

Cornwall Council report

Cllr Dick Cole

Time period: 16th January to 26th February 2017.

1. Council meetings

I have attended a range of formal meetings at Cornwall Council in the last month.

These included: Full Council (2), Planning Policy Advisory Committee (which stretched over two days) and an associated pre-agenda session, Housing PAC (which reviewed the Council's housing strategy), Transport PAC, Constitution and Governance Committee, Electoral Review Panel (3) and associated workshop, a meeting of members from the China Clay Area, another meeting of the China Clay Area Network and an associated briefing on the proposed link road between the A30 and St Austell, a number of briefings (4) at New County Hall, national minority working group, group leaders' meeting, a summit on the economic impacts of Brexit (held at the Royal Cornwall showground) and planning training on design.

As well as the meetings listed above, I had some informal meetings with council officers at the unitary authority, and I have attended three meetings of St Enoder Parish Council and a number of sessions relating to the St Enoder Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Other meetings

I have also attended a meeting of the Board of ClayTAWC at St Dennis, of which I am Chairman, the AGM of Indian Queens Pit (as a trustee) and the South and East Cornwall Local Action Group,

3. St Enoder Neighbourhood Plan

Along with other members of St Enoder Parish, I have been very busy with the work relating to the distribution of the second consultation document for the Neighbourhood Plan (plus response sheet and freepost envelopes). I am grateful to everyone who helped to staple the questionnaires together (particularly on the evening of 17th January) and the actual deliveries. I also attended the three consultation events held at Indian Queens Victory Hall (Tuesday 31st January), Fraddon Village Hall (Tuesday 7th February) and Summercourt New Memorial Hall (Thursday 9th February).

4. Full Council; 21st February

Cornwall Council set its budget for 2017/2018 at this meeting, which included a 3.97% increase (of which 2.0% would represent an increase in funding for adult social care). A majority of councillors supported the budget, myself included.

As in the previous debate in November, the initial calculations showed that the unitary authority would raise an additional £14 million from council tax next year but, because of ongoing cuts from central government, the Council will, overall, end up with £2.5 million less to spend on services than in the previous year. The figures presented to this most recent meeting were somewhat different because of the rural 100% business rate retention pilot and that some highway maintenance capital grants had been redefined as revenue, but the underlying budgetary problems were the same which meant that a reasonable increase in council tax was necessary.

The budget also includes the decision to freeze car parking fees for the coming twelve months from April, which followed a campaign by my MK colleague Cllr Andrew Long and independent councillor Sally Hawken.

At this meeting, councillors also agreed their final submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) in terms of the number of elected members from 2021. The proposal for 99 councillors from the Electoral Review Panel was passed by 66 votes to 13, which I had originally proposed. An alternative size of 85, proposed by the Conservatives, was rejected by a similar margin.

I am uncomfortable with the reduction in councillors, but the LGBCE had made it clear that a reduction had to be made and that the Council's initial suggested Council size of between 105 and 115 members would not be acceptable.

The Council's documentation, and that submitted by third parties, will now be analysed by the LGBCE before it publishes its decision of the Council's future size in May 2017. At this point, the focus will shift onto deciding the boundaries of the actual divisions.

5. Planning Policy Advisory Committee; 20th & 24th February

This meeting was the longest that I have ever chaired. It had a lot of business, which included an Allocations Development Plan Document (housing for the main towns), a DPD for Mineral Safeguarding, Community Infrastructure Levy, update on Environmental Growth Strategy, guidance notes on some Local Plan policies including infill & rounding off, holiday conditions, air quality and design, and more.

The meeting started at 10.00 on Monday 20th January and lasted until past 4.00, when we adjourned. The meeting was reconvened on the following Thursday, lasting from 10.00 to 1.15.

Specific matters of interest to residents of St Ender Parish included the following:

- The Allocations DPD included the key employment site at Moorland Road, Indian Queens.

- The Mineral Safeguarding DPD included the aggregate plants in Melbur and Wheal Remfrey, as well as Treliver Farm in St Columb (where testing recently took place for a tin / wolfrum mine). I also asked that the safeguarding buffer around the working area of the china clay deposits be modified to remove as many domestic properties from it as possible.
- The guidance notes on infill & rounding off and holiday conditions were discussed but deferred for more work.

6. The threat to local Police Community Support Officers

The Police and Crime Plan (2017-2020) for the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary was published in early February.

Local press reports stated that the Police intended to recruit "100 new uniformed officers, 50 civilian investigators and 30 record-takers." But the downside is that more than half of the Police Community Support Officers working across the force area will be "phased out" during the next four years.

I was particularly concerned to read a statement in the Cornish Guardian which stated that "no decision has yet been taken on which communities are likely to lose a PCSO" but that "large towns and cities are expected to see little change." I immediately queried where this would leave communities, such as ours, which do not happen to be a large town or city?

Back in August 2016, I had attended a meeting of the China Clay Network which included a presentation from the Commissioner's Strategy and Planning Manager. One of the key issues raised at the meeting was the importance of PCSOs in our area. There was a strong consensus that the local officers had been very effective in their work and had built strong working relationships with Parish Councils and other bodies. I was therefore very disappointed to see that our views had not been listened to.

I have written to Alison Hernandez and asked her to rethink her approach to PCSOs and community policing. The letter I have received back says that no decisions have been made about which communities will lose their PCSOs. However, there was no clear repudiation of the published comment about "large towns and cities."

At the most recent meeting of the China Clay Area Network (Monday 20th February), we raised further concerns with Andrew White, the Chief Executive for the Police and Crime Commissioner. There was a strong consensus in support of the PCSOs and it was unanimously agreed to write to the Chief Inspector to express our concerns.

6. Biogas plant at Higher Fraddon

On 14th February, I met with staff at Cornwall Council for an update on what is happening with the various conditions relating to the consent for the biogas plant.

Here is a summary, which I hope will form a useful update.

Condition 1 states that the dome on the secondary digester should be reduced by 3.1m and this must be completed within nine months of the date of the planning permission (which was granted on 28th September 2016).

Greener for Life are in breach of condition 4 which states that: "Within four months of the date of this permission, a detailed 'Construction Management Plan' ... shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the reduction in height of the secondary digester and other necessary construction works including surface water drainage and the commissioning phase of the anaerobic digester plant." This should have been sent in by the end of January, but this has not yet been received.

Condition 6 deals with surface water management. Information has been submitted and there have been detailed discussions with the Council's drainage officer. She requested additional information earlier this month and the discussions continue.

Condition 14 deals with traffic movements and the unitary authority has been unhappy with what has been submitted by Greener for Life. The information that has been submitted is not consistent with what they said during the previous application and appeal processes. Discussions with the Council's highway officers are ongoing.

Condition 16 covers the need for a vehicle management policy. The Council raised some concerns about the initial submission from Greener for Life and a revised scheme was received [on 14 February]. This has been referred to the Highways team for feedback.

Condition 17 meanwhile covers landscaping. The Council's landscaping team felt the proposed scheme left a lot to be desired and requested a revised scheme about two weeks ago.

Finally, condition 20 relates to the odour management plan. A revised document has been received and has been referred to the Council's Public Health and Protection team. This includes: "details of covered storage on site for all imported material for approval ... covered storage means that all waste and biocrops imported by lorry shall be stored either inside the main reception building or that the outside storage bays where the biocrops are currently stored shall be roofed and walled."

It is clear that Greener for Life have no intention of storing the "biocrops" in their main building and their latest odour management plan includes the details for the covering of the external storage area.

In addition, Greener for Life have submitted a new planning application to increase the number of "staff/other vehicle movements (Light Goods Vehicles) from 7 per week to an average of 17 staff/other vehicle

movements (Light Goods Vehicles) per week (over a 4 week monthly period) to a maximum of 24 in any given week (Monday to Sunday) in the 4 week period.”

The reference number is PA17/01086 and the information can be viewed on the Council's planning portal.

7. Pines Tip

As reported at the Parish Council's Planning Meeting on 10th January 2017, the appeal into three proposed wind turbines on Pines Tip near Fraddon has commenced. I have completed the production of a detailed representation from the Parish Council in objection to this scheme, which had been strongly opposed by local people and was unanimously turned down by the unitary authority's Strategic Planning Committee. The document ended up being 9,500 words in length.

8. Traffic matters

- Double yellow lines

As reported in my last monthly report, I wrote to the local Highway & Environment Manager from Cormac about the condition of double yellow lines. I received the following reply:

I can confirm that the faded yellow lines for St Columb Road are already on the countywide list of defects and I have asked the highway steward to inspect the bus stop markings adjacent to Victory Hall and Carworgie Way to confirm whether they still require attention. I have also asked him to confirm specifically where the double yellow lines are faded in Fraddon.

The faded markings and signs for the waiting restrictions are added to a countywide list of sites where lining and signs requires renewal. The sites are then ranked and prioritised by Cornwall Council's Civil Parking Enforcement team. Due to reducing budgets, we are unable to accommodate the renewal of all waiting restrictions that require attention across the county, therefore the sites must be prioritised accordingly. In the meantime, if we are able to include the renewal of the lining as part of any other highway work, we will endeavour to do so, which is how the double yellow lines on Chapel Road / top of The Drang, Indian Queens were renewed.

The objectives of Civil Parking Enforcement are: reducing congestion, to maximise safety and to support economic regeneration. With these objectives there are set priority routes of enforcement patrols based upon on the Council's sensitive route network and enforcement is concentrated on the following categories: the most sensitive urban towns, commuter network, extended seasonal network, local freight network and key bus corridors. These are routes that are vital for supporting and

facilitating the County's economic regeneration and for addressing mounting congestion problems. Parking Services have limited resources and have to prioritise the routes which are key to supporting the economy and communities within Cornwall. Whilst there is concentration on the priority routes, when there is contact from the public that parking contraventions are becoming an issue and causing problems on routes not usually patrolled. Parking Services will respond (whenever resources are available) and sending officers to enforce. I have forwarded your recent email to them, for consideration.

With regards to the requests for new restrictions to be added to the highway network, I have the locations mentioned on a list for consideration when a budget becomes available. I regret there are currently no funds to carry out this type of improvement work from the maintenance budget since the Councillor highway improvement funding was removed.

I have since contacted the Civil Parking Enforcement team and sent them additional information. An officer will be visiting the Parish in the near future to review the extent of the defects with the lines, particularly in St Francis Road and around the Co-op.

- **Additional funding**

In October, central government granted £2.9 million to Cornwall Council for a range of a range of resurfacing, drainage and road marking schemes.

In our area, I can confirm that these ongoing works have included:

- Resurfacing of the road near Melbur blockworks.
- Improvement of white lines (mostly around junctions) at Fraddon, Indian Queens, St Columb Road and Summercourt.
- Drainage maintenance in a number of areas including around Retyn and Trevuzza, plus Highgate Hill and Moorland Road at Indian Queens.

- **Road surfacing improvements**

In addition, I have had it confirmed that Cornwall Council is planning further improvements in a number of locations, which are time-tabled in for the 2017/2018 financial year. These include the following:

- Carnego Lane, Summercourt.
- Road to Carvynick, Summercourt.

- Road from A3058 towards Goonabarn and Trendeal.
- Approaches to Halloon roundabout, St Columb Road.
- Approaches to Highgate Roundabout, Indian Queens.
- Moorland Road, Indian Queens (around and to the east of the roadabout).
- The road through Trevarren Village.
- Watery Lane, from Blackcross.
- Trefullock Moor, Summercourt.

I have also raised concerns about a number of areas, where the road surface is showing significant wear. These include Carworgie Way, St Columb Road; Pocohontas Crescent, Indian Queens, and Toldish. The officers are continuing to monitor these areas and have confirmed in the latter two locations that they have been nominated for surface treatment but these works will not be programmed until a later date.

- HGVs along Moorland Road towards Ruthvoes

In addition, I have asked Cormac to investigate an upsurge in problems with large lorries which are mistakenly driving east along the old A30 into St Columb Parish, where they turning around and causing significant problems for local people. Enquiries are being made and I will report again when I get a further update from the local Highway & Environment Manager.

- HGVs and Barton Lane

The local Highway & Environment Manager is also investigating problems at the entrance to Barton Lane, where HGVs have damaged two properties in recent months and have also caused some congestion problems.

- Possible asset schemes

I have also requested further information about possible capital works that have been discussed in the past; namely, (i) problems with rising water on Chapel Road to the east of Queens Garage, (ii) drainage issues on the old A30 through Fraddon, and (iii) drainage works at entrance to Gaverigan Farm.

I have been told that the Cormac's design group believe they have a solution for Chapel Road / Queens Garage and will be finalising the design in the next couple of weeks.

In Fraddon, the design group has been out to the site during very heavy rain and, at the moment, have recorded the system working well, with all gullies and channels in a clear state. I have been told that the scheme is still on the programme but it is a lower priority than the other schemes being progressed. Some further investigatory work is to be carried out to access the main drainage line through this area to better understand past problems. I have requested a meeting with this team to discuss these potential works in detail.

Works at Gaverigan are to be nominated for a scheme to be worked up and to take place in 2017/18 budget.

- **Clodan Mews**

I have again raised the very poor condition of garden area in Clodan Mews, St Columb Road. The local Highway & Environment Manager is waiting to hear back from their environmental team and I will update with a further report when I hear more.

9. Traffic on access to incinerator

There have also been complaints about the number of waste lorries backing up on the road leading to the access road in the early morning. I will be attending a meeting at the incinerator to discuss these problems this coming Wednesday.

10. Indian Queens School

In my last report, I recorded how I had met with the headteacher of the School, Jane Scown, in December 2016 to discuss a number of issues and had a further meeting with the appropriate officers at Cornwall Council on 9th January 2017. This related to specific proposals in the travel plan included a new footway between the School and the Harvenna Heights housing estate, and a further path from the School through the Mowie to the Carworgie Way / Halloon Avenue estate. I am chasing Cornwall Council, but have yet to hear back in detail from this.

However, the pine trees at Ocean View have been taken down as requested by local residents who had ongoing problems with the amount of pine needles that end up in their guttering and on their gardens.

11. Kelliers

It has taken over seven years, but on 10th February 2017, the ownership of the land known as the Kelliers, near Indian Queens, was transferred from Cornwall Council to St Enoder Parish Council.

The grant of £4,950 from the unitary authority to help fund the work to improve the Kelliers as a countryside area has also been received, and I look forward to the Council taking this project forward in the coming months.

12. Post Office at Fraddon

With the redevelopment of Kingsley Village into a retail park including a Marks & Spencers, I have made regular representations about the need for a Post Office in Fraddon. The developers have reaffirmed to me that they will have a Post Office in the new complex. I am also continuing to press the present owners to maintain a Post Office (albeit as a temporary unit in a car park area) during the construction period for the new shops, as promised during the planning application stage.

I will report back more when I have further confirmation on what will be happening.

13. Inquiries

During the last month, I have also helped numerous people with advice and guidance on a range of problems which have included housing and traffic concerns.

In addition, I have received a number of calls about an increase in anti-social behaviour in parts of the Parish and I have liaised on this matter with our local PCSOs.

