

Cornwall Council report

Cllr Dick Cole

Time period: 22nd March – 21st April 2014

1. Council meetings

I have attended a range of meetings over the last month. These included: Full Council; Strategic Planning Committee; Central Planning Committee; Devolution and Localism Portfolio Advisory Committee; Environment, Heritage and Planning PAC (plus two associated pre-agenda briefings/meetings); and an informal meeting of the Homes and Communities PAC.

2. Other meetings

I also attended meetings of (i) the Clay Area Training and Work Centre at St Dennis, (ii) the "CERC" Liaison Committee (also attended by Cllr Austin), and (iii) the St Piran Trust which is working to re-excavate St Piran's Oratory from within the towans near Perranporth.

3. St Enoder Youth Club building

I am delighted that the Lottery (*Awards for All* programme) has confirmed the grant application for £10,000, that I submitted on behalf of St Enoder Parish Council, has been successful. We can now all look forward to the Youth Club building becoming a reality within the next three to four months.

4. £500,000 for local projects

Following my success with the above *Awards for All* grant, I am very pleased to be able to report that the total amount I have raised for projects within St Enoder Parish has now passed £500,000.

5. 1st St Enoder Scout Group

I have helped the 1st St Enoder Scout Group with a successful grant application for £1,000 from the China Clay Area Community Fund.

6. Consultation into mobile library services

Cornwall's 12-week consultation on the cessation of all mobile library and mobile one stop shop services, including the loss of the Clay Bus, is soon coming to its end (30th April). I am working with Martin Eddy, Network Manager, on a response from the China Clay Area Network which will be discussed at a meeting on Thursday (24th April).

I have also produced a draft response to the consultation from the Parish Council, which I hope can be agreed at this week's meeting.

7. Letter from China Clay Area Network Meeting

As noted in my last monthly report, I recently drafted a letter in association with the Network Manager of the China Clay Area, on behalf of the China Clay Area Network (24th February). It was sent to the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and the members of the Cabinet. A reasonably lengthy letter, it set out local concerns that the five parishes within Clay Country do not receive their "fair share" of Cornwall Council expenditure.

A written response has been received from the Leader of Cornwall Council and will be considered at a meeting of the China Clay Area Network on Thursday (24th April). I am not pleased with the content of Mr Pollard's letter, which did not really address the issues we had raised and was as follows:

Dear Dick

Delivery of Council Services in the China Clay Area

Thank you for your letter of 7 March concerning the delivery of local services in the China Clay community network area.

As you will be aware the future of service provision across Cornwall's many different settlement types is something I am keen to address in the development of the Council Strategy. As you know to support this the Chief Executive and I have held nine local meetings with members throughout March to start a discussion that will lead to adoption of a new four year Council Strategy later in the year.

The first step on the journey is to identify and discuss the challenges facing Cornwall. Dispersed settlement patterns is clearly one of these challenges and we may need to identify how these challenges might be addressed by maximising the many opportunities that we currently have such as the next tranche of European funding. There is also a stronger desire now than there has ever been before by the public sector to join together to work more effectively.

I have also shared with members the Cabinet's initial thoughts on identifying a set of "values" that guide our behaviours and "principles" that inform our decision-making – one of which is having "clear priorities based on understanding and evidence." With this in mind, and with the Devolution and Localism PAC agreeing the proposed way forward for the Community Networks, I hope that members and Parish Council within the China Clay Community Network building on their existing strong base will be able to determine local priorities based on local evidence that can help inform and complement the Council Strategy.

With the 2014/15 budget agreed and being delivered, I am anxious to avoid any further "salami slicing" and we focus our efforts on taking a more holistic approach to planning for Cornwall's future than has happened previously.

Yours sincerely

John Pollard
Leader of the Council

8. Planning hearing into two traveller pitches at Toldish

On 1st April, I attended the planning hearing into the proposal for two traveller pitches near Toldish on the outskirts of Indian Queens. It was held in the St Austell One Stop Shop.

The original proposal was turned down by the Central Planning Committee of Cornwall Council on June 10th 2013, because: "The proposed use of land as a traveller site would harm the rural character of the area and would provide a site poorly related to local services ..." The vote to refuse the application was taken by 14 votes to one.

At the hearing, I represented the views of St Enoder Parish Council and local residents. In particular, I argued that (i) the proposed traveller site would be in an area of countryside that should be protected from development, (ii) that there were no residential properties which front onto what is essentially a country lane and allowing this development would irrevocably change the character of this area, and (iii) that, since 2006, 43 of the 115 pitches that had been consented were within the five parishes of China Clay Area (Roche, St Dennis, St Enoder, St Stephen and Treverbyn) – 37% of the pitches consented for the whole of Cornwall, even though the population of the China Clay Area is less than 5% of that of Cornwall.

The Inspector's ruling is expected in mid to late May.

9. Repair of road bridge near Perrose and Retyn

In February, I reported that a road bridge near Perrose and Retyn had been undermined by the amount of water in the river beneath it and that it had been closed to traffic. I have been lobbying a large number of officers for the repairs to be undertaken as soon as possible, and I am pleased to be able to report that the emergency repair works commenced on Tuesday 15th April. The bridge has been seriously undermined and it is expected that the works will take about three-four weeks.

10. Pot holes on rural roads

In recent weeks, I have visited many different parts of St Enoder Parish and I have compiled a list of rural roads where, I believe, urgent repairs are needed. I have submitted the list to Cornwall Council / CORMAC and asked them to investigate what could be done. The list includes the

following lengths of road; lower stretches of Barton Lane, Fraddon, Burthy and Chytane, Narrow Lane between Penhale and St Enoder Churchtown, Resurrance and Goonabarn to the south of Summercourt, and Trevarren Village. I am also pushing for some patching on the road between Fraddon Hill and Higher Fraddon, which I had hoped would be done last year, and I will report back when I receive an update from the Highways team.

11. Penare Farm AD plant

As I reported last month, work started on the AD plant at Penare Farm in the week commencing 10th March. Because they had started work in advance of the "pre-commencement" conditions related to the project, they temporarily ceased work until the paperwork had been finished. These conditions have since been agreed and largely reflect the information that had already been contained within the original permission.

However, I raised issues about two of the conditions (i) surface water and (ii) regular engagement with the local community. In terms of surface water, this will be dealt with by attenuation tanks on the site but some water will be allowed to flow into the nearby stream through Fraddon. This has been okayed by council officers and experts at the Environment Agency, but I have been able to extract a written assurance from the developers that they would undertake further works if they contributed to any flooding problems downstream. I have also ensured that the engagement with the local community will be done in partnership with the Parish Council.

12. McDonalds at Fraddon

I also met with Gregg Fox, the new franchise-holder of the McDonalds restaurant at Fraddon. He says he is keen to be involved with the local community and I have promised to keep him informed about what is happening locally.

13. Vandalism at Indian Queens Pit

Sadly, I spent the morning of Good Friday having to repair vandalised stonework at Queens Pit, which is a Scheduled Monument and thereby protected by law. Though we are fortunate that we experience less vandalism than many other places in Cornwall, it is nonetheless disheartening when it happens.

14. Fairview Park, St Columb Road

Members of the Parish Council will be aware that the play area included within the plans for the Fairview Park estate was never constructed. I have tried to resolve the issue in the past and have spoken to some local residents recently and I have promised to make another attempt.

Possible solutions could involve the Parish Council and I would like to discuss the options at this week's meeting.

15. WW1 project

As I have reported previously, I am researching the lives of servicemen from Fraddon, Indian Queens, St Columb Road and Summercourt who were killed or died in the First World War, which I intend to publish in a book. I am considering broadening out the project, which I would like to discuss with the Parish Council at this week's meeting.

16. Inquiries

Throughout the last month, I have also helped numerous people with advice and guidance. Issues included housing concerns, planning matters, parking problems, the condition of local roads, etc.