

# **Cornwall Council report**

## **CLlr Dick Cole**

Time period: 22nd June – 21st July 2015

### **1. Council meetings**

I have attended a range of formal meetings over the last month. These included: Full Council (2), Cabinet, Central Sub-Area Planning Committee, Communities Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), an informal Planning PAC and two associated pre-agenda/preparatory meetings, a meeting of PAC Chairmen and key officers, Constitution and Governance Committee, Informal Planning and Development Improvement Group, Appointment of Chief Officers Panel, Group Leaders' meeting, and two briefings on the Council's "Case for Cornwall,"

In addition to the formal meetings listed above, I have had numerous meetings with council officers and others to discuss a range of issues. Some of these are referenced below.

### **2. Other meetings**

I have also attended meetings of the Indian Queens Pit Association, the Executive of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Rural Partnership, and the South & East Cornwall Local Action Group.

### **3. Penare Pig Farm, Higher Fraddon and associated AD plant**

The most recent meeting of the Higher Fraddon Community Forum took place on 8th July. The minutes of the meeting will soon be available.

I am continuing to liaise with a range of individuals about the planning applications, the ongoing concerns about traffic movements and smells, etc.

Recent developments since last month's report include the following:

(i) It has been confirmed that a contract has been signed between the pig farm and the biogas plant. It specifies that the plant will take up to 7,000 tonnes of pig slurry per annum (ie. all the material produced at the farm), but there has been a build-up of slurry at the farm over the past six months, which is excess to its immediate requirements. The farm has started to remove this backlog, which it is estimated will equate to 175 tractor movements.

(ii) Smell has been an increasing problem from both the pig farm and biogas plant. At the July Forum meeting, representatives of the pig farm stated that they were planning to change the diet of the pigs to reduce ammonia and therefore smells. They also stated that they would be willing to construct a bio-filter – or equivalent – to further reduce odour.

(iii) I have formally requested that Cornwall Council look in detail at whether the developments at Higher Fraddon would increase the possibility of flooding in Fraddon.

It is still the case that Cornwall Council intends to deal with the three applications at the same meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee.

#### **4. Planning**

I have been actively involved with a large number of ongoing applications. Listed below are a few examples, though this list is by no means exhaustive:

##### **- Land west of Kilburn, Fraddon (PA14/00882)**

In my last monthly report, I reported how I had written a detailed letter of complaint about how this development has been handled. In spite of my continuing opposition to the proposal, the outline consent has been issued. I can also report that I have yet to receive a formal response to my complaint.

##### **- Wind turbine at Goonhoskyn (PA14/10808)**

The application for a wind turbine at Goonhoskyn has been de-registered because the applicant had not followed the appropriate guidance on pre-application consultation.

##### **- Large garage / store at Linton Rise, Summercourt (PA14/10939)**

This application was considered at a meeting of Cornwall Council's Central Sub-Area Planning Committee on July 6th. The application was refused because of the size and bulk of the proposed structure, but there was considerable sympathy for the applicants. Councillors suggested that I liaise with the applicants to produce a revised application for a less substantial building.

##### **- Five dwellings near Manor Drive, Fraddon (PA15/00763)**

Last month I reported that, following objections from St Enoder Parish Council, the above application had been referred to Cornwall Council's Central Sub-Area Planning Committee. I have been informed that there has been further negotiation between the application and the Council, but I still do not consider the application to be policy compliant.

##### **- Laburnum Cottage; planning appeal (PA14/09872)**

As requested at the last meeting, I produced a statement on behalf of the Parish Council, setting out opposition to the proposal to allow unrestricted occupancy of the annexe as a separate dwelling. It has been forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate.

#### **5. Bus depot in Summercourt**

Since Western Greyhound ceased trading, I have been in regular contact with staff at the Council's "passenger unit," concerning the fact that First's service between Truro and Newquay does not stop in Summercourt. I have received numerous representations from local people on this matter

and I have brought them to the attention of the unitary authority. Summercourt Travel has slightly increased the number of trips through its 497 service (to Truro via Ladock).

I can report now that First have purchased the former Western Greyhound yard off St Austell Street and I am presently seeking a meeting with the Managing Director of the bus company to find out more about his plans for the site.

## **6. The Kelliers**

On 16th July, I met with Cornwall Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for the transfer of assets, Jeremy Rowe, and a senior member of the Property Team. I formally requested that the freehold of The Kelliers be transferred to St Enoder Parish Council, instead of being leased as previously agreed following the refusal of the unitary authority to honour the arrangement with the former Restormel Borough Council.

I can report that I received a fair hearing and I am cautiously optimistic that we could be successful.

## **7. Open space at Lindsay Fields**

I am pleased to report that, following representations I have made, Cornwall Council is liaising with the developer of Lindsay Fields in Fraddon about the adoption of the open space to the rear of the most recent development within the estate. The Council has set out a list of outstanding works that the developer will need to undertake prior to it taking responsibility for the land.

## **8. Open space at Fairview Park**

I have also been continuing to put pressure on Cornwall Council to finalise the details of how we transfer this area of land into the ownership of Cornwall Council as previously agreed.

## **9. Full Council: 14th July**

At this special meeting, the majority of members backed "The Case for Cornwall," which sought additional freedoms and flexibilities for the unitary authority.

In previous meetings, I argued for the document to be much more ambitious but I was unsuccessful. I did vote to support the document, but made it clear that it did not go far enough.

The document is a mixed bag. It seeks some devolution of political and economic powers to Cornwall, alongside greater integration of the National Health Service and social care – not a devolution as such – and included specific requests for additional funding in certain areas.

At the same meeting, councillors were informed about the "Devolution

Deal" that central government were willing to sanction. This was formally announced on 16th July and the headline announcements are that (i) Cornwall Council will have new powers to franchise bus services in the area; (ii) Cornwall Council will work with local health organisations on a plan for integrating health and social care services, (iii) Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly will be given Intermediate Body status to allow some more localised control over EU funding, and (iv) the Local Enterprise Partnership will be given "more say on boosting local skills levels" and the ability to "integrate national and local business support services."

From my perspective, it is not "democratic" devolution to give more influence to unelected bodies with limited democratic legitimacy such as the Local Enterprise Partnership, and it is also extremely disappointing that Cornwall has failed to secure any new powers over planning or housing.

## **10. Communities PAC**

I attended a meeting of the above committee on 17th July, and spoke in the debate about the proposed out-sourcing of libraries and one-stop services for the Council. Along with a number of members, I raised concerns about the proposal and it was referred back for more work to be done and alternatives explored.

## **11. Inquiries**

During the last month, I have also helped numerous people and local organisations with advice and guidance on a wide range of issues.