

**To receive a report on Victoria Gardens and the Maurice
Huggins Room and consider any actions**

Report to: Services Committee

Date of Report: 23.09.26

Officer Writing the Report: Town Clerk

Pursuant to: Full Town Council, 5 March 2026, minute 369/25/26

Purpose of the Report: To provide Members with further information in relation to the resolution agreed in March 2026 and to enable consideration of any subsequent action.

Officers Recommendations:

To note Cornwall Council's arrangements for the Maurice Huggins Room and to continue to support the hirers until such time as Cornwall Council's tender process has concluded or the organisations no longer require use of the facility.

Members are encouraged to work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to support the restoration and enhancement of Victoria Gardens. Subject to the approval of Agenda Item 16, it is recommended that this matter be progressed through the Play Parks, Open Spaces and Street Furniture Working Group, together with the acting Services Manager supporting Members.

Report Summary

Full Town Council 5 March 2026:

369/25/26 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON VICTORIA GARDENS AND THE MAURICE HUGGINS ROOM AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

Members discussed the report received and included within the reports pack.

Following a unanimous vote (14 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions), it was proposed by Councillor Bickford, seconded by Councillor Peggs, and **RESOLVED:**

1. To cease progressing the lease arrangements for both Victoria Gardens and the Maurice Huggins Room.
2. That Saltash Town Council wishes to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of Victoria Gardens, without assuming full liability, by undertaking the restoration of the railings (details to be confirmed), introducing sponsored benches, and supporting the Friends of Victoria Gardens.
3. To work collaboratively with Cornwall Council to enhance the site (as outlined in point 2 above) while avoiding the financial and legal responsibilities associated with a full asset transfer.
4. To note the difficulty faced by the Town Council in identifying a viable use for the Maurice Huggins Room that would not negatively impact existing local businesses. The Town Council encourages Cornwall Council to engage with the community to explore potential community-focused uses, as demand is likely to arise from community groups rather than commercial operators.

Cornwall Council were informed of the Town Council's resolution, as detailed above, in March 2026. Cornwall Council has subsequently advised that it intends to progress a tender process for the building to be taken on by another organisation.

In the meantime, the premises continue to be used by community organisations (With You Cornwall and Saltash Together). It is therefore recommended that the Town Council continues to support these groups until such time as Cornwall Council's tender process has concluded or the organisations no longer require use of the facility.

Whilst there are associated overheads and staff resources involved, with limited income being generated, both organisations deliver valuable services that provide a benefit to the local community.

Regarding Victoria Gardens Cornwall Council's Open Spaces Officer is of the view that the Cormac Volunteering Programme is the way forward, not a licence to the Town Council. Cornwall Council have confirmed that Saltash Together have already engaged with this programme (circa 6 months ago), which has been working on restoration, and that they are also looking at work to the benches. So, Members are asked to consider liaising with the group and Rebecca Dickson (Cormac) so that the Town Council can work in partnership.

Signature of Officer:

Town Clerk