

Cornwall Council report

Cllr Dick Cole

Time period: 26th October – 30th November 2024

1.0 Council and other meetings

Over the last five weeks, physical meetings at Cornwall Council were Full Council (2), Cabinet, Constitution and Governance Committee, Economic Growth and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee. There was also a meeting of councillors from the China Clay Area via Teams and a briefing about revisions to the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Housing. Other physical meetings have including St Dennis Parish Council and St Enoder Parish Council (2), the St Dennis and Nanpean Community Trust (incinerator fund), plus the committees of Fraddon Village Hall and Indian Queens Band.

In addition, I have had informal meetings with a number of individuals.

2.0 Full Council meeting

There were two Full Council meetings in November. The first one (7th November) was an "extraordinary" one with a single item on the agenda – a vote of no-confidence in the council leader Linda Taylor. It was all so unedifying and completely pointless. The opposition councillors who tabled the motion had little chance of success, as the Conservative administration had enough councillors to defeat the proposition. I do wonder to what extent the decision of the Conservatives, four years ago, to table a no-confidence vote in the previous leader of Cornwall Council led directly to this more recent vote.

The second one (26th November) included a motion relating to inheritance tax on farms. It was carried overwhelmingly. There were also numerous sensible and well-regarded contributions, but it deteriorated at times with some councillors using the opportunity to "play politics," and there were certainly plenty of insults flying around the chamber.

3.0 Homechoice

The revised approach to the Homechoice system (for the allocation of publicly-owned rental properties) is due to commence in February. It is my understanding that some changes to the policy have been modified since they were agreed by Cabinet. I will report in more detail once I have seen the finalised policy document.

Most importantly for St Dennis and St Enoder, I viewed a final draft of local lettings plans, which will prioritise lettings for local people in the two parishes. These will hopefully be signed within the next couple of months.

4.0 UK Parliament Week

On 21st November, I helped with an event for UK Parliament Week in the council offices. Some thirty pupils from eight primary schools from the Aspire Academy

took part. More children were expected but a number of schools did not make it because of the snow. Others politicians involved included MPs Noah Law and Jayne Kirkham, and councillors James Mustoe and Thalia Marrington. It was extremely positive and enjoyable.

5.0 Event with Noah Law MP

The member of parliament for St Austell and Newquay recently held three meetings about his commitment to support jobs and prosperity in his constituency. I was pleased to attend the meeting in Clay Country, which was held at ClayTAWC.

6.0 "Report it"

Over the last month, I have reported a number of local issues of concern to residents. If you spot any problems, you can also report it through Cornwall Council's website at: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/report-something/>

ST DENNIS PARISH

5.0 Proposed solar farm near Trerice

Since the public consultation into a proposed solar farm at Trerice, I have been informed that the applicants intent to change the name of the project from Treviscoe to Trerice.

6.0 Traffic matters

On 14th November, I had another site visit with the local Highway Manager (Cormac). This was to discuss the siting of "Welcome to St Dennis Parish" signs, as well as potential locations for name-signs for local hamlets. I hope to have a worked-up project to take forward with the Parish Council in early 2025.

7.0 Hall Road play area

Last month, I was pleased to report that Cornwall Council is working up a project to look at the "devolution" of small play areas and green spaces to Parish Councils throughout Clay Country.

I brought this up with St Dennis Parish Council and I am delighted that they have taken the decision to seek ownership of the play area at Hall Road. This will allow us to replace the present equipment with something fit for the present day. It will hopefully be paid for through the incinerator fund.

There will be a site meeting with Cornwall Council about this on 13th December.

ST ENODER PARISH

8.0 Thomas Playing Field

The refurbishment of the play equipment has been ongoing. The time it has taken has been extremely frustrating, but I have been promised that the works will be completed in the first week of December. Fingers crossed.

9.0 Planning matters

Listed below are some updates on planning applications in St Enoder Parish.

9.1 Burthy Solar farm [PA23/01893]

The Parish Clerk and I have received a final draft of the legal agreement relating to the community fund associated with the recently-consented Burthy Solar Farm near Fraddon. The Parish Council will be paid £17,000 per annum for the next 40 years to invest in the community infrastructure of our Parish.

We have confirmed it is acceptable and it will be signed in the very near-future.

9.2 Proposed solar farm at Trelion [PA24/05312]

I have previously reported that a planning application for a 49.9mw solar farm has been submitted in St Stephen Parish. There was uncertainty about the route of the cabling that, if the application was successful, would link the development to the Indian Queens Power Station. One option was along public roads, extending from Scarcewater past Seaview Terrace, through Fraddon and Indian Queens, and then past Gaverigan.

Further information has been submitted which now shows their preferred route to be no longer be along roads, except in the Gaverigan area, but through adjacent fields or clay industry land. I will be studying the route in some detail soon, as I think it might impact on footpaths maintained by St Enoder Parish Council.

9.3 Unit 2, Indian Queens Industrial Estate (PA24/07158)

Further to my report from last month about the retrospective application for a door opening into the rear of the industrial unit and related issues (ie. problems with landscaping and changes to the consented scheme), I can report that I had a meeting planning officers on 19th November to discuss the scheme. They are going back to the applicant to raise concerns.

10.0 Speed visor poles

Residents may have noticed that a number of poles to host the Parish Council's mobile speed visors have been erected around the Parish.

11.0 Small play areas and green spaces

Last month, I was pleased to report that Cornwall Council is working up a project to look at the “devolution” of small play areas and green spaces to Parish Council throughout Clay Country. There will be a site meeting with Cornwall Council about this on 13th December and the areas under discussion include a number of small play areas / green spaces [Clodan Mews, Hanover Park, Kingsley Court, Lindsay Fields, Penhale Gardens and St James View].

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL FAMILIES

12.0 Advice

In addition, I have assisted numerous households and individuals with guidance and advice on a range of topics.