

# **Cornwall Council report**

## **Cllr Dick Cole**

Time period: 25th March – 26th May 2019

Listed below are some examples of the work that I have undertaken during the last two months. I did not do a monthly report in April, as the Parish Council meeting was only two weeks after I had presented my annual report to the 2019 Annual Assembly.

### **1. Council meetings and related activities**

I have attended a number of formal meetings or briefings at Cornwall Council. These include Full Council (two) plus a preparatory briefing, Economic Growth and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Neighbourhood OSC (and an associated briefing on the Fire Service), informal Investment Panel, meeting of Group Leaders, mandatory planning training, additional training sessions on scrutiny work and tree protection, China Clay Area Network meeting, Cornish National Minority Working Group (four), Electoral Review Panel (plus two meetings with officers about the Community Governance Review for local parishes), Positive Parking Review panel, and an all-member briefing on the future arrangements for the running of the unitary authority.

In the same period, I attended a number of informal meetings with council officers, senior councillors and others. These have covered a diverse range of topics including planning matters and traffic safety (see below).

In addition, I attended five meetings of St Enoder Parish Council, our Annual Assembly and one meeting of the working group for the St Enoder Parish Neighbourhood Plan (see below).

### **2. Other meetings and activities**

There were also two meetings of the Indian Queens Pit charity (trustee), two meetings of the St Piran Trust (which included its 2019 AGM when I was re-appointed as a trustee), the Community-led Local Development Local Action Group for South and East Cornwall (of which I have been re-elected vice-chairman) and the St Austell Bay Economic Forum.

### **3.0 St Enoder Neighbourhood Plan**

It is with a great sense of relief that I can report that the St Enoder Neighbourhood Plan has been completed and submitted to Cornwall Council.

The consultation into the "pre-submission" draft of the Neighbourhood Plan for St Enoder Parish initially ended on Monday 18th February, though

following a request from a local business, an extension to the consultation was agreed until 4th March. In total, we received 27 representations (six from statutory organizations, 12 from local residents and nine from landholders).

The working group held two meetings (on 20th March and 23rd April) to consider the feedback and a number of changes were made to the Plan. The decision to formally submit the revised Plan was taken at a formal meeting of the Parish Council on 30th April. In addition to the Plan itself, I have completed an associated consultation statement and a "basic condition" assessment, which have also been submitted to the unitary authority.

Cornwall Council will soon hold a further formal consultation, which will be followed by a review undertaken by a planning inspector, and there will then be a referendum of local residents.

## **4. Planning matters**

### **4.1 Carvynick Holiday Park**

Planning permission was granted for 38 holiday units at Carvynick and an office/leisure building, with access, layout and scale, appearance and landscaping reserved. A holiday condition was imposed on the 38 units, so that they could not be unfettered residential properties.

A previous application for the same site at Carvynick had been refused by the unitary authority. This has been appealed by Kingsley Developers (SW) Ltd and it is now with the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol. The applicants are arguing that there should not be a planning restriction that states the holiday units have to be used for holiday accommodation.

In recent weeks, additional information has been submitted to the appeal, in which Kingsley Developers (SW) Ltd have confirmed that they will be objecting to the content of the St Enoder Neighbourhood Plan at the next formal consultation.

### **4.2 Housing applications in Higher Fraddon**

There has been one planning application and two submissions for "pre-application advice" on the right-hand-side of the road leading to Higher Fraddon. This has generated considerable opposition from local residents.

The decision on the application for a single property in the wooded area (PA18/11316) will soon be made. The proposal is likely to be refused, because Cornwall Council has issued pre-application advice for a possible 14 new dwellings (PA19/00791/PREAPP) in the same wooded area, which advised against an application.

In the response from Cornwall Council, the following comments were made about representations from St Enoder Parish Council:

"The Parish Council noted this was not in line with the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan. 28 residents present [at a recent Parish Council meeting] objected to the scheme due to additional traffic on an already busy narrow road, no footpath on the road, lack of infrastructure, ribbon development along an already congested narrow road with not sufficient off road parking, flooding issues already in this area with a stream running along the back, issues with sewerage and the abundance of wildlife on the site."

Following a request for this area of trees to be protected by Cllr Charlotte Cowburn, the following was stated.

"Cornwall Council's Forestry Officer has placed a TPO (tree preservation order) on the site to prevent any pre-emptive felling in order to obtain planning permission. The trees do have an amenity contribution to the larger landscape as well as transient public visual amenity from passing traffic. Additionally their loss would result in a net canopy loss and a decrease in wildlife resource which would not be in keeping with Cornwall Council's Biodiversity Action Plan."

And in conclusion, it added:

"The proposal would be contrary to Policy 4 - Exception Sites of the emerging NDP and does not appear to have the support of the local community. It is unlikely that, should the proposal proceed to formal submission, it would be supported."

The second request for pre-application advice relates to a proposal for 28 dwellings on the old farmyard site (PA19/00656/PREAPP), slightly further up the road. Cornwall Council has not yet published its advice, but housing in this area would also be against Policy 4 of the St Enoder Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

### **4.3 Pig farm in Higher Fraddon**

I attended a meeting with officers from Cornwall Council and the pig farm at Higher Fraddon on 5th April. The meeting was to discuss a number of issues about the farm, how it liaises with the adjacent biogas plant and to discuss the farm's application to not retrofit two of the farm buildings with biofilters (PA18/00336). Discussions are ongoing and I will update further in the near future.

### **4.4 Harvenna Close / Grovewood Court**

About twenty people attended the Parish Council meeting on 14th May to raise concerns about the proposals for two properties in gardens of properties on Harvenna Close (PA19/03258 and PA19/03266), but which would exit onto Grovewood Court. There were a range of concerns, dominated by worries about traffic and the impact on parking. As a consequence, I have formally requested that highway officers look closely at the impact of the proposed developments.

## **4.5 Blue Anchor**

Parish councillors will be aware that St Austell Brewery wish to build five properties in the car park of the Blue Anchor. The initial drawings located the houses to the rear of existing cottages and the residents were quite worried. The Brewery's planning agent visited the site to meet with local residents (and me), and the company had agreed to redesign the scheme and locate the houses elsewhere in the parking area.

## **5. Road safety issues and traffic issues**

Over the last two months, I have continued to follow up on a range of road safety and traffic issues. I regularly meet up with the local Cormac officer, Rachel Tatlow, and our last meeting was on 13th May. I also met with Geoff Brown, the Cabinet Member with responsibility for transport, on 14th May.

I have included updates in many previous monthly reports, but there has been considerable discussion about local traffic and road safety matters on social media in the last few days. I therefore think it would be worthwhile for me to give a comprehensive update on these matters at this time.

### **5.1 Traffic issues at Indian Queens School**

I have received representations over a significant period of time about speeding traffic, the volume of traffic and parking issues around Indian Queens School. Related to this, my priority has been to regularly lobby Cornwall Council to ensure that it follows through with the proposed safety measures included in the School's Travel Plan.

#### **- School Travel Plan and new recreational space**

As a bit of a recap, in 2014, as part of the planning application to build extra classrooms at the School, Cornwall Council commissioned consultants to produce a Travel Plan. Around this time, I helped to secure additional recreation land next to the School. It was initially agreed that about half of the field would be enclosed for use by the School and a new footway constructed across the field to the Harvenna Heights estate, creating a new pedestrian approach to the School.

The remaining budget from the school improvement works is earmarked for the enclosure (fencing) of the School's element of the field and associated works within that area. The construction of the new path – which will be immediately outside of the fenced area for safeguarding reasons – has not yet happened, but I can confirm that a meeting has been set up for the first week in July at which representatives of Cornwall Council, the School and the Aspire Academy chain will be getting together to discuss the options around the field. I will be at that meeting and I will be meeting the head of the School separately next week.

In terms of the School Travel Plan associated with the planning consent, it was prepared for Cornwall Council by Hyder Consulting (UK) Limited. I have repeatedly been in contact with the Education Capital Team (which has traditionally oversees improvement works at schools) and other sections at the unitary authority, calling for the commitments in the document to be delivered.

Put bluntly, the key problem I have encountered is that the Travel Plan was agreed by Education Capital Team, but there had been limited discussion with the staff in the transport section. It has all been pretty exasperating.

For information, extracts from the document include the following:

Page 20 states: "A footpath is being provided which would link into the proposed new residential development to the south (when this is built out)." As noted before, this has yet to be done.

Page 20 also states: "The school will liaise with Cornwall Council with regards to the Halloon Avenue footpath and encourage them to provide this link (if this is feasible as the land is not owned by Cornwall Council). The developer has partly built out an extant planning consent, and it is understood that a condition of the consent included the provision of a footpath. The school will encourage Cornwall Council to investigate the provision of this footpath as this will improve the walking access to the school and reduce the need to travel via vehicle." This also has yet to be done.

Page 34 and 35 references the possibility of parents parking in the nearby Queens Club car park. The statement is: "The Travel Team [at the School] will discuss with Cornwall Council the feasibility of providing a crossing patrol across St Francis Road in order to facilitate pedestrian movements from the Queens club car park. It is envisaged that a patrol would operate during the school peak hours (0830-0900 and 1500-1530). It is anticipated that this will instil confidence amongst parents using this car parking area for a walking bus or park and stride location." I never thought this would happen, but I know the Council has yet to consider providing a crossing patrol.

Page 40 meanwhile includes the following statement on the Action Plan: "The Action Plan for Indian Queens Primary School is presented below and identifies specific measures relating to the STP objectives. It is recognised that whilst it might not be possible to implement each of the suggested Action Plan measures immediately, the school, with assistance from partners, will both prioritise and subsequently implement appropriate measures going forward."

Specific proposals of relevance to Cornwall Council include:

HW2: Discuss and encourage Cornwall Council to implement crossings and/or a new footpath on St Francis Road / Chapel Road.

HW4: Investigate potential locations for a school crossing patrol.

WA2: Promote the 'park and stride' schemes using Victory Hall and Indian Queens Club as potential drop-off points, investigate with CC the option of improving crossing movements on St Francis Road.

## - **Cornwall Road Casualty Reduction Strategy**

I can add that, on 23rd May, I attended a meeting of the Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which was considering the content of a new Cornwall Road Casualty Reduction Strategy and associated Action Plan. The Action Plan includes a range of feasibility studies and specific engineering improvements, to deal with road safety matters, to be carried out within the next two years. I was not impressed that the above elements in the School Travel Plan for Indian Queens School were not included.

I made forceful representations at the meeting and Cornwall Council's Service Director for Transport and Infrastructure has agreed to review the Travel Plan and consider the safety elements within it for inclusion in the Road Casualty Reduction Strategy. I should find out if this can be done within a matter of weeks.

## **5.2 Improvements along A3058 (north of Summercourt)**

Last year, it was confirmed that Cornwall Council had been successful in its bid to the Government's Safer Roads Fund to carry out safety works on the A3058 between Summercourt and Quintrell Downs. The funding of over £1 million will not be made available until 2020/2021 but work has commenced on scoping what works should be funded.

The application was for works between the crossroads junction at Summercourt and the roundabout at Quintrell Downs. I have already made representations that works should be focussed within the village of Summercourt as much as possible.

A meeting to discuss progress was held on 2nd April. I have requested a number of things including a vehicle-activated sign on Beacon Road and crossing points. I have received a representation that "average speed cameras" should be installed, and I will ask that this option is also considered.

I can confirm that once proposals have been prepared, there will be a consultation to find out what local people think.

## **5.3 Community Network funding**

Cornwall Council is making £50,000 available to each of its Community Networks for each year between 2018/2019 and 2021/2022. This means that the six members of the China Clay Area will have a total of £150,000 to allocate between now and 2021 – with the remaining money being made available after the 2021 election.

Local councillors have decided that the money will be divided equally between the six divisions in the China Clay Area, and we will therefore have about £25,000 to spend in St Enoder Parish, though it must be acknowledged that this is a limited amount of money and it would be easy to spend twenty-times that.

- **Mobile vehicle activated sign**

Through the Parish Council, we have decided to use part of the Community Network money to purchase a mobile "vehicle activated sign" which can be moved to numerous locations around the Parish as a "flashing" disincentive to speeding but to also record the actual speeds of vehicles for use with the Police and others to help us make further improvements.

There is a delay with this purchase at the moment as the suggested maintenance and operational costs of the unit (ie. for moving it around the local area) were excessive. This is now being reviewed by Cornwall Council, and I am seeking an alternative, more cost-effective, way forward with parish councillors able to action the frequent relocation of the camera.

- **Summercourt School**

In addition, we are investigating calming works and a 20 mph speed limit outside Summercourt School. I have pushed for these improvements for quite some time, including when the 20 mph speed limit was agreed for the access road to Indian Queens School.

I repeatedly challenged the view that the School was not a priority, but have asked that a scheme be worked up through the Community Network scheme. Initial feedback stated that I needed to fund a "feasibility study" costing £7,000 because of the potential complexity of any meaningful scheme by the School. This relates to the position of the School being on the outskirts of the village and close to a 60 mph speed limit.

I am presently disputing this and, after a meeting with the Cabinet Member for Transport, I have asked whether this improvement, for historic reasons, could be funded through a different mechanism.

- **Chapel Road / The Drang, Indian Queens**

As noted above, I am pushing for the proposals in the Travel Plan for Indian Queens School to be properly taken forward but, in order to keep my options open, I have requested that a temporary speed-visor be placed on Chapel Road (near the dropping-off point for the School) to record the nature of the traffic in that location (ie. numbers and speeds).

- **Other requests**

In order for this update to be as comprehensive as possible, I would like to address what happened during 2013 and 2017 for background.

Some areas had historic schemes in the Cornwall Council Transport Plan, which were taken forward. In other areas, such as ours, elected members were told to prepare a list of schemes that we would like to see happen. We were told that these would be assessed and some would be taken forward.

The list I produced was very long (including vehicle activated signs (VAS), speed limit changes, enhanced entry points into built-up areas, etc), and I did a ridiculous amount of lobbying of the relevant officers but, under a weight of requests, the scheme simply stalled.

All my previous requests to the unitary authority are still listed with the relevant officers and may be summarised as follows:

- Speed reduction measures / traffic calming at Fraddon, Indian Queens and St Columb Road, which could include traffic calming measures at entry points, possible priority build-outs through the villages, as well as permanent VAS signs.
- Speed reduction measures / traffic calming in Summercourt, which could include traffic calming measures at entry points, possible priority build-outs, as well as permanent VAS signs.
- Traffic management measures to resolve congestion, accessibility, delivery and safety issues relating to the Co-op store in St Columb Road.
- Improved pedestrian phase to existing signalised junction at Summercourt crossroads, to improve safety and accessibility.
- Access improvements at Indian Queens Primary School, which were agreed when the planning permission was granted for additional classrooms and should be taken forward as part of the School's Travel Plan.
- 20 mph speed limit and related highway improvements outside Summercourt School.
- Traffic calming at New Road near Fraddon and at Sea View Terrace on the road to St Stephen.

- **Feedback from council officers**

I must add that when I follow-up new requests with council officers for improvements, I often get told that it would need to be funded from the Parish's share of the Community Network funding.

#### **5.4 Concerns at Fraddon around Kingsley Village**

At three recent meetings of St Enoder Parish Council, residents of Fraddon have raised concerns about the level of traffic in their area and related

issues, including fears of a likely increase in traffic cutting through the built-up areas of Fraddon and St Columb Road when the Kingsley Village complex reopens.

I can confirm that I have formally requested that a traffic census is undertaken at the western end of Fraddon. This would help us better document any subsequent increase in the amount of traffic and provide evidence to argue for possible future mitigation measures. At this point, I have not had confirmation when the survey might be undertaken.

I was also asked about the speed limit extents at Fraddon and whether there was an opportunity to extend the speed limit towards Pedna Carne, and I have raised the request with Rachel Tatlow. Her response was as follows:

"There is insufficient frontage development to extend the limit further east of its current location, and consequently through the A & B road 'speed limit review' a few years ago, it was recommended to retain the existing derestricted limit throughout this section."

## **5.5 Surfacing works**

Earlier this year, surfacing works were undertaken at Trevarren and on the A392 (near the junctions with Atlantic Reach, Tresithney and Trugo). With regard to the works on the A392, I raised concerns about the excessive damage to verges along Barton Lane, which was caused by diverted traffic when the main road towards Quintrell Downs was closed. Works have also been carried out on the road from the A3058 (St Austell Street) to Goonabarn, to the south of Summercourt.

The following surfacing works are timetabled for next month:

- A3076 (from Mitchell and past Gummows Shop, which is partially along the St Enoder Parish boundary): provisional date is 10th-13th June.
- A39 Highgate to Halloon: provisional date is 17th-27th June

Other locations are on the work programme, but not with dates as yet, are as follows:

- Watery Lane near Black Cross
- B3275 near Melbur Blockworks
- Trefullock Moor.
- Carworgie Way and Halloon Avenue, St Columb Road
- Pocohontas Crescent and Princess Park, Indian Queens
- The Drang, Indian Queens

## **5.6 Lining works**

I also receive a large number of requests for works that can be undertaken through existing maintenance budgets. This has included the need to repaint some road markings and I have had it confirmed that the

lined speed limit gateway into Indian Queens on Moorland Road will be renewed later this year.

### **5.7 Double yellow lines.**

It has also been a reality that Cornwall Council has prioritised traffic enforcement in towns and council-owned car parks. But now that they are in the process of installing "pay-on-exit" and "number-plate recognition" technologies in certain car parks, and we have succeeded in getting guarantees that the freed-up enforcement officers will be able to deal with poor parking in more rural areas such as ours.

In relation to this, I am lobbying the parking team to get the double-yellow lines repainted in many areas, so that they are enforceable.

### **5.8 Other highway issues**

In addition, I am continuing to monitor and follow-up on a number of other highway issues. These include:

- Localised flooding on the A3058 and issues with ditches.
- Maintenance of the ditch in Church Lane by the Mission Church.
- Condition of road drain network in built-up areas of the Parish.

## **6. New waste bins**

In recent years, I have had a number of requests for extra waste bins in our area. The Parish Council has also had similar requests.

I have been making representations and I am pleased to be able to report that Cornwall Council has placed new bins in the four locations where we had received most requests. They are (i) at the entrance to the Goss Moor trail, (ii) on St Francis Road by the Mission Church, (iii) at the bus-stop by the Blue Anchor and (iv) at the bus-stop by the London Inn.

## **7. World War One project**

### **- "Trusting Fully Trusting"**

It recently came to my attention that a number of our First World War books were partly misprinted. We have found that in some of them a few pages were missing / duplicated / mixed up, in the section between pages 90 to 120.

The Parish Clerk and I have gone through all remaining copies to check that they are ok and the printer has agreed to provide an additional 50 new copies (at no cost to the Parish Council) in lieu of those that were faulty. If anyone does happen to have a faulty copy, please let us know and we will replace it with a new error-free version.

As well as being available from the Parish Council, we have provided copies of the book to Waterstones bookshop in Truro.

- **End of grant paperwork**

I have submitted all the necessary paperwork to the Heritage Lottery Fund, to show how we spent their grant of £7,500 on this project.

- **Literary Festival**

The book is still being well-received and I have received an invitation to speak at Gorseth Kernow's Literary Festival about how the book was researched and produced. The event will take place at St Just in the first week of September.

**8. New leader at Cornwall Council**

At the Full Council on 21st May, the Liberal Democrat leader of Cornwall Council Adam Paynter stood down after two years at the helm. His independent deputy Julian German is the new leader of the authority, and Adam will now be his second-in-command.

Julian German was challenged for the role by the leader of the Conservative group but the majority of Council, including me, voted for him.

**9. Thomas Playing Field**

Along with the Parish Clerk and Cllr Mark Kessell, I have helped to monitor the condition of the new play equipment in the Thomas Playing Field and report issues to the supplier, such as where some rust is coming through. There has also been damage to the trampoline caused by young people bouncing on it with their bicycles, and the Clerk has got the area fenced off.

**10. Inquiries**

During the last month, I have also helped numerous people with guidance on a range of issues.