

Cornwall Council report

Cllr Dick Cole

Time period: 22nd July – 22nd September 2019

Listed below are some examples of the activities that I have been involved with over the last two months.

1. Council meetings and related activities

I have attended a number of formal meetings and briefings at Cornwall Council.

These included Full Council and an associated briefing, Environment Growth and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee and an associated meeting about an upcoming inquiry into private sector housing, Electoral Review Panel plus four associated meetings with officers and four public meetings, Central Planning Committee, Positive Parking Panel, three meetings with council officers about traffic issues at Indian Queens School and suggested improvements, China Clay Area Network, two meetings with councillors from the China Clay Area – one of which focussed on a “place-shaping” strategy for the five parishes of the Chinas Clay Area, briefings on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Group Leaders’ meeting and a meeting with the Council chairman Hilary Frank about council priorities and processes.

There have also been informal meetings with a range of officers at the unitary authority and I have attended three meetings of St Enoder Parish Council.

Further information about some of these meetings are included later in this update report.

2. Other meetings and local activities

During the last month, I attended meetings of the Local Action Group for South and East Cornwall and was pleased to take part in Indian Queens Carnival. As a trustee of Indian Queens Pit, I was also delighted that the annual John Cowling concert at the venue was attended by over 400 people.

3. Extension to Indian Queens Cemetery

I am particularly pleased to be able to confirm that the planning application, submitted by the Parish Council Clerk and I, for the land to the rear of Indian Queens Cemetery to be an extension for the burial area, has been successful. The Clerk and I have already met a surveyor on site to start planning out how it will look.

4. Planning matters

4.1 St Ender Neighbourhood Plan

The statutory consultation for the St Ender Neighbourhood Plan ended on 1st August. A planning inspector has commenced his examination of the document and, on behalf of the Parish Council, I have worked with Cornwall Council to clarify some points of detail for him.

4.2 Pig farm at Higher Fraddon

The existing planning permission for the pig farm specifies that two existing pig buildings (nos 4 and 5) on the farm should be retrofitted with biofilters, and that this work needs to be undertaken in advance of the construction of the two further consented buildings.

A planning application was submitted last year (PA18/00336) which sought to modify a condition not to retrofit the buildings, though this has not yet been decided as council officers have been trying to assess whether they think that the smells from the site merit forcing the owners to install the biofilters.

I met with a group of local residents on 8th August to keep them informed about ongoing discussions and many of these residents attended a meeting of the Parish Council on 13th August, when they restated their view that the biofilters should be installed. This position was also reaffirmed by the Parish Council.

4.3 Carvynick Holiday Park

I have previously reported that a planning inspector had granted outline planning permission for 38 residential units and an office/leisure building (PA18/04360) at Carvynick, with matters of "access, layout and scale, appearance and landscaping" reserved. This means that a further application will need to be submitted to set out the detail of what is developed.

The site owners, Kingsley Developers, submitted a further application (PA19/05348) to amend condition 2 of the consent to allow for a "phased development." It would be fair to say that there has been some uncertainty about the implications of such a change, but I understand that this request has now been withdrawn by the applicants.

4.4 Two bungalows to rear of Harvenna Close, Fraddon

There has also been considerable opposition to the proposals for new properties in the gardens of two properties on Harvenna Close (PA19/03258 and PA19/03266), but which would exit onto Grovewood Court. I have referred the decision to a meeting of the Central Sub-Area Planning Committee, and it was initially thought that it would be considered on 30th September. However, due to the nature of some of

the objections, the applicants have been asked to provide some further information and a decision will therefore be taken at a future meeting of the Sub-Area Planning Committee.

4.5 Indian Queens Industrial Estate

There has also been considerable opposition to a proposal to create a new access into Unit 2 of Indian Queens Industrial Estate for an area of additional car parking (PA19/05975). It would exit onto Moorland Road and a number of local residents attended the meeting of the Parish Council on 13th August to raise their concerns. It is noteworthy that the original planning permission includes a condition that vehicular access to the various employment units should be through the Lodge Way road, which was specifically built to serve the industrial estate.

I have spoken to the planning officer and he has gone back to the owners of Unit 2 and suggested that they find a way to serve the area of additional car parking from Lodge Way as originally intended.

5. Road safety, traffic and related issues

5.1 Indian Queens School

5.1.1 New pathway to School from Harvenna Heights estate

As reported previously, I managed to get agreement in principle that a new pathway is to be constructed across the field to the west of the School. It is planned that a large proportion of the field will be fenced off for use by the School. A new path will then be created on the exterior of the fence, allowing a new pedestrian route between the School and the Harvenna Heights estate.

I have had meetings with officers to discuss the new pathway on 1st and 19th August, and I can confirm that a surveyor is presently working out exactly where the fence should be located. I am also liaising with the School on this, and as soon as the fence line is known we will be able to finalise costings for the pathway and how it is delivered.

5.1.2 School Travel Plan

In addition to the new path noted above, I am continuing to put pressure of the unitary authority to carry out commitments contained within the School's Travel Plan, which I recently managed to also get included within the Council's Road Casualty Reduction Strategy.

In addition to a meeting on 19th August, I have also had informal meetings with a couple of senior officers and councillors. At this time, I am pushing for the Council to deliver some form of road crossing on both Chapel Road and St Francis Road (as noted in the Travel Plan), to make the routes to school much safer. I am also making enquiries about an advisory 20mph speed limit on the part of Chapel Road by the Drang.

As part of this, I requested that Cornwall Council undertook a survey of speed along Chapel Road, near the top of the Drang. This was carried out over a period of 11 days in July and I have now received a copy of the results. These are available on request from me.

I will be using this evidence to keep up the pressure for improvements in this area. The speed recordings were taken in both directions and showed the following:

- North-eastbound traffic had a mean speed of 26.3 mph, but 21.4 % of the vehicles were travelling at speeds of between 31 and 40 mph, while 1.1% were recorded doing over 40 mph.
- South-westbound traffic had a mean speed of 29.5 mph, but 44.4 % of the vehicles were travelling at speeds of between 31 and 40 mph, while 4.0% were recorded doing over 40 mph.

5.2 Summercourt School

As noted previously, Cornwall Council has made some monies available to each of its Community Networks in order to carry out highway improvements in the period leading up to 2022. I estimate that there is about £33,000 to be spent in St Enoder Parish.

In addition to a mobile "vehicle activated sign," one of my priorities is to get a 20 mph speed limit outside Summercourt School. I can confirm that officers have produced a plan for an advisory 20mph speed limit associated with a flashing signs with associated signage that states "School 20mph when lights show." I am in discussions with the officers about what they have proposed and, now that the Schools are back, I will be seeking a meeting with Summercourt School and the Aspire Academy to discuss the proposal further.

5.3 Re-surfacing of the Drang and Suncrest Estate, Indian Queens

I am pleased to be able to report that the Drang and Suncrest Estate were resurfaced during August.

5.4 Double yellow lines along St Francis Road, Indian Queens and St Columb Road

As I knew that following the resurfacing of the Drang and Suncrest Estate, there would be a need to repaint some lines, I formally requested that when the lining team was in the parish, they should also repaint the faded lines along the whole of St Francis Road. This was agreed.

The Drang has been finished, along with a small part of St Francis Road, but not the whole area as promised. I am presently chasing up when these works will be completed.

5.5 Patching of Carworgie Way and Halloon Avenue, St Columb Road

I can also report that CORMAC are timetabled to carry out patching in Carworgie Way and Halloon Avenue during October. I will let people know when I have a definite date for the works.

5.6 Kingsley Village

Some residents at a recent Parish Council expressed concern about the potential impact of traffic visiting the Kingsley Village complex on the local road network. At my request, a traffic survey was carried out in advance of the opening of the new units. I have yet to receive the results but have been told it should be with me within a matter of a few weeks.

5.7 Other highway matters

The white "teeth" on the approach to Toldish on the old A30 have been repainted and it has been confirmed that the small gridded road gully outside of the Summercourt Memorial Hall will be repaired in mid-October.

A number of residents have raised concerns about continuing flooding on the A3058 (St Austell St) towards Summercourt and issues with road drains. CORMAC have confirmed that they will be undertaking maintenance of the infrastructure along this road in the near future.

6. Anti-social behaviour and vandalism

Many parishioners have raised concerns about the increased level of anti-social behaviour and vandalism around the Fraddon, Indian Queens and St Columb Road area.

I can confirm that I am in regular contact with the local policing team and I know that these problems are being prioritised. As well as the team based in St Columb, some officers from Newquay have also been out in recent weeks, and I know they have been following up numerous inquiries.

I share the frustrations of local residents, not least because Indian Queens Pit was damaged in late August and a fellow trustee of the pit, Malcolm Williams, and I had to repair a section of wall which had been partly pulled down.

I would add that it is important that all incidents are reported to the local policing team. If anything has happened which has not yet been reported to them, please let me know (place, time, etc) and I will feed it through to the authorities.

7. Water problems on Parka Road, Fraddon

Throughout the summer, there have been a number of breaks in the water main in Parka Road, Fraddon.

It has caused significant problems in the local area, both in terms of water supply and traffic congestion.

A number of residents have made representations to South West Water (SWW), along with the Parish Council and the local MP. I have liaised with CORMAC and they received the following update at the end of August:

“South West Water have advised that the water main has been identified for capital improvement. The recent series of bursts and associated reinstatement costs have only strengthened the case for its replacement.

“South West Water will be progressing this main for capital funding in the next financial year 2020–21. Funding for the present year has already been allocated.”

Other people have had a less positive response and I will be continuing to make representations to make sure that the works are undertaken as soon as possible.

8. A strategy for the China Clay Area

On 4th September, the six councillors from the China Clay Area met with a senior officer from the Localism team to look in detail at the working draft of our emerging “place-shaping” strategy and action plan for the five parishes of Clay Country. A significant amount of work was done and, as a consequence, the draft document is going through a considerable edit before it is presented to the China Clay Area Network for further discussion.

9. New waste collection contract?

At the Full Council meeting on 10th September, Cornwall Council agreed over £60 million in capital expenditure for new vehicles and wheelie bins, related to the new waste collection contract that is due to commence in April 2020. I did not support the uplift in the capital budget and queried aspects of the overall financial information relating the Council’s wider budget including waste disposal (ie. the incinerator).

It has since transpired that the two bidders for the contract have come in significantly over the anticipated budget and there appears some doubt about how the costs could be reduced to provide better value for the local council tax payer. A number of councillors are querying why the Council doesn’t do the waste collection itself.

10. Fraddon Millennium Green

As the secretary of the Fraddon Millennium Green Trust, I am pleased to be able to report that we have contractors in the Green cutting back on overgrown hedges and starting to give the place a good tidy-up.

11. Electoral Review Panel

11.1 Community Governance Review

In recent weeks, a lot of my time has been taken up by the Community Governance Review, which has given parish councils and other stakeholders the opportunity to seek changes to parish boundaries.

A large number of requests have been received and these are being reviewed at the moment. Some town councils are seeking to expand into rural areas while in other areas some smaller communities are trying to break away from existing parishes. There are also many smaller proposed changes.

We are midway through a series of public meetings, which I have attended in my role as Vice-chairman of the committee. So far, these have taken place at Bude, Penzance, Falmouth and Crantock (for the wider Newquay area).

11.2 Impact on St Enoder Parish

I can also confirm that Newlyn East Parish Council has made a submission to include some land near Mitchell (presently in St Enoder Parish) to be shifted to their parish. They would like to take over the development site of 26 affordable properties (Coastline Housing) adjacent to Mitchell, most of the fruit farm and an associated dwelling, the old school house, and two-and-a-half fields associated with Nantillio Farm (which includes the playing field used by Mitchell residents and the Nantillio Farm bungalow).

St Enoder Parish Council has objected to the change and the Parish Clerk attended the Crantock meeting to set out the views of local councillors.

12. WW1 book

Following the announcement that our book "Trusting Fully Trusting" (about the servicemen of Fraddon, Indian Queens, St Columb Road and Summercourt who lost their lives in the First World War) won the cup for best non-fiction Cornish book published in 2018 at Gorsedh Kernow's Holyer an Gof Publishers' Awards, I spoke at the organisation's Literary Festival on 5th September. I was really pleased with how the discussion went and how warmly people spoke about the book.

I had previously also given an illustrated talk to a friends group at St Dennis (13th August), which also went well.

13. Cricket

It has not all been work and I participated in the annual councillors versus officers cricket game. I had to leave early to attend a Parish Council meeting, but did enjoy taking part. My innings was, as usual, quite short but I did manage to hit one six! The councillors won for the fourth year in a row.

14. Inquiries

During the last two months, I have helped numerous people with guidance on a range of issues including planning matters, environmental concerns, educational matters and more.