



Falmouth Town Council



FALMOUTH

the spirit of the sea



Falmouth Town Council, Cornwall

Budget £4.8m. Precept £3.3m. Population c 25,000. Councillors 16. Staff 75+. Borrowing £1.7m.

Regular best place to live in the South West recognition. An exemplar for 'Town Team' Partnership and Economic Plan. LGA best practice for engaging with devolution. You find the Town Council in the 4th tranche of radical and wide ranging change since elections in 2013. It has changed to meet community need in the testing context of austerity, devolution agenda and rapid expansion of our two universities.

Transformed the Council significantly increased in output, moving in to new areas of service delivery, and taking the lead in holistic delivery often in collaboration with others.

The Reason we have changed:

- Cornwall Council a new unitary authority was established on 1st April 2009 replacing the County Council and six district/borough councils. It was sold on the basis of delivering a strong voice for Cornwall, delivering devolution and eliminating duplication.
- It had an inauspicious start. But had got its game together and is set to deliver £440m in savings from 2009 to 2024. (123 Councillors are further reducing to 87 in 2021)
- Double devolution. Devolution from Whitehall has seen operational devolution to Town and Parish Councils.
- A new (2021) CC administration and austerity has seen a draw back in some devolution and additional service cuts.

Devolution/Partnership

- Slow and humble beginnings. Regime change at CC and the austerity climate seen a gathering of pace.
- At unitary change all services 'flowed up'
- There needs to be a will (*elected members*)
- There needs to be a relationship with CC (*and other partners*)
- There needs to be evidence (*do your residents want it? How do you know? What is the cost?*)
- Freehold v Leasehold v Agency

Devolution/Partnership 2

- There needs to be capacity & expertise
- Can you be innovative (*Does it have to be delivered the same? Can you do it better?*)

4 Tranches of Devolution

Falmouth initially planned 4 tranches from 2013 at one a year, that was optimistic! For several reasons we are only now involved in tranche 4. Rome wasn't built in a day.

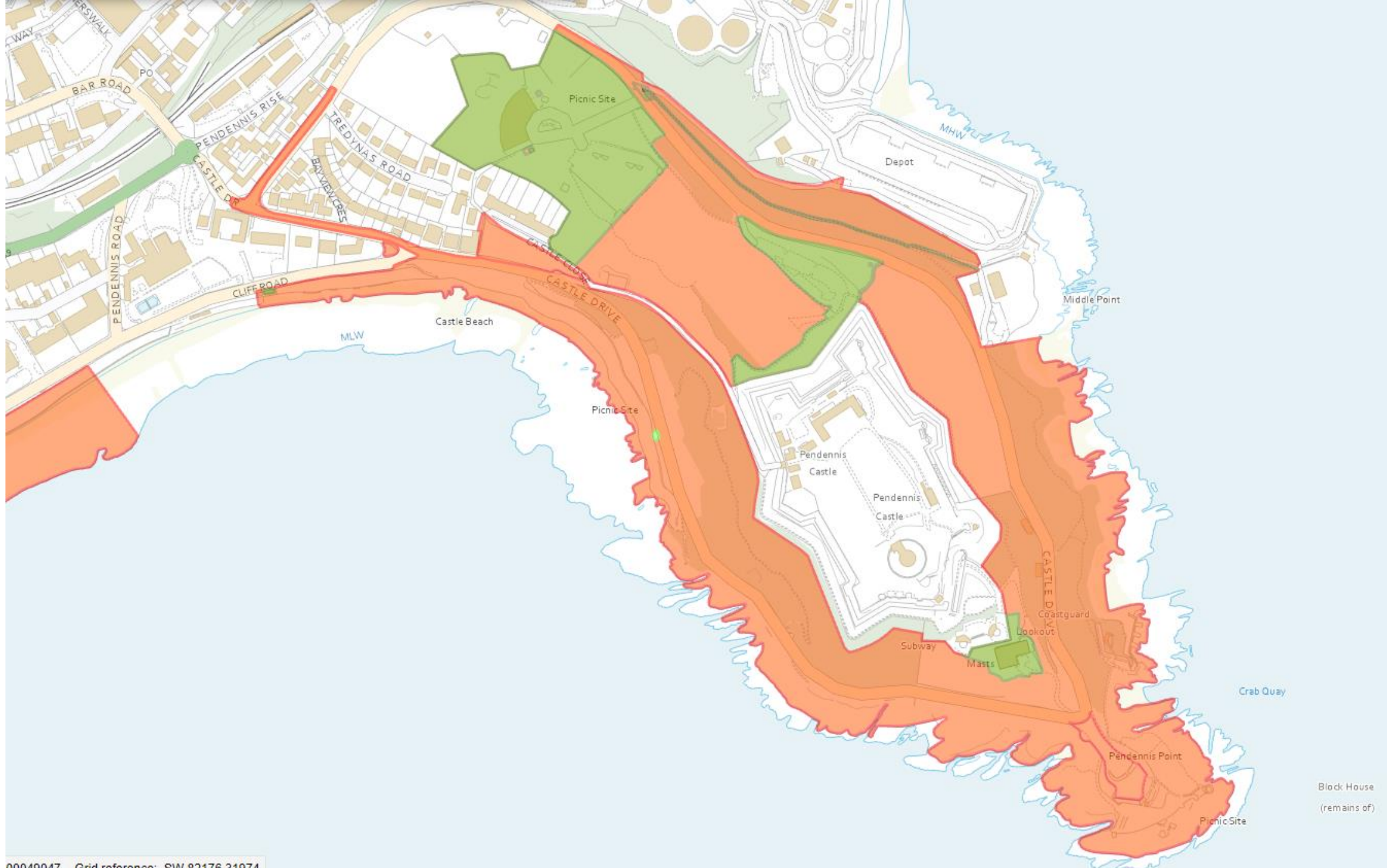
Tranche 4 includes over 90 environmental assets, from large formal parks and gardens to highway verges; 3 off-street car parks; a theatre and restaurant and some 'tidying up' from tranches 1-3.

Tranche 3 had seen us taking on the management of statutory services as the agent for others. E.g. Falmouth Library – but not replicating a tired library model. But as an integral part of a comprehensive cultural services model encompassing galleries, museums, events, parks and gardens, educational outreach and youth services.

We have saved discretionary services as requested by our community. E.g. CCTV. In a ground-breaking partnership with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service. E.g. external youth services.

- In December 2022 Cornwall Council Cabinet voted unanimously to transfer the freehold of the headland to Falmouth Town Council for a symbolic sum of £1, abandoning the idea of a public sale. A devolution grant of £34,000 was also awarded to Falmouth Town Council, allowing us to address outstanding safety concerns.





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