



CORNWALL
COUNCIL
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Strategic Director: Together for Families (DCS)



Starfish



April 2026

www.cornwall.gov.uk



Welcome

From Leader of Cornwall Council, Councillor Leigh Frost

Hello and thank you for your interest in joining Cornwall Council and serving the people of our remarkable Duchy.

As Leader of the Council, I am proud to represent the place I have long called home. Cornwall is a unique and special part of the country, known not only for its natural beauty but also for its strong communities, distinct identity and shared sense of purpose. Leading one of the largest unitary authorities in England brings real responsibility, and none more important than our role in supporting children, young people and families.

Our ambition is clear: to build a better Cornwall, for everyone, and that starts with ensuring our children have the best possible start in life. We want our

children and families to feel safe, supported and able to achieve their full potential, whatever their background or circumstances.

We know there are real challenges, but we are determined to meet those challenges head on through strengthening early help, protecting the most vulnerable, and working closely with partners to improve outcomes across the system.

Cornwall is far more than its coastline and countryside. It is a place of innovation, resilience and opportunity, from our growing renewable energy sector to our rich cultural heritage and evolving economy. We believe Cornwall has

the potential to lead nationally, and investing in our children and young people is central to that ambition.

We are looking for an exceptional leader who shares our passion and commitment, someone who understands the importance of strong, compassionate and effective children's services, and who is ready to make a lasting difference.

If you are inspired by the opportunity to serve our communities and help shape a brighter future for Cornwall's children and families, we would be delighted to receive your application.



Welcome

From Chief Executive, Kate Kennally

Thank you for your interest in this pivotal role as Strategic Director for Together for Families (DCS) at Cornwall Council.

Cornwall is an extraordinary place. People are proud to be Cornish and proud to live here. We have a strong sense of identity, a rich history and a spirit of community that is very real. It is also a place of contrasts. Alongside the beauty that so many visitors see, we have some of the highest levels of deprivation in the country. Families in many parts of Cornwall face daily pressures that are often invisible to the outside world. Many parents are doing everything they can to keep going in the face of financial strain, high housing costs and limited opportunities.

It is our responsibility to stand alongside them. That is why children and young people are at the heart of everything we do. We have adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and we take that responsibility seriously. Children shape our decisions. They are the first people we listen to when we develop new plans for Cornwall, and their voices guide our priorities for the future.

If you join us, you will find a strong, committed team who care deeply about doing what is right. Our children's services are rated as

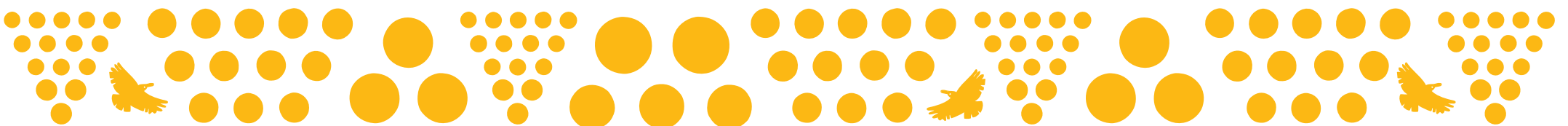
Good with Outstanding features, and our culture is focused on learning, improvement and finding solutions. We have excellent relationships with schools, a well-established education partnership and a strong early help and family first offer with so much to build on.

At the same time, we are realistic about the challenges ahead. Our SEND system is under real pressure, both operationally and financially.

We have invested significantly in children's services through our three year budget process, but we need to change the cost profile in a way that is sustainable. You will play a central part in this. We are also active in national SEND reform work and I want our new DCS to help us shape those changes so that they work for Cornwall's children.



If you join us, you will find a strong, committed team who care deeply about doing what is right



What makes this role different is its reach across the whole organisation. As a Chief Officer of the council, your leadership will include working alongside me, members and the rest of the senior leadership team to shape the future of Cornwall through our responsibilities of being a Strategic Authority. You will be joining a close, collaborative group of four Strategic Directors and a Chief Operating Officer, all of whom bring real energy and ambition to their work. We want you to be a full part of that team, with a strong voice around the table.

We are looking for someone who is ambitious for our children and families, and ambitious for Cornwall. Someone who understands what outstanding services look like and has the confidence to lead people towards that goal. Someone who is thoughtful about resources, clear about priorities and able to bring partners with them. Above all, we want someone who cares deeply about children and families and who will champion them across the whole council.

Cornwall is a place that rewards people who invest in it. Because our communities are so strong and so distinctive, you really do need to be close enough to work here regularly and be part of the place. The relationships you build will shape your success.

If you feel a connection to what you've read, if you want to be part of a council that puts children and families first and if you are excited by the chance to make a difference in a place with real heart, I would be delighted to hear from you.

Thank you again for your interest.

Kate Kennally
Chief Executive,
Cornwall Council



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We are looking for someone who is ambitious for our children and families, and ambitious for Cornwall

About us

Cornwall is blessed with world-class natural beauty matched by leading edge innovation and limitless ambition.

We see Cornwall as the UK's fifth nation, proud of our Celtic heritage, shaped by our pioneering history and focused on a bright future for one and all. Cornwall is a thriving cultural destination, home to globally renowned natural and built attractions, a vibrant food scene, growing university sector, and a rich arts offer. Cornwall is also a place that is fast becoming key to the sustainability of the UK economy, with cutting edge technologies being developed across a range of sectors, including renewable energy, critical minerals, defence, agri-food and space.

We want to stimulate **'good growth'** and unlock the potential of everyone in Cornwall - even future residents that aren't even born yet. That is why one of our six Cornwall Council priorities is to create a caring place for families where children build a bright future, with lifelong opportunities that stretch beyond their postcode. Our whole **workforce of c5,800** is one of the most passionate you'll find anywhere, upholding our values and focused every day on doing their best for the people of Cornwall by being bold and empowering to create sustainable change together.

What makes us different?

A strong and mature organisation

We are an award-winning council with a clear track record of delivery and are consistently in-tune with residents and businesses. Our members and employees are proud to work for Cornwall, driving commitment and fuelling ambition for the place in which we live.

An outstanding natural environment

Over 1,000 miles of coastline, beautiful beaches, and sweeping moorland, much of it protected as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, making Cornwall one of the most scenic places in the UK to live and work.

Exceptional connectivity

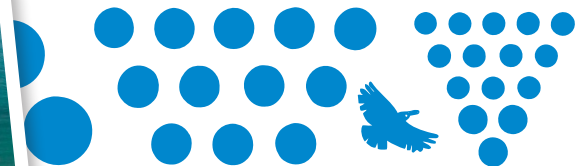
Cornwall is the landing point for 22 of the world's fastest transatlantic fibre optic cables, and Cornwall Airport Newquay (owned by the Council) is the fastest-growing regional airport in the UK, connecting over 400,000 passengers a year.

A strong, devolved voice

As the first rural authority to agree a Devolution Deal with Government, Cornwall Council has real powers over transport, energy, health, social care and heritage, giving Cornwall genuine influence over its own future.

A safe, welcoming place to live and work

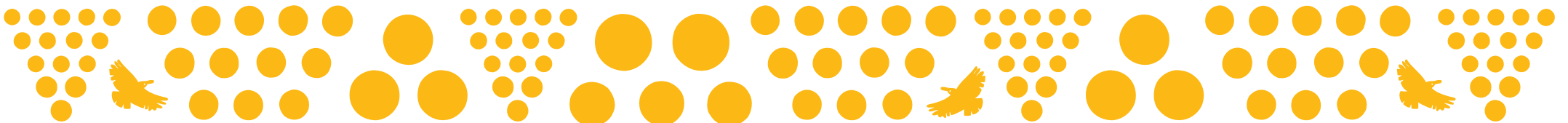
With crime rates among the lowest in the UK, Children's services rated Good by Ofsted and 13 higher education campuses across the county, Cornwall is a brilliant place for families and people of all ages.



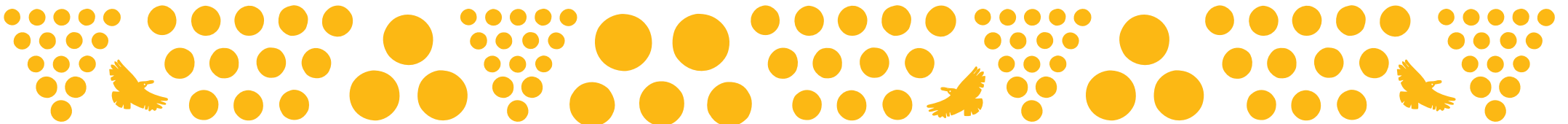
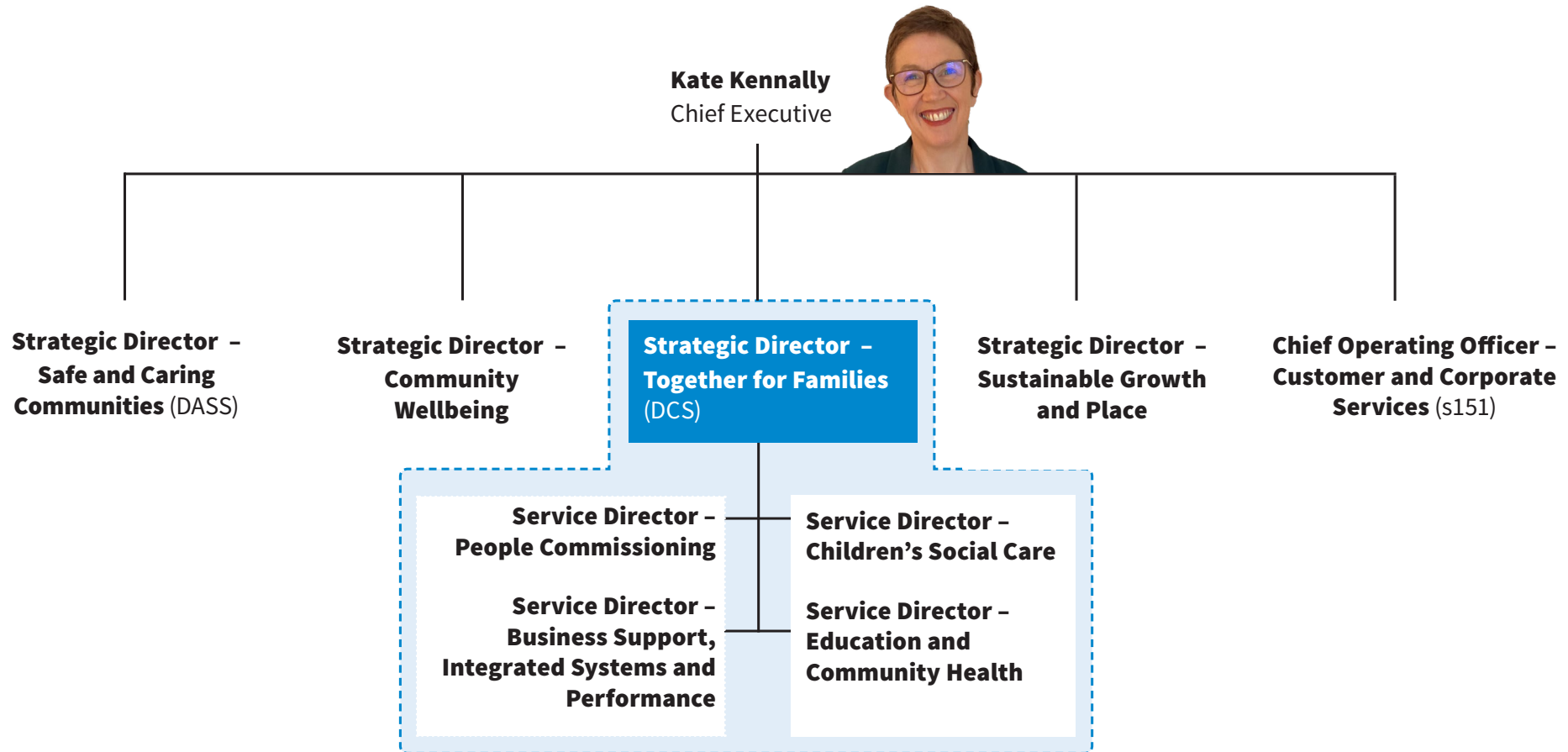
Team Cornwall

We are respected at a regional and national level for our innovation, best practice and championing sector-led improvement. Our latest peer challenge highlighted a range of strengths in our approach:

- **Our strong sense of place**, with a proud identity and heritage, underpins a shared long-term ambition for the area.
- **The calibre, commitment and passion of our elected members and officers** results in a highly effective organisation with loyal and experienced staff.
- **A constructive culture** across the organisation is the result of conscious endeavour and insightful leadership. This is supported by open and accessible leaders, extensive staff engagement mechanisms, strong development opportunities and well-embedded organisational values and principles.
- **Excellent and mature partnerships**, with genuinely shared ambitions, joint endeavour and ‘buy-in’ at both the strategic and operational level.
- **A strong track record with Government**, reflected in the intention to explore designating the council as a Single Foundation Strategic Authority, which would be a unique hybrid arrangement.



Senior Leadership structure



Role profile

Staffing and Budgets

Responsible for a Directorate of **1,500+ employees**
 Net Staffing Budget: **£60m+**

Operating Budget: **c.£180m**
 Capital Programme Budget: **£147m**

Purpose

- To be part of a Corporate Director Team (CDT) of six, which comprises the Chief Executive, the Chief Operating Officer and four Strategic Directors to deliver the Council’s business plan.
- To support the Chief Executive and Members in developing and delivering the Council’s strategic agenda and influencing policy and practice.
- To work together effectively with the senior leadership team, Members and statutory partners to deliver the Council’s strategy and promote a Team Cornwall approach.
- To incorporate the statutory function of the Director of Children’s Services and to be the lead director for developing educational and social care partnerships which ensures that children in Cornwall are protected from harm and have the opportunity to have a healthy, enjoyable and inspiring childhood.
- To have overall responsibility for ensuring that the needs of children are addressed across the Council through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- To make a significant contribution to public sector transformation as it relates to people services.

Financial accountability

- Accountable for revenue operational and commissioning budgets of c.£180m

Leadership capabilities

Systems leader and navigator

- To be a visible place leader within Cornwall, as a Chief Officer of the Council.
- Responsible for overseeing the development of strategies and service delivery strategies that consider new opportunities for working with communities and partners to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Responsible for providing strategic check and challenge where services are identified as not commissioning in an outcome-focused way and take action to ensure that resources are deployed to meet statutory needs within available resources.
- To work collaboratively with SW Peninsula colleagues to support sector led improvement; build resilience in service delivery, commissioning and safeguarding.

Political leadership and financial control

- As a Chief Officer of the Council to work with the Chief Executive to translate political ambitions into implementable service delivery plans.
- Responsible for providing effective policy advice, information and support to enable the Portfolio Holder to discharge the responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children’s Services.
- Responsible for ensuring the Directorate delivers the political ambitions and desired outcomes set by cabinet and relevant portfolio holders.
- Responsible for ensuring that the council as a corporate body has a clear understanding of its responsibilities as Corporate Parent and can demonstrate how these are being effectively discharged.
- Responsible for ensuring appropriate financial controls and value for money delivery within the Directorate and reporting this back.
- Responsible for providing Directorate contributions to the business plan for Cornwall and embedding a commissioning / commercial mindset in directorate practices.
- Responsible for ensuring that all grant monies received by the Government for the delivery of children’s responsibilities are spent in line with grant conditions.

Co-production and community experience

- Responsible for ensuring that service priorities and how they're delivered are truly co-produced and owned by the people of Cornwall.
- Responsible for ensuring that the Directorate drives to continually improve satisfaction and outstanding experience for the people and communities of Cornwall.

Developing the future workforce

- Responsible for the skills development of staff across the Directorate, identifying areas where there are further opportunities for development.
- Responsible for identifying and supporting the development of talent within Together for Families as part of the Council's approach to succession planning.
- Responsible for ensuring that the directorate has the right workforce strategy in place to ensure the right people are in the right place, with the right skills to deliver services for the people of Cornwall.
- Responsible for ensuring that the specific risks and opportunities facing the wider children's workforce are understood across key partnerships and strategies developed to ensure service sustainability.

Leading change, learning and innovation

- Responsible for providing the Directorate application of the strategic vision for change.
- Responsible for working across the Directorate to embed cultural change and the transition towards the 'team Cornwall' approach.
- Responsible for supporting the Directorate to reflect honestly on practice and innovate methods and approaches in safe forums.
- Responsible for influencing change and ensuring a culture of innovation and continuous improvement and evaluation is embedded across the Directorate.
- Responsible for setting the ambition for the directorate and driving business transformation programmes to ensure delivery in line with the Council business and financial plan and wider Council transformation strategies.
- Responsible for delivering two-way accountability through effective employee engagement practices across the Directorate.

Place-based leadership

- Responsible for acting as a strategic convenor, building relationships with key leaders of organisations working to support the people of Cornwall and deliver the 2050 Cornwall Plan.
- Responsible for setting the directorate vision for how services work in new ways in localities and communities.
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Inclusion and diversity

- Responsible for ensuring that unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation is challenged and action taken to ensure that Cornwall and the local authority is actively promoting inclusion and equity across Cornwall's diverse communities.
- Responsible for setting the vision for an inclusive working environment within the Directorate where everyone is able to be themselves in-line with the Council's values and behavioral framework.

Performance, quality and standards

- Responsible as a Chief Officer of the Council for the Council's overall performance and delivery of the Council's business and financial plan
- Responsible for Directorate performance and addressing service underperformance through building of a strong performance and assurance culture.
- Responsible for ensuring Directorate compliance to regulatory and statutory guidance.
- Responsible for ensuring that Directorate teams follow Council policies and standards in relation to safeguarding and those at risk.
- Responsible for ensuring Directorate compliance to health and safety standards
- Responsible for considering and implementing in line with Council policy, directorate opportunities to reduce the carbon footprint of staff and suppliers.

Role specific accountabilities

- To ensure that the Council and partners work in ways which promotes children’s well-being, enables them to achieve and protects them from harm.

- To line manage the Service Director – Children and Family Services; Service Director – Health, Education and Early Years; Service Director – People Commissioning; Service Director – Business Support, Integrated Systems and Performance.

- To be the Council’s Senior Responsible Officer for the Together for Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- To lead and manage SEND, Education & Early Years, Children’s Community Health Services, Children’s Social Care Services, post 16 destinations and People Commissioning

- To maintain an effective working relationship with the Department for Education and Ofsted, to influence the development of policy for the benefit of children and which provides assurance on the quality of services being provided in Cornwall

- To provide advice and support to enable the Chief Executive to effectively discharge the responsibility of Lead Safeguarding Partner under Working Together statutory guidance and provide assurance that the safeguarding arrangements for children and young people are effective.

- Work to ensure Cornwall’s devolution ambitions and settlement improve the life chances of children and young people in Cornwall



- To produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in conjunction with the statutory directors of adult social care and public health which informs the Health and Wellbeing strategy and commissioning plans of the authority.

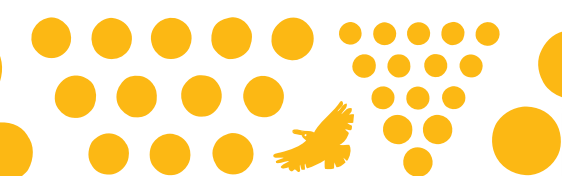
- To be an effective and active member of the Cornwall Health and Wellbeing Board ensuring that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities are embedded across the Council and partner organisations.

- To work with the Strategic Director for Sustainable Growth and Place and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Economic Forum to ensure that young people have the right skills to succeed and prosper into the future in line with the Cornwall Plan.

- To provide strategic leadership to ensure that children’s services positively supports the values and objectives of Cornwall Council, delivering on net carbon zero, promoting prevention, early intervention and resilience to improve outcomes for local people, by promoting health, wellbeing and independence and reducing dependency on public services.

- To ensure that there are arrangements in place across the Council to hear the Voice of the Child to inform the Council’s responsibilities under our Public Sector Equality Duty and the authority’s duties under the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child.

- To be the Council’s Senior Responsible Officer for the Together for Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



Competencies

We use the following criteria to assess suitability for the role.

Connect better

I connect better so that we communicate in ways everyone understands and listen closely to what matters most to residents, partners, and colleagues.

Work alongside elected members, colleagues, partners and our communities:

- I build strong relationships with all our key stakeholders and partners outside the Council, and I stay connected with our communities.

Make our communications clear and accessible:

- I change how I communicate to suit the people I'm talking to, make sure I really listen and understand, and encourage everyone to share their views.

Think bigger

I think bigger so that we're ready to meet future challenges by working with others to solve complex problems.

Understand how what we do connects with the system and environment we work in:

- I understand how my work connects with what others are doing - both inside and outside the Council - so we can make the biggest impact for our local area and communities.

Build and deliver ambitious plans with our communities:

- I get involved in finding new and better ways for us to work together, so we can create strong solutions that can handle the complex and changing world we work in.

Maximise resources

I maximise resources so that we can increase efficiency and reduce waste and always seek to improve.

Make the most of limited resources:

- I make the most of our resources by finding new ways to secure and use them. I work with others to make best use of data and digital tools, our people and our finances.

Always doing our best:

- I take pride in doing a good job and am open to learning. I keep building my skills and knowledge so that I can help deliver the services our residents need - now and in the future.

Deliver results

I deliver results so that we fulfil our promises to our communities.

Play my part in achieving our shared goals:

- I help shape and deliver plans that prepare our communities for the future. I consider things we can't control—like changes in the environment or the economy—and how they might affect people locally.

Take responsibility:

- I co-create clear goals and take responsibility for delivering high quality work quickly. If things aren't going to plan, I look for solutions.

Belonging and inclusion

I champion belonging and inclusion so that we can create a fairer, more inclusive Cornwall.

Creating a culture where we can all thrive:

- I make time for my wellbeing so I can do my job well and support others to do the same.
- I work with colleagues, partners, and residents in ways that help them feel supported and confident that their views are valued.

Building inclusive and respectful relationships:

- I seek and consider different points of view.
- I build relationships based on trust, respect and compassion.

Salary and benefits

Salary: £135,400 - £171,760



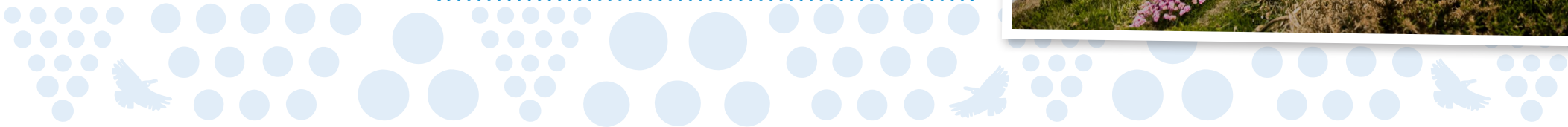
Working at Cornwall Council

Cornwall Council’s ambition is to be an employer of choice, a high performing Council and a learning organisation.

We commit to providing a reward and benefits package to attract, motivate and reward our employees. We offer a range of flexible working options to our staff. This helps provide our employees with a greater work/life balance. Whilst still ensuring that service needs are met.

Our core employee rewards and benefits include:

- a competitive salary.
- a defined benefit pension scheme, based on your career average earnings. This includes the option for extra voluntary contributions
- a generous annual leave entitlement with the potential to purchase additional leave.
- A national award-winning employee health and wellbeing programme
- Employee benefits scheme giving employees access to a wide range of discounts to local and national goods and services. Automatic enrolment into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).
- Relocation package.



How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please go to the [Starfish Search website here](#) and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Contact Information

For a confidential discussion about the role please contact Tim Farr on **07756 293292** or tim.farr@starfishsearch.com

Key dates

Application deadline	Sunday 3 May 2026
Longlisting Panel	6 May 2026
Technical Interviews (Teams)	13 May 2026
Shortlisting Panel	18 May 2026
1-1s with Chief Executive and Psychometric Testing	w/c 25 May 2026
Final Panel	3 June 2026





If you would like this information in another format or language please contact us:

Cornwall Council, County Hall,
Treyew Road, Truro TR1 3AY

Email: customerservices@cornwall.gov.uk

www.cornwall.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 1234 100

 **Cornwall recycles**
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