

# **Cornwall Council report**

## **CLLr Dick Cole**

Time period: 23rd November 2013 – 24th January 2014

### **1. Council meetings**

I have attended a range of meetings over the last two months. These included: Full Council (2); Central Area Committee; China Clay Area Network; Environment, Heritage and Planning Portfolio Advisory Committee (PAC) (and three associated pre-agenda briefings/meetings); Homes and Communities PAC; Planning and Development Improvement Group (informal); Strategic Planning Committee; and the Transport and Waste PAC (informal).

### **2. Other meetings**

I also attended six meetings about the future of LEADER and related funding in Cornwall in the period 2015-2020. This included a meeting with the Chairman of the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Community-led Local Development working group (CLLD) which I continue to chair.

Local meetings attended included Indian Queens Victory Hall Committee, Indian Queens Pit Association, and the Governors of Summercourt Academy.

### **3. Flooding problems; December 2013 and January 2014**

In recent weeks, flooding incidents across Cornwall have hit the headlines once again. This has included significant coastal flooding and associated damage – which has been estimated at over £2 million.

There were also a number of incidents with flood water within St Enoher Parish during the recent Christmas and New Year period. This included some internal flooding at properties in Blue Anchor, Fraddon; significant water run-off from fields associated with Polmenna Farm, which flooded a garage in Fraddon; significant water run-off from fields near Wartha Mews, Fraddon; significant external flooding around two properties at St Dennis Junction, while rising water would have flooded two properties in Chapel Town, Summercourt, if the residents had not secured a number of pumps to keep remove the water from around their homes.

I visited some of the properties during the actual incidents on 23rd December 2013 and 1st January 2014, and I have already produced a report about what happened. This report has been sent to Cornwall Council and I have archived a copy with the Parish Council.

It should be noted that the properties affected had been previously hit by incidents in December 2012 and March 2013, and works were already planned to investigate measures to protect them against further flooding.

#### **4. Flooding problems; St Dennis Junction**

In December 2012, two properties at Dennis Junction on the old A30 – about one mile from the crossroads at Indian Queens – were flooded. The water came from the road ditches and associated pipes, which simply could not cope with the amount of rainfall.

This was included within the detailed report that I produced last year and, as a consequence, improvements were made to the road ditches and pipework in this area in Mid January in order to prevent the future flooding of two properties.

#### **5. Flooding problems; Property Level Protection (PLP)**

Following my production of the report on the flooding incidents in St Ender Parish in November/December 2012 and March 2013, I have continued to make representations on behalf of local residents.

The unitary authority has secured funding for a new Property Level Protection (PLP) scheme across Cornwall. And I am pleased to be able to report that – because of the detail in my report – about eight properties in Fraddon and Summercourt will be included. Surveyors will soon be visiting these properties to explore what could be done to safeguard them against flooding in the future.

#### **6. Trevarren**

Since November 2013, I have made further representations on behalf of the residents of Trevarren, who remain concerned about the surcharge of waste from the foul water onto the highway at Trevarren. I can confirm that this is an ongoing problem and, over the Christmas period, there have been a number of further episodes on seepage onto the highway.

I have recently received assurances from South West Water, via Steve Rosser their Waste Water Strategic Planning Manager, that they are prioritising Trevarren as they develop a programme for dealing with external flooding across Cornwall. He wrote:

“I can confirm that SWW submitted our PR14 business plan for the period 2015-20 to Ofwat for scrutiny in December 2013, this included funding to resolve four times as many external only flooding problems as was the case in our 2010-15 plan. Previously, our primary objective has been to resolve internal flood risk, however, we recognise that external flooding such as is being experienced at Trevarren can be very unpleasant for our customers and we have therefore included an enhanced programme of works to address serious external problems. Thanks to your recent communications with local residents we now have a full record of flood history at Trevarren which will assist in maximising available funding to find a resolution to this longstanding problem.

“Unfortunately, a final decision on full acceptance of our business plan is not due until next winter. However, as these works also have strong support from our Operations team under Mike Galligan we will be commencing re-evaluation of potential solutions early in financial year 2014-15 and aim to be provide an update on progress in the summer. Subject to Ofwat approval and agreement of a suitable solution we have targeted improvement works to commence early in the 2015-17 period to coincide with other planned improvements in the St Columb area.”

## **7. Clay Country mobile library / one-stop-shop**

Cornwall Council continues to be in an extremely difficult financial position, because of massive reductions in funding from central government and rising costs. Members of the Parish Council will already be aware that it has agreed to make cuts of £44 million from its budget for the next financial year.

I am extremely saddened that the unitary authority has now announced, amongst other things, that – in order to keep to its reduced budget – it is about to start a consultation on plans to reduce opening hours at local libraries and one-stop-shops, and a further 12-week consultation on plans to cease all mobile library and mobile one stop shop services.

I am extremely disappointed that the Clay Country mobile library / one-stop-shop is under threat and I will report back when I have more information about the consultation.

## **8. Kelliars**

As members will recall, there is one outstanding issue that must be dealt with in relation the Kelliars, before the lease agreement between Cornwall Council and St Enoder Parish Council can be finalised. This relates to obligations associated with the closed landfill sites in the area.

I recently met with Jonny Alford from Cornwall Council’s property team. He has informed me that Cornwall Council are continue to monitor the landfill areas with a view to reporting their findings to the Environment Agency in the late spring. Cornwall Council believes that if the monitoring shows low level of activity, it is anticipated that the landfill licence will be surrendered and there will be no lasting liability to manage the site as a closed landfill.

Mr Alford has suggested that, at this point, it might be sensible to complete the agreed lease and for St Enoder Parish Council to become responsible for the management and improvement of the site.

Mr Alford has also noted that the Environment Agency could remain concerned about the landfill areas after the monitoring period and decline to surrender the licence. If this happened, it has been suggested that Cornwall Council and the Parish Council could draft additional clauses to

the lease (reflecting the fact that the unitary authority would retain the liability for the landfill licence, monitoring and management) before it is signed.

## **9. Improvements at Indian Queens Primary School**

As noted in my last report, discussions are ongoing between Cornwall Council and Indian Queens Primary School about the funding package for the construction of new classrooms, so that all children in the Indian Queens area can be guaranteed a place at the School.

It is hoped that detailed plans will be developed in the coming weeks and then publicised to the local community.

## **10. Stopping up of Highway at New Road, Penhale**

On 28th November 2013, I attended the Inquiry into the proposed stopping up of the highway at New Road, sought by Kingsley Village in order to allow them to construct the approved extension to Kingsley Village and a new car parking area.

In previous months, I had attempted to assist the two main parties (Kingsley Developers and Julian and Son) to come to a compromise based around a new access road to Mr Julian's premises. I did my best to be a go-between, though I was ultimately unsuccessful. For that reason, I did not make any formal representations to the Inquiry.

Cllr Michael Bunyan attended the Inquiry on behalf of St Enoder Parish Council. At the beginning of the day's proceedings, he explained that the views of Parish Council had already been lodged in writing. This was acknowledged and Cllr Bunyan offered to answer any questions if there was a need for further clarity or extra information. No questions were forthcoming.

The stopping up order has been granted and is covered elsewhere on the agenda of this meeting.

## **11. Planning; proposed turbine at Beacon Road, Summercourt PA12/02362**

Members of the Parish Council will be aware that the appeal into the above planning application has been dismissed. I think it is important to note that Cornwall Council only refused the original application because of concerns about noise.

However, in the detailed representation that I produced on behalf of the Parish Council, we also raised concerns including the adverse impact on the nearest residents, as well as impact on landscape and the setting of the Grade 1 Listed church at St Enoder. All these extra concerns were acknowledged by the Inspector as adverse impacts, which were added to his reasons not to allow the appeal. It certainly shows that it is worthwhile to make detailed representations on contentious planning applications.

## **12. Planning; proposed turbine at Nancolleth PA13/07654**

I attended the Central Planning Committee on 18th December to speak on the above application, which the Parish Council has commented on as an adjoining Parish after we had been contacted by parishioners.

Because no other members of the Parish Council were available to attend, I read out a statement – which had been prepared by Cllr Jenny Pickles – and, as divisional member, added some further thoughts about how the landscapes of Mid Cornwall were receiving less protection than other parts of Cornwall.

The application was turned unanimously by Cornwall Council, though I understand that the applicants have already lodged an appeal against the decision.

## **13. Planning; proposed traveller site at Toldish PA13/02083**

As requested previously by the Parish Council, I have produced a detailed representation for the planning appeal objecting to the above proposal. It has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. I understand that there will be a hearing into the proposal on 1st April.

## **14. Planning; 2.67 hectare solar farm at Glebe Farm, Summercourt PA12/05890**

Members of the Parish Council will be aware that the above application was approved on the 31st October and that, when it went through Strategic Planning Committee, it was agreed that a unilateral undertaking be signed to pay £5,500 to St Enoder Parish Council as a one-off community payment.

Late last year, I was disappointed to find out that the unilateral undertaking had not been produced. I also found out that the developers had changed, following the granting of the planning consent. I have repeatedly followed up the issue of the community payment with legal staff at the Council, as well as the development firm. In November, I received assurances that the community payment would still be honoured and I am pleased to be able to report that St Enoder Parish Council received a payment of £5,500 earlier this month.

## **15. Youth Club**

The initial five sessions of the Youth Club took place in November and December and liaised with the two youth workers, Daniel James and Laura Kinsley-Potter, on a weekly basis. I have also been in contact with Carol Fitzpatrick of the Cornwall Youth Service and she is willing for the provision to continue, but she would like to see more children attending the Club.

The Club reconvened on Wednesday 22nd January and I have booked all Wednesday evenings at the Methodist Church Hall in Indian Queens for the next four months.

I am pleased to be able to report that the committee of the Indian Queens Half Marathon has donated £100 to the Youth Club project, which I have passed on to the Clerk.

#### **16. Adoption of road at St James View, Fraddon**

I am also very pleased to be able to report that the process whereby Cornwall Council formally adopts the road and associated pavements in St James View is nearing completion.

#### **17. Environmental improvements**

In the last few months, I have continued to lobby Cornwall Council to "tidy up" certain areas within the Parish. I am pleased to be able to report that, in early December 2013, CORMAC cleared weeds from around the entrance into Heather Meadow, Fraddon, and also cleared soil slippage from a pavement in Summercourt.

#### **18. Site visit to incinerator**

On the 12th January, I attended a site visit to the site of the waste incinerator between St Dennis and Treviscoe. As someone who opposed the incinerator for a decade, it was not a nice experience to see the full extent of the new haul road and the wide-ranging works being carried out on site.

#### **19. Indian Queens Victory Hall**

The Indian Queens Victory Hall Committee has completed its latest improvements (largely funded by the Clay Country Local Action Group) which included the purchase of 119 new chairs and nine tables – thanks to the short-term cashflow loan from the Parish Council. The Committee has received all the grant from the LAG and has been able to repay the loan to the Parish Council. I have given the cheque to the Clerk.

#### **20. Full Council**

At the last meeting of Cornwall Council, I was one of the signatories to a motion which sought fair funding for Cornwall and agreed to make further representations to central government. The motion won near-unanimous support.

Along with many members from mid Cornwall, I supported a motion to review Cornwall's approach to waste. It was however heavily defeated by members who had no wish to revisit any aspects of the Integrated Waste Management Contract.

Councillors also voted to consult on a new draft of the Cornwall Local Plan with a housing target of 47,500 for the period 2010-2030. Sadly, the debate was less about what is right for Cornwall, and more about what target we could get past central government. For more information on this debate members could visit my blog at <http://mebyonkernow.blogspot.co.uk/>

## **21. Newsletter**

I have just printed my six-monthly newsletter and this is presently being delivered around the Parish. It promotes the new Youth Club, and also seeks information about local people who served and died in the First World War for the book I am presently writing.

## **22. Inquiries**

Throughout the last two months, I have also helped numerous people with advice and guidance. Issues included housing problems, planning matters, various enforcement matters, parking issues, flytipping, etc.