



ST AGNES PARISH COUNCIL

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Full Council meeting: 13th April 2026

Agenda item 11: Parish Youth Project, temporary funding

Context

At its last meeting, Full Council resolved to undertake a parish-wide consultation on support for youth services and provision within the parish, including, but not limited to, the Parish Youth Project (PYP) (218/25, 02.03.26).

The method and timing of this consultation need to be carefully considered. Preparatory work is underway and Council will be kept updated. A draft consultation will be brought forward in due course for approval.

The purpose of the consultation is to establish whether there is a public mandate for the Council to consider increasing its financial support for youth services in the parish, including the PYP. However, it would be counterproductive to allow the PYP to fail through lack of funding while the consultation is being prepared and undertaken. If the service were to cease, qualified Youth Workers will secure other employment, young people will disengage, and the trusted relationships between Youth Workers and young people will be lost. For that reason, the following is proposed by the Youth Strategy Working Group for Council's consideration.

Temporary funding proposal

The HR Committee previously recommended, and Full Council approved, that underspends in the 2025/26 staffing budget be transferred into a Staffing Earmarked Reserve (EMR) to support matters such as occupational health, pay awards and locum cover (H25/25, 18.11.25, 170/25, 01.12.25). The 2025/26 Maintenance Team staffing underspend is £28,757 (owing to fiscal lag associated with the recruitment timescales). It is recommended that £20,000 be transferred into the Staffing EMR, creating a healthy starting reserve for those purposes. The remaining £8,757 could be used to support continuation of the PYP pending both the outcome of the public consultation and decisions on funding applications currently submitted, including the National Lottery 'Awards for All'. This would provide service continuity and avoid provision damage while the Council determines, with public input, its longer-term position on youth support.

Use of this underspend in this way would impact the 2026/27 budget, Precept or adversely affect the Council's general reserve position and would offer a sensible and pragmatic solution in the current circumstances.

Youth Strategy

The Council's [adopted Youth Strategy](#) commits it to supporting children and young people to thrive in the parish, to providing opportunities and personal development, to involving young people in decisions affecting them, to providing an annual budget for child and youth services, and to supporting and overseeing the Parish Youth Project as a commissioned service. The Strategy also recognises that local social and economic pressures are adversely affecting young people and that they should not be disadvantaged by those circumstances. In that context, it would be inconsistent with the Council's own strategic commitments to allow the PYP to decline prematurely before consultation has been completed and before longer-term decisions have been taken. Continued interim support therefore provides a prudent and policy-consistent way of maintaining a commissioned service, avoiding avoidable harm to young people, and ensuring the consultation can take place meaningfully rather than after provision has already been lost.

Grant applications

The PYP has submitted its annual National Lottery 'Awards for All' application. Decisions typically take 12 to 16 weeks, with any award usually confirmed around June or July. Other funding bids are also pending with South West Water and Delamere Dairy Foundation funding.

It is important to recognise, however, that grant funding is never provided as unrestricted income. Each funding stream is tied to specific purposes and expenditure criteria. For example, the Delamere Dairy Foundation application relates specifically to provision in Mount Hawke, in conjunction with the Mount Hawke Skate Park, to enable sessions to be run there. The South West Water bid is intended to support enhancement activities, such as music and other specialist group provision. Although the National Lottery 'Awards for All' funding is broader and supports operation of the PYP more generally, it too is subject to approved expenditure categories and audit requirements. In all cases, the PYP must demonstrate compliance with the funding criteria.

Typically, these funding streams are intended to enhance a service, rather than fund its core operating base. Without the fundamental funding required to maintain the project — including qualified Youth Worker salaries, venue hire, heating and general overheads etc — these complementary grants cannot be fully or effectively used. The PYP cannot deliver skate park sessions without Youth Workers; it cannot provide externally funded activities if the service itself is no longer operating; it cannot make use of transport or outing funding if there is no Youth Worker in place to organise and supervise provision.

Accordingly, the Council must consider both the nature (and availability) of external grant funding and the structure of the service itself when deciding what support, if any, is needed to ensure the project remains viable and able to benefit from additional external funding.

Current provision

From April 2026, the PYP will reduce its service to two nights per week (St. Agnes and Porthtowan) having already withdrawn provision in Blackwater and, at the end of March, in Mount Hawke. Should the Delamere Dairy Foundation funding application succeed, there will be the opportunity to reinstate Mount Hawke provision through skate park-based sessions, subject to overall operational survival. The PYP has successfully recruited a parent onto its bank staff, which provides some additional paid support, and is continuing efforts to recruit volunteers to assist with service delivery.

In parallel, the PYP is engaging with other youth-focused organisations in the parish, including the Scouts, to explore how complementary provision may work more closely together. This is a positive development. However, the Council should be careful not to place unrealistic expectations on such arrangements. For example, 1st St Agnes Scouts already has a substantial waiting list and is entirely dependent on volunteers and adult-to-child ratios. While there is some overlap in the age range served, Scouts is a uniformed organisation and is not designed to meet the more complex social, emotional, behavioural and welfare needs that the PYP regularly supports, including issues linked to poverty, abuse, substance misuse and mental health. Those needs are addressed through qualified youth work provision, sometimes in conjunction with Children's Services, and cannot be replaced by other community groups. Any such collaboration should be viewed as complementary, rather than as a substitute for the PYP.

Local Government context

For context, other Councils make direct financial provision for youth work and wider youth services within their communities.

Saltash Town Council has allocated £100,000 in 2026/27 to professional youth work through a three-year tender arrangement, having previously budgeted approximately £50,000 for a one-year award split between two youth groups. This equates to 5.64% of Saltash's annual expenditure budget of £1,774,443. Applied on the same basis, 5.64% of St Agnes Parish Council's annual expenditure budget of £993,071 would equate to £55,965.22, or £47,958.71 if applied to the 2026/27 precept of £851,000. Saltash has also separately increased its Youth Council budget from £4,000 to £6,000. If this is included as youth-related support, the total identifiable youth allocation is £106,000, equating to 5.97% of annual expenditure. On the same basis, this would equate to £59,276.34 against St Agnes Parish Council's expenditure budget, or £50,804.70 against the precept.

St Austell Town Council provides an annual grant of £20,000 towards youth services in its area, with additional occasional small grants and project support where appropriate. This represents approximately 1.1% of its annual budget and 1.5% of

its precept. Applied to St Agnes Parish Council, 1.1% of the annual expenditure budget of £993,071 would equate to £10,923.78, and 1.5% of the precept of £851,000 would equate to £12,765.

Redruth Town Council has set aside £20,000 for youth organisations from an annual budget of approximately £1.8 million. This equates to approximately 1.11% of its annual budget. On the same basis, 1.11% of St Agnes Parish Council's annual expenditure budget of £993,071 would equate to £11,023.09, or £9,446.10 if applied to the 2026/27 precept of £851,000. In addition to direct funding, Redruth supports young people through broader youth-focused provision and assets.

These examples show that it is increasingly common for local councils to provide direct financial support for youth work and youth provision in response to wider pressures on youth services. They also demonstrate that councils adopt different funding models, ranging from annual grants to longer-term commissioned arrangements. This provides useful context for the Parish Council in considering the scale and form of any future support, and reinforces the importance of consultation and public mandate in informing future decision-making.

Legal position

The Council has the General Power of Competence under s.1 Localism Act 2011, which is the principal legal basis for funding and supporting youth provision, including the Parish Youth Project as an existing commissioned service. In addition, s.19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 expressly applies to parish/town councils and permits the provision of social and recreational facilities, including staff, premises and assistance, and grant support to not-for-profit bodies providing them. Local Government Act 1972, s.137(3) assists where funding is given to a charitable or other not-for-profit public service body.

Recommendation(s)

That Council notes the public consultation is being prepared to test community support for increased youth funding, and that the outcome of that consultation, together with any future increase in annual youth support funding, can inform the Council's business planning process. In order to avoid harm to young people, the loss of qualified Youth Workers, and premature damage to the service before that process is complete and current grant applications are determined, Council approves a one-off grant of £8,757 as interim support for the Parish Youth Project.