

To receive a report on Dowl Glan Clean Water Campaign and consider any actions and associated expenditure.

Report to: Full Town Council

Date of Report: 26.08.2026

Officer Writing the Report: Administration Officer

Pursuant Minute:

(Pursuant to FTC 02.07.26 minute nr. 103/26/27)

Officer's Recommendations

Members are requested to consider the Dowl Glan motion and determine the Town Council's position. In doing so, Members may resolve to support the campaign by approving the motion and endorsing the collective letter, decline to support the motion, or note the information provided.

Report Summary

Dowl Glan is a Cornwall-wide grassroots campaign that brings together town and parish councils, community groups and residents who are concerned about sewage pollution, water quality and rising water bills. The campaign seeks to unite councils across Cornwall in calling for significant reform of the management of water and sewage services within Cornwall.

The campaign is encouraging town and parish councils across Cornwall to support the sending of a formal letter to Cornwall's MPs, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Ofwat and Cornwall Council. Using the template letter provided at Appendix A, the correspondence draws upon the provisions of the Water (Special Measures) Act and Ofwat's licence conditions. The intention is for the letter to represent not merely a protest, but a formal challenge to South West Water's continued suitability to operate under its current licence.

The motion for consideration by town and parish councils is as follows:

1. "This Council notes with grave concern the systemic failure of South West Water to manage the sewage system in Cornwall. Despite record bills and government intervention, raw sewage continues to impact our environment and public health. Therefore, this Council resolves:
2. To formally declare a Vote of No Confidence in South West Water.

3. To sign the collective letter to the Secretary of State demanding the removal of South West Water's management through a Special Administration Order."

Since April 2026, 64 town and parish councils have voted in favour of the Dowr Glan motion and have signed and submitted the letter. A list of those councils is included at Appendix B.

In preparing this report, attempts were made to identify Anna Gelderd MP's position on the campaign. However, no publicly available information could be found to confirm whether she supports or opposes the initiative.

The Dowr Glan Campaign did set a closing date, and the main handover event and vote at Cornwall Council took place on July 21, 2026, when Cornwall Council formally voted in favour of the Dowr Glan motion.

The collective letter was submitted to DEFRA and Ofwat in early August 2026. However, the campaign has identified a key Westminster petition deadline of 14 September 2026, when the UK Parliament is scheduled to debate a petition calling for a referendum on bringing the water industry into public ownership.

As a result, the campaign remains active and continues to engage with town and parish councils, encouraging them to formally declare a vote of no confidence in South West Water and to support the wider objectives of the campaign.

Should Saltash Town Council resolve to vote no confidence in South West Water and sign the letter, Dowr Glan has advised that it will keep the Council informed of the campaign's progress and any outcomes arising from the submission of the letter to the Government, Ofwat and Cornwall's MPs.

The campaign states that, if successful, South West Water would be removed from managing water and sewage services in Cornwall, with responsibility transferring from a private company to a publicly owned organisation operating as a public service.

Signature of Officer:

Administration Officer