, the Town Council recognises the need to develop a strategic business plan. This will ensure that we continue to provide high quality services for all our residents and use the Council Tax collected from households effectively and efficiently both now and in the future.



The Town Council is made up of 16 councillors spread across three wards. All are volunteers who give their time for free to benefit the community in which they live. They bring a range of real-world experience, as well as enthusiasm to oversee the delivery of great services and plan strategically for the future. Amidst the 'can do' attitude I see in action every day, we also value the debate and scrutiny of open public meetings and forums, which play an important role in how a council conducts its business.

We also have a small dedicated team of staff to ensure the cogs of the machine turn smoothly. Without them, the decisions and strategy set by the Councillors would not come to fruition.

In order to deliver current services and plan for the future of our town, the council actively seeks to work in positive collaboration with the public, private and voluntary sectors to benefit Saltash. We strongly value the power of partnership working, recognising we can achieve far more by working together on common goals.

I look forward to making the business plan happen.

Councillor Richard Bickford

Chairman and Mayor of Saltash 2022-24

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Bickford'.

1. About us



Overview of the Town Council

Saltash Town Council forms the third tier of local government and works with Cornwall Council who are our Unitary Authority. We are the largest Town Council in the south-east area of Cornwall.

The Town Council is committed to providing excellence in the Services and Facilities which it delivers. We aim to be responsive, accessible, and transparent in our approach and in the work delivered.

There are sixteen Councillors representing three Wards – Essa, Tamar and Trematon. Councillors are elected from the community every four years. Spaces are filled via by-elections, or by means of the Town Council choosing new Councillors via co-option.

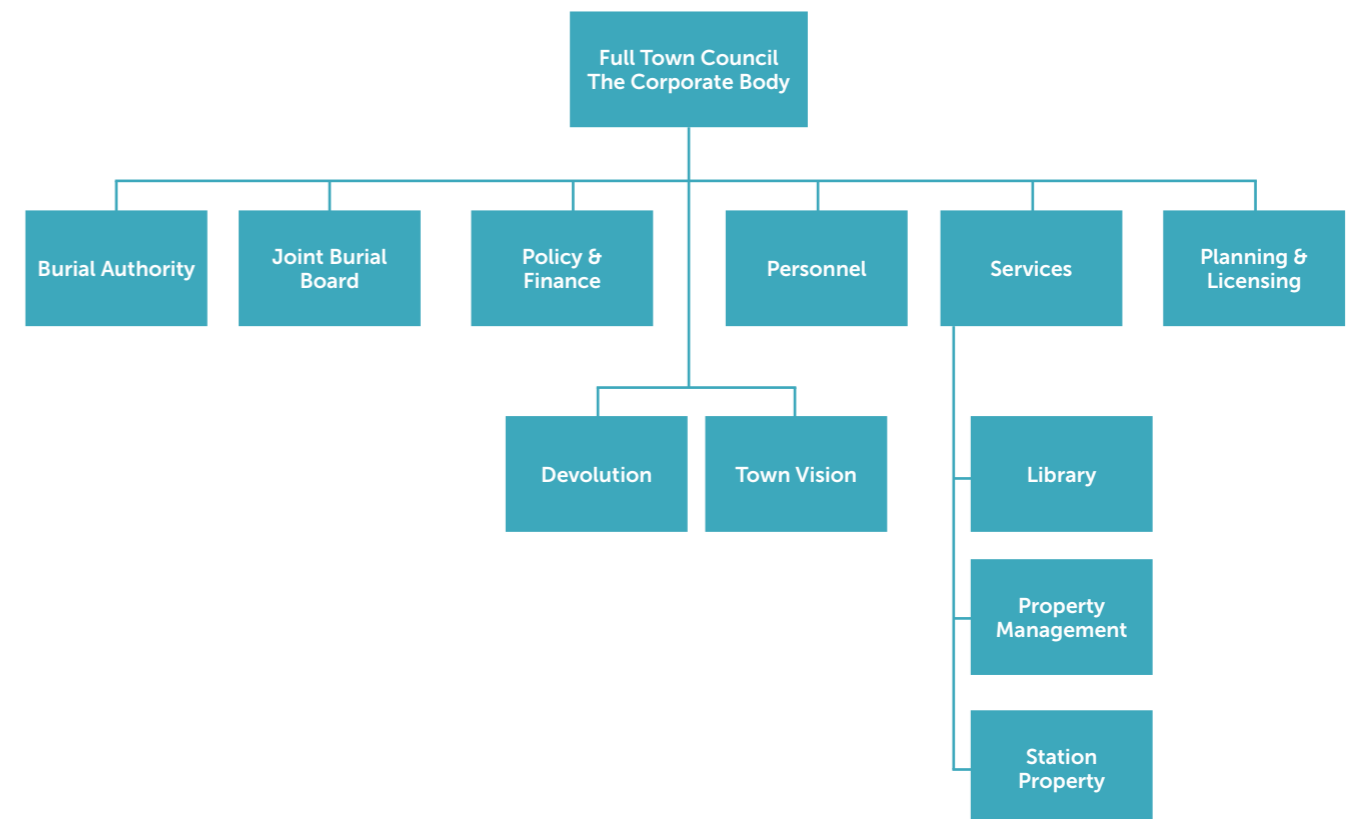
The Chairman and Deputy Chairman are elected by Members of the Town Council annually at the Annual Town Council meeting held in May. The Chairman also undertakes the role of Mayor representing the Town Council and community at official engagements, with their consort.

We employ 24 staff who, led by the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, are responsible for the administration of the Town Council and delivery of our Services.

The Town Council operates a Committee system which sets the budget and decides how funds are to be spent. Town Council meetings are open to the public and the Town Council provides monthly sessions which the public can attend and raise issues with their Local Councillor.

Visit the Town Council website for more information at www.saltash.gov.uk

Town Council Committee Structure



Town Council Management and Operations

The Town Clerk is the most senior employee and undertakes the administration of the Town Council. The Town Clerk is required to carry out all the functions required by law as the Town Council's Proper Officer and to issue all statutory notifications. Local Government Act 1972 s112.

The Responsible Finance Officer is responsible for the administration of the Town Council's financial affairs. Local Government Act 1972 s151.

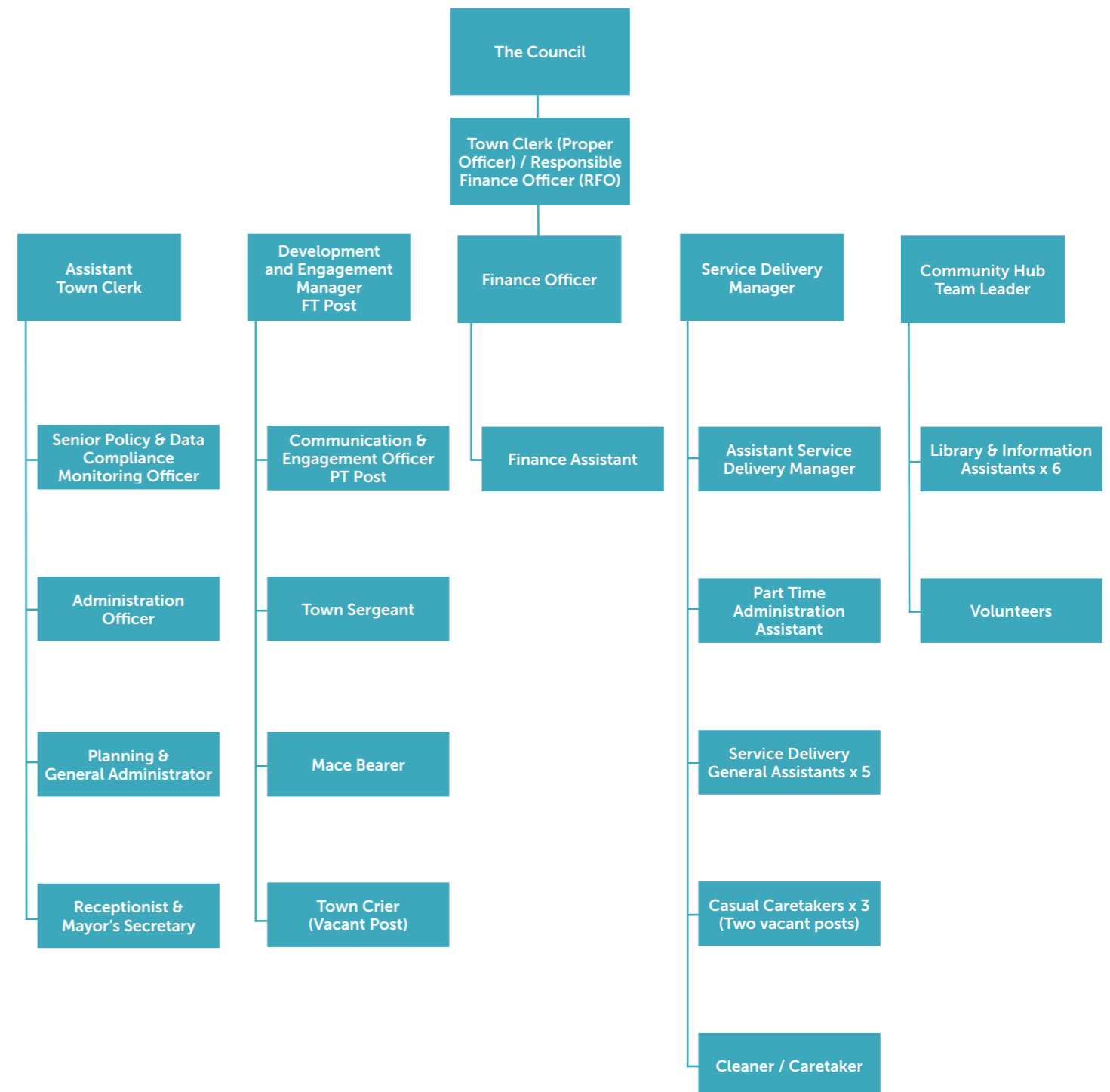
Councillors are not line managers or directors of Town Council Officers. A Councillor's role is to represent their Ward and the people that live in it. Councillors provide a bridge between the community and the Town Council. As well as being an advocate for local residents and signposting them to the right Officer at the Town Council.

Councillors and Officers are indispensable to one another. A mutual respect between both is essential for good local government. Together, both roles bring the critical skills, experience and knowledge required to manage an effective public sector organisation. Councillors provide a democratic mandate to the Town Council, whereas Officers contribute the professional expertise needed to deliver the Town Council framework within the law.

The Town Council fully supports Continual Professional Development (CPD) which covers both Officer and Councillor needs to ensure competency, relevance, skills and knowledge to guarantee all roles are performed effectively.

Organisation Structure, Committee Structure, Town Councillors and Officers are available to view on pages 9 and 11.

Saltash Town Council Line Management Staff Structure





Meet our Councillors



Meet the Town Council Team



Responsibilities of your Town Council

Over the last ten years, the Town Council's responsibilities and assets have grown considerably, through either devolution (asset transfers from Cornwall Council) and/or by working in partnership with key stakeholders (Service Level Agreements).

Refer to the Town Council's Portfolios to understand Saltash Town Council's responsibilities.

Supporting documentation can be found by visiting the Town Council Website
www.saltash.gov.uk/town-council-business-plan

Responsibilities of Cornwall Council

Different services in Saltash such as; rubbish and recycling, transport and parking, planning, licensing, housing, health and social care, benefits and support, street lighting faults, potholes, drainage and flooding, illegally parked vehicles, abandoned vehicles and much more.

Visit www.cornwall.gov.uk for more information

2.

About the Business Plan



Business Plan Introduction

This document is the Town Council's Business Plan. It outlines and clarifies the strategic priorities of the Town Council and aims to provide a framework for budget setting and identified operational targets over the period.

This Business Plan sets out Saltash Town Council's vision for Saltash, its purpose, values, objectives and priorities. The aims and future aspirations should be those which Saltash Town Council itself can achieve, either through direct operational decisions or by increasing its influence on other delivery bodies, such as Cornwall Council.

The aim of the Business Plan is to give Saltash residents a clear understanding of what the Town Council is trying to achieve and how it intends to work towards delivery. It details what the Town Council will focus on over the next three years and enable it to operate in a consistent and co-ordinated way, as well as focusing debate and budget decisions on the key priorities.

The future development of the Business Plan will be based on community engagement and involvement, which in turn will enable the Town Council to become even more confident with its decision-making.

At the same time, the Plan will help the local community to have a better understanding of who does what in Saltash, explaining what issues fall under the responsibility of other delivery bodies such as Cornwall Council, CORMAC, National Highways etc.

The Business Plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure that the Town Council remains focused on the delivery of its objectives and to assist with the budget setting process. This function will be a responsibility of the Town Vision Sub Committee, in order that it can take an overview of proposed projects considered by each Committee and Sub Committee, recommending amendments to Full Council.

Committees and Sub Committees of the Town Council will work to the Business Plan to meet or exceed the set core priorities.

The Business Plan is informed by the following documents:

Saltash Neighbourhood Development Plan - www.democracy.cornwall.gov.uk

Coastal Communities Team - www.sites.google.com/view/saltashwatersidecct/home

The Cornwall Transport Plan - www.cornwall.gov.uk/transport-parking-and-streets

Streets for People Design Code – Delivering Quality of Life - www.cornwall.gov.uk

Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies - www.cornwall.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework - www.assets.publishing.service.gov.uk

Visit individual websites for more information.

Saltash Town Council will also respond to other relevant studies as they come to light.



Saltash Town Council Strategic Priorities

The Town Council recently considered and approved six strategic priorities for the next three years to ensure Saltash becomes an envied riverside town, being greener, more inclusive and prosperous. Front of the Council's mind when putting together the Business Plan is the current, challenging economic and social conditions affecting everyone and particularly rural and coastal communities like Saltash.

The six strategic priorities are also informed by the Saltash Neighbourhood Development Plan and other local, regional and national strategies. They outline how Saltash Town Council will continue to deliver quality services for residents and people working in, and visiting the town.



Boosting Jobs and Economic Prosperity;

To ensure Saltash benefits from higher income, reduced poverty, improved facilities and quality of life. Promote Saltash as a vibrant and welcoming visitor destination.



Health and Wellbeing;

To support the Saltash Healthcare Action Group in improving our local NHS provision. Support improvement to mental health, fitness facilities, educational wellbeing of children and opportunities to access a high level of quality learning for young people.



Housing;

To ensure Saltash has a balanced range of high quality and affordable housing by working in partnership with Cornwall Council.



Travel and Transport;

To work with key stakeholders to support access to affordable, accessible and sustainable transport in Saltash and the rural and urban areas and promote walking and cycling.



Climate Emergency;

To continue to acknowledge a climate emergency and to bring forward a local climate change strategy.



Recreation and Leisure;

To continue to provide, improve, and support in Saltash, play parks, open green spaces, library service, cultural activity, leisure and sport facilities, and to acknowledge our unique position on the Tamar and Lynher Rivers.

Our Vision for Saltash

Our intention is that by 2030 Saltash will be an envied riverside town, being greener, more inclusive and prosperous in all aspects, with a reinvigorated town centre and waterfront, award-winning new housing, a diverse economy, with an excellent quality of life and lifestyle for all ages.

Our Mission

Saltash Town Council endeavours to promote the best social, economic, and environmental practices for Saltash by efficiently managing services, assets, and the resources of the Town Council for the benefit of the local community. The Town Council aims to be a professional and competent Town Council, which is open/transparent and accountable and ensures sound financial management of the Town Council's resources.

Our Core Values

Saltash Town Council will...

- Be Transparent
- Be Civil and Respectful to others
- Be accountable for our actions
- Be fair
- Be collaborative
- Be innovative

“greener, more inclusive and prosperous in all aspects”



“To improve the quality of life for residents & businesses”

Our Aims

- To improve the quality of life for residents and businesses in Saltash;
- To provide effective, transparent and accountable local government of Saltash Town Council;
- To ensure best value for money;
- To effectively represent the residents and businesses in Saltash;
- To protect and enhance the services in Saltash;
- To preserve and enhance the rural, built, and natural environments of Saltash;
- To enable residents to be involved in the life of Saltash and its future development.

Our Objectives

- Keep informed of changes to legislation and ensure that procedures and Town Council policies are reviewed and revised in line with such changes;
- To continue to maintain and update the Town Council website. Publish all information required by legislation and as much other information as possible;
- To give residents and businesses the opportunity to express their views and represent these effectively;
- To communicate effectively with residents linked to the Town Council Communication Strategy and continue to explore new ways of communication;
- To work effectively with Cornwall Council, Councillors, and other key stakeholders for the betterment of Saltash;
- To use the Saltash Neighbourhood Plan effectively in all matters relating to the town;
- To continue to consider all local planning and enforcement matters that affect the town and provide comment on their impact on local residents, businesses, and the rural nature of the town.

Strengths, Weaknesses Opportunities & Threats (SWOT)

Analysis of the current situation

Strengths:

- The Town Council is recognised by Cornwall Council and other organisations as a trusted voice in delivering projects and managing funds in the community;
- Improved collaborative working;
- Situated at the 'Gateway to Cornwall';
- Unique waterfront position on the Tamar and Lynher Rivers;
- Councillors are engaged in the work of the Town Council and their constituents;
- Saltash is a thriving community, with lots of drive and ambition to improve;
- Good community knowledge;
- Community spirit support for events and organisations;
- Good diverse experience and knowledge within the Town Council;
- Cautious and balanced approach;
- Community open spaces, play provisions, library service, leisure and sport facilities and youth services.

Opportunities:

- Town Councils now have higher/greater remit to become involved in more;
- Highly committed team with opportunities to progress and create a career path;
- Future funding opportunities to improve/support the high street and the wider town;
- Exploit our location at the 'Gateway to Cornwall';
- Unique waterfront position on the Tamar and Lynher Rivers;
- Expand tourism that supports existing and future facilities;
- Neighbourhood Plan;
- Good public/green transport in proximity to the A38 and railway station;
- Plymouth's large population as a neighbouring city to Fore Street.

Weaknesses:

- Town Council doesn't have the capacity to run the operations efficiently or the space to accommodate future staff;
- The community is unaware of the Town Council role; there is confusion about who provides what service;
- Lack of strong engagement within the community;
- The Town Council has very little generating assets;
- Fore Street needs a spruce up to attract residents to shop and visitors to visit the town;
- Border towns (Plymouth and Truro) lead to Saltash being overlooked;
- Plymouth employment pressure means residents leave the town for employment;
- Poor connectivity from Saltash Waterside to Fore Street;
- Poor standard of NHS provision;
- Lack of clarity regarding Councillors' non-executive roles and complementarity with the executive team;
- Lack of consideration and inclusion of Saltash as a town in its entirety, rather than limited to Fore Street.

Threats:

- Uncertain future very hard to plan for;
- Economic fluctuations out of our control makes budgeting and delivery of projects problematic;
- Loss of funding opportunities due to the economic climate;
- Far greater demand on Councillor time with the expanding remit;
- Future public spending cuts will have an effect on Fore Street;
- Anti-social behaviour and vandalism;
- People by-pass Fore Street due to the A38 on the doorstep to neighbouring city;
- Plymouth as a neighbouring city often means Saltash is forgotten, having a negative impact on continuity;
- Loss of expertise in the event of Councillor or staff resignation and a potential change in Administration every four years;
- Affordability of housing, low wages, competing land uses, traffic congestion.

3.

How this
Business
Plan will be
delivered



Our Activity Plan

Each year, we will produce an activity plan for the year ahead which will guide our work. The first will be set in April 2024 for the 2024-25 financial year (April to March) and these will then be reviewed and finalised in the early part of the following year.

The activity plan will detail the specific actions the Town Council will undertake to meet our objectives and overarching aims. Each action will be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound (SMART). Tasks will be assigned to the Responsible Officer and the Committee will have an oversight with regard to ensuring delivery. Many of our objectives may take several years to complete and we will set out appropriate milestones to strengthen accountability as part of our activity plan.

Our Committees and Sub Committees will have a key role in making the strategic and policy decisions required to give effect to the objectives of the Town Council. For specific objectives we may also establish more informal working groups, comprised of Councillors and relevant stakeholders, to develop the detailed plans and actions we need to meet to deliver our aims.

Whilst we will detail specific actions to take, we will also be flexible in responding to opportunities and issues that arise. When considering new activity not covered by the activity plan, we will appraise whether it contributes to meeting our objectives.

A more detailed activity plan can be located on the Town Council website www.saltash.gov.uk/town-council-business-plan

“To develop the detailed plans and actions we need to meet to deliver our aims”



Communications Strategy

Saltash Town Council is committed to effective communications to ensure the Town Council's operations, priorities, objectives, values, ambitions and challenges are better understood by all our audiences - both internal and external – including our statutory obligations as a Council.

1. Who do we want to reach?

Our Audience and stakeholders

Key stakeholders include residents, local businesses, and community organisations, local government organisations and Cornwall Councillors, local media and Politicians.

2. What do we want to achieve?

Updates to the community

Provide regular updates on council activities, decisions, and upcoming events to keep the community informed.

Community engagement

Actively engage with the community through public forums, surveys and consultations, and feedback mechanisms to understand concerns and gather input. Ensure the channels of communicating these elements cover electronic and paper versions.

Transparency

Emphasise transparency by sharing meeting minutes, financial reports, and important documents to build trust and enable scrutiny of council functions and business.

Responsive platforms

Monitor and respond promptly to enquiries and concerns raised by residents on various communication platforms.

Feedback mechanism

Promote the methods for residents to provide feedback on services and decision making.

3. How will we communicate?

Consistent Branding

Maintain a consistent visual identity and tone of voice across all messaging on all communication channels, and assets, for recognition and clarity.

Channels of Communication

Identify a mix of channels such as official websites, social media, newsletters, and community meetings to disseminate information. Social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram will provide a fundamental and cost-effective home for STC communications.

Town Council website

- Social media strategy to encompass various platforms utilising them to their full potential.
- Print media including local news outlets
- Broadcast TV and Radio channels
- Mailouts and leaflet drops
- Posters and banners
- Noticeboards
- In Person – Meet your Councillor sessions

Proactive PR

Continue to positively promote the work that STC undertakes to the local media utilising all opportunities to enhance the role of the council in the town.

Statements to the Media

Provide a mechanism to respond to any media enquiries in a timely manner so as to safeguard the image of the Town Council and its members.

4. What will we communicate?

Regular Updates

Establish a clear plan for communicating during urgent situations, ensuring residents receive timely and accurate information.

Education Campaigns

Implement educational campaigns to inform residents about local policies, initiatives, and the decision-making process – dog poo campaign, green initiatives, speed awareness etc., including circulating Cornwall Council education awareness.

Multilingual and Accessible Communication

Incorporate Cornish language elements to communications out to the community – including email signatures. Celebrate our Cornish heritage by using Cornish and English for communications and greetings in all genres – written, video and all graphics. We will endeavour to make all our communications as accessible as possible in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018.

5. Building good partnerships

Collaboration with Local Media

Foster relationships with local media outlets to enhance coverage of Council activities and community news through a positive working relationship.

Collaboration with Local Government

Use our communication platforms to promote the division of responsibilities between the Town Council and Cornwall Council and provide clarity regarding reporting issues to both Councils.

How will this be led?

2024-25 we will be recruiting new roles of Development and Engagement Manager and Communications and Engagement Officer, part of their roles will be the implementation of this strategy.

Good Governance

To ensure Saltash Town Council operates as a professional, competent, and caring organisation that manages its assets, finances and human resources efficiently.

To work in partnership with key stakeholders to maintain and improve the quality of the Town Council's Services and Property in line with public expectation whilst ensuring value for money.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Town Council and its operations through a culture of adapting to change and regular review by delegating more decisions over day-to-day operations to the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer whilst overall accountability rests with the Corporate Body.

To work towards obtaining the Local Council Award Scheme to ensure we continue to perform to a high standard and that Saltash Town Council is up-to-date and progressive by the standard set by the sector.

The Local Council Award Scheme provides a framework to plan, improve performance and confidence, with policies in place for continuous development.

Good Governance Functions include:

- Ensuring compliance with statutory and legal obligations;
- Financial and budgetary management and monitoring;
- Scrutiny and audit of Town Council practices;
- Development of strategies, policies, procedures and best practice guidelines to maximise the Town Council's effectiveness;
- Negotiation and implementation of devolution issues to ensure where appropriate, services and facilities are locally managed;
- Monitoring the Town Council's performance;
- Planning of financial and staffing resources.

There are two Committees that support the Town Council's Good Governance– Policy and Finance and Personnel.

Visit www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/local-council-award-scheme

Financial Information

Primarily the Town Council's financial resource is from the precept, funded through the local residents of Saltash, via what is known as the local 'precept'. This is the local tax levied by the Town Council, which is collected on its behalf by Cornwall Council as part of the overall Council Tax bill.

To be able to continue to preserve and maintain services for the community of Saltash, it is necessary to increase your Council Tax for 2024-25 by 4.81%. This equates to £11.42 per year which is just 22 pence per week, per household, for a typical Band D property.

In addition to the precept, the Town Council generates income from other sources and is proactive in seeking relevant funding opportunities.

The Town Council has two types of reserves:

Type 1: General Reserves

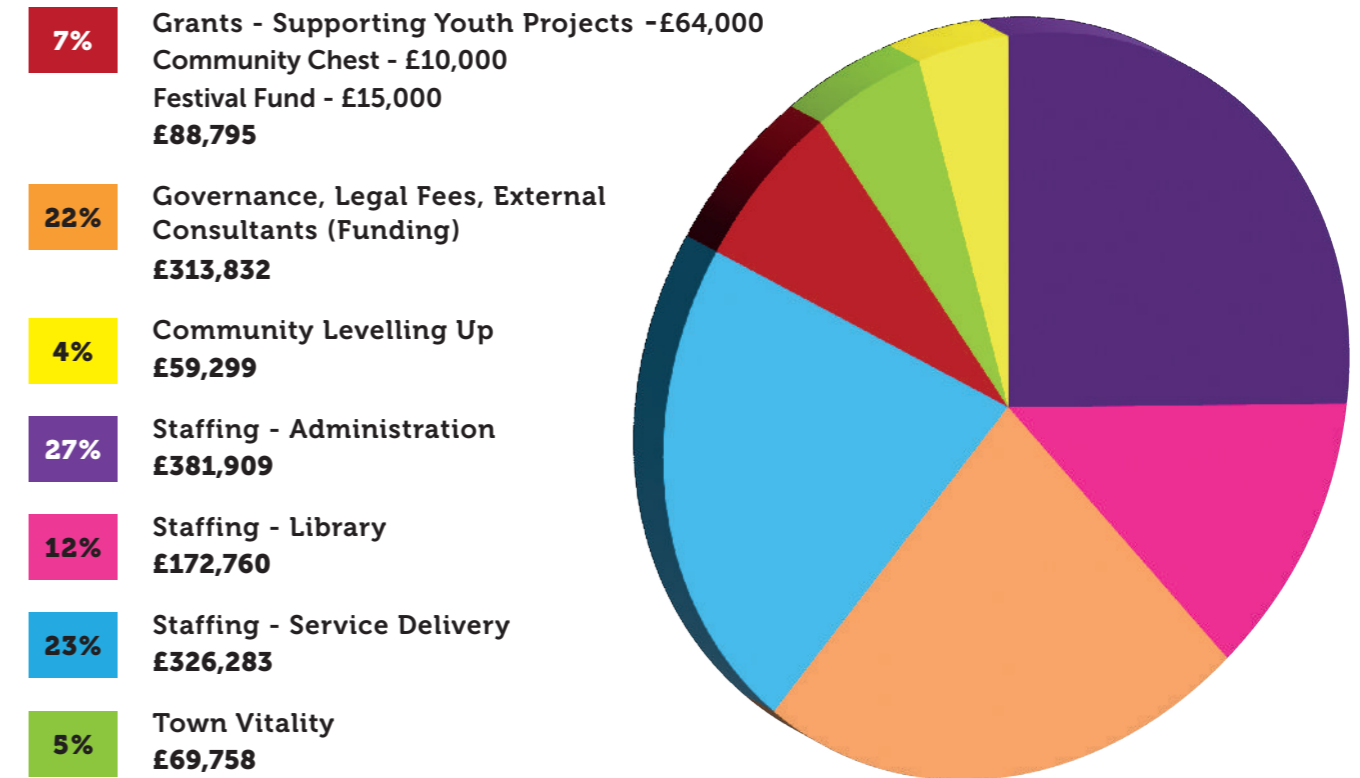
Balances in this category are not identified for specified purposes, but will be used for devolved assets and services.

The Town Council's existing contingency pot is set at 5 month's expenditure for the year 2024-25 to cushion against the impact of unforeseen events or genuine emergencies.

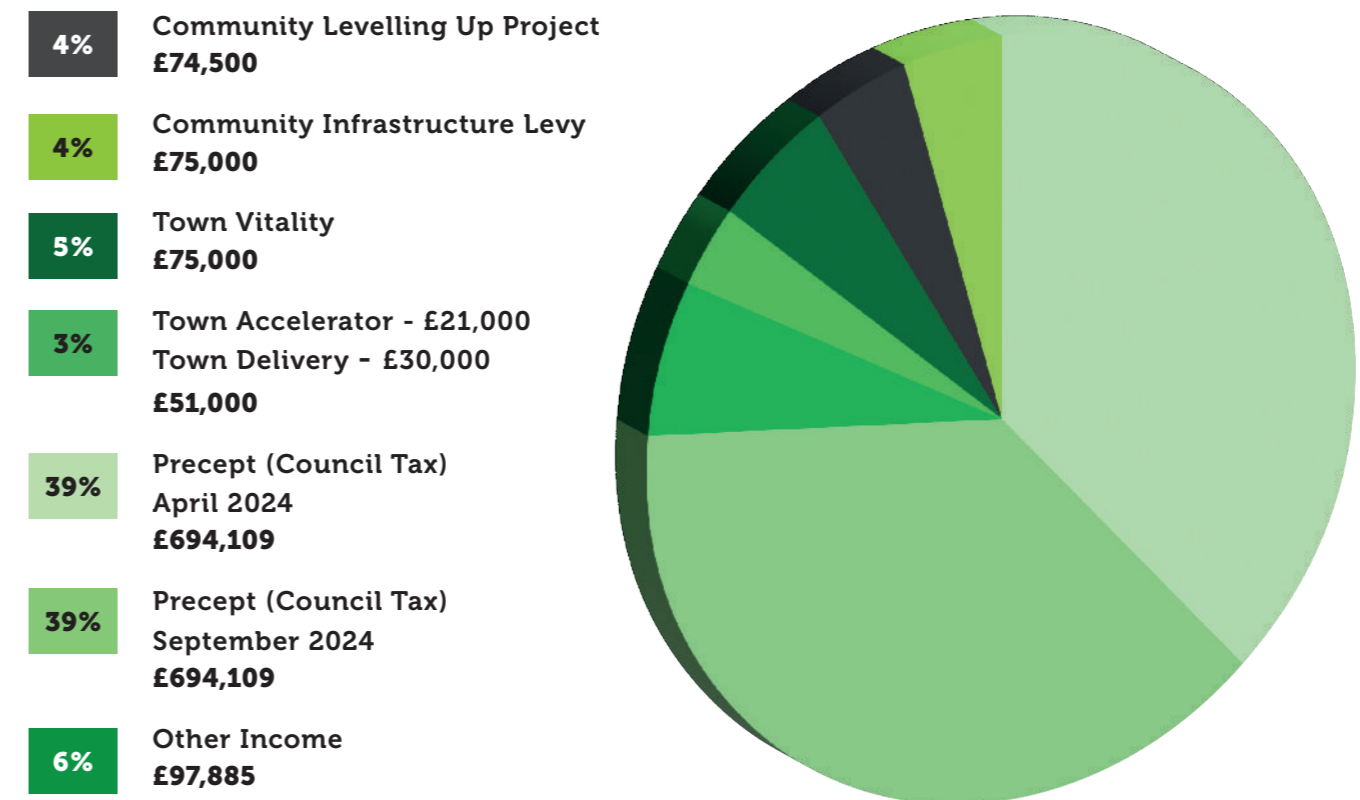
Type 2: Earmarked Reserves

Balances in this category are set aside for specified projects where spending will occur outside of the usual annual spending pattern of the budget. Earmarked Reserves have little or no impact on the Council Tax.

Expenditure for 2024-2025



Income for 2024-2025



Future Funding

The Town Council is committed to seeking relevant funding opportunities to better improve the town.

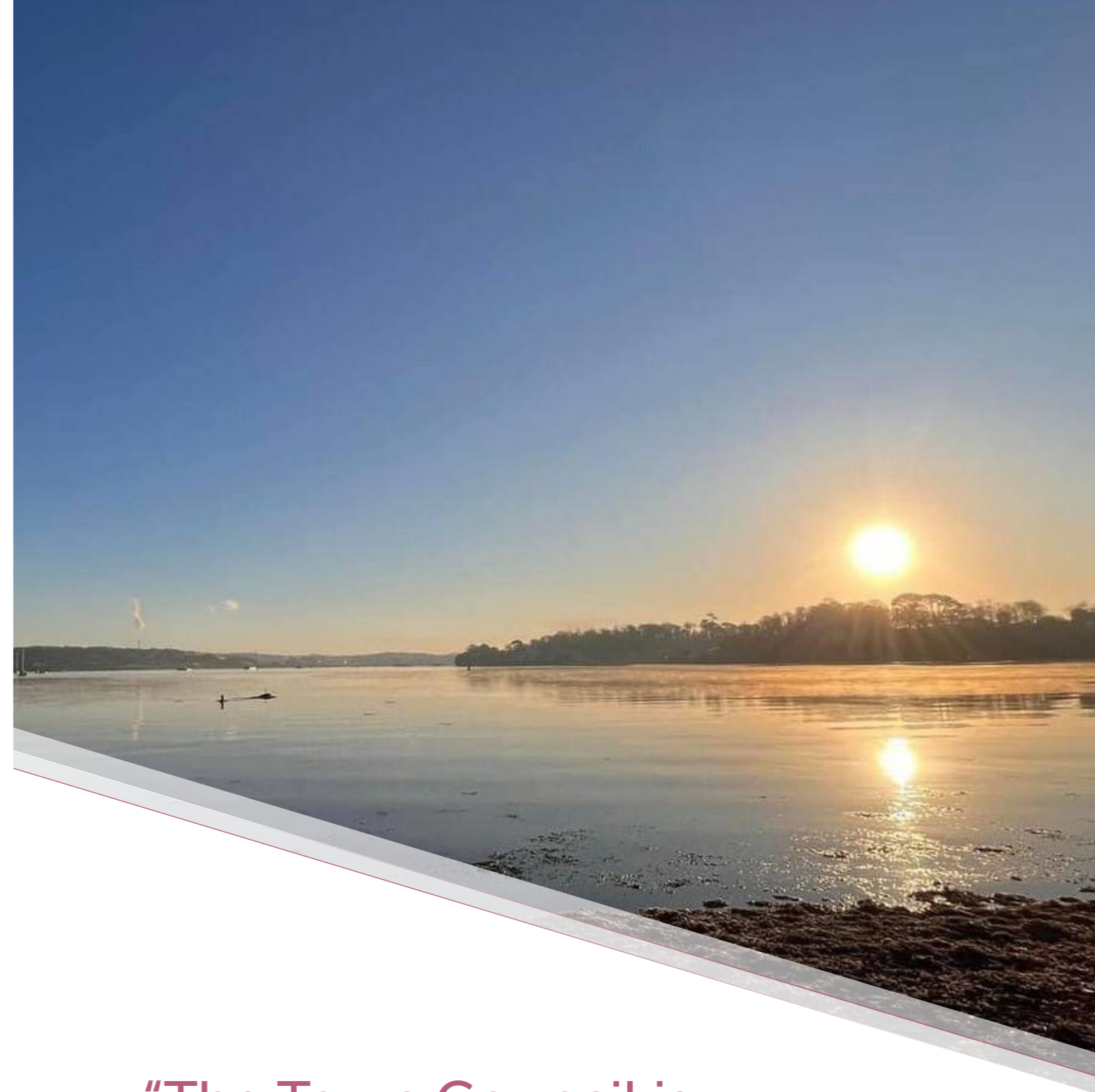
Funding awarded provides the Town Council the opportunity to research and better understand what the residents would like to see in Saltash, without impacting the Council Tax.

The Town Council continues to work hard in bringing the following successfully funded projects to fruition in partnership with key stakeholders:

- Town Vitality £84,000 – Open Green Community Space;
- Town Accelerator Fund £21,000 – Open Green Community Space;
- Town Delivery Fund £30,000 – Public Realm Improvements;
- Community Infrastructure Levy £75,000 – Play Park Provision;
- Community Levelling Up Fund £74,500 – Connectivity and Sustainable Transport.

The Town Council is committed to contributing towards funding bids to help further secure opportunities for the community using the General and Earmarked Revenues.

- Community Infrastructure Levy £20,000 – Play Park Provision;
- Community Levelling Up Fund £5,000 – Connectivity and Sustainable Transport.



“The Town Council is committed to seeking relevant funding opportunities to better improve the town”

This Business Plan establishes an overarching and unified strategy for Saltash Town Council and is therefore an important piece of work. Providing a solid foundation to secure further investment, increase engagement with residents whilst balancing pragmatism with a sense of ambition.

Saltash is a great place to live and there are so many active community groups making a difference, particularly important in these challenging times. We can do so much more by collectively working together and we believe that having a focused business plan in place will really help to ensure Saltash thrives and achieves its undoubted potential.



Town Council Office Opening Times

Monday - Friday 10am to 1pm & 2pm to 4pm

Email: enquiries@saltash.gov.uk

Website: www.saltash.gov.uk

Tel: 01752 844846

Saltash Town Council

The Guildhall

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Saltash

Cornwall

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