

Cornwall Council report

Cllr Dick Cole

Time period: 25th July to 25th September 2016.

1. Council meetings

I have attended a range of formal meetings at Cornwall Council over the last two months. These included: Planning Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) plus two associated briefings / pre-agenda sessions, Constitution and Governance Committee and associated informal meeting, Electoral Review Panel (two) and associated informal meeting, Farms Panel and associated pre-agenda session, China Clay Area Network meeting, "peer review" meeting about council communications, heritage forum, meeting of Cornwall councillors from the China Clay Area, national minority working group (and two associated meetings), incinerator liaison group, and three member briefings covering topics such as the outcome of the EU referendum, housing and requests to central government for more devolved responsibilities.

As well as the meetings listed above, I have had numerous informal meetings with council officers.

2. Other meetings

I have attended meetings of ClayTAWC (Chairman), the Indian Queens Pit Committee (trustee) and South & East Cornwall Local Action Group, when its Community Led Local Development programme for submission to central government was agreed. In addition, I have had informal meetings with a number of local groups.

3. New play area in Indian Queens Recreation Ground

Much of my time in the last two weeks has been taken up with the construction of the new play area in the Recreation Ground. It has been quite frustrating, as we were told the construction would take four-five weeks but, because of various delays, it has taken about eleven weeks.

It was very disappointing that we were not able to open in August as planned, but I am relieved that the park is now open and it has been getting some very heavy usage over the few days.

The providers have knocked £400 off the bill – because of the delay – so that we could spend this amount on turf to be laid around the new rubber surface to ensure a better finish to the project. I would like to thank everyone who helped with the laying of the turf on the evening of 8th September – your help was much appreciated.

Three picnic benches have been placed around the play area, and the Parish Clerk and I are presently negotiating with the suppliers about a few small "snags" which have yet to be dealt with.

The Parish Council worked for a number of years to pull together the package of funding for this proposal, and we are grateful to everyone who is providing financial support.

As well as the monies from the Parish Council's own reserves, additional funding for the project has come from:

- Sun Edison; who built a solar farm at Burthy near Fraddon. As part of their planning permission, the company agreed to provide a one-off community payment to St Enoder Parish Council to put towards improvements in the local area.
- Kingsley Developers; who agreed to provide funding towards play equipment in St Enoder Parish (as part of Section 106 agreements) in lieu of not providing small play areas on two of their developments within the locality.
- Cornwall SITA Trust; who awarded St Enoder Parish a grant, which meant that the project had the full funding to go ahead.

It is my hope that we will soon have a formal opening of the new play area, so that we can celebrate the provision of this wonderful new facility for the local area.

4. New path to play area in Queens

As reported previously, on behalf of the Parish Council I submitted an application to the National Lottery's Awards for All programme for a grant of £10,000 to construct a tarmac path from the car park area to the new play area in the Recreation Ground. This was because of the need to improve access across the Recreation Ground during the winter months when the field can get quite wet and boggy.

I can report that the National Lottery will be publicising the outcome of our grant application on 11th October.

5. Fraddon Millennium Green

As one of the trustees for the Fraddon Millennium Green, I am pleased that it has had a bit of a "facelift" over the summer.

A new rocker has been put in the play area in the place of the old one that had been removed quite a while ago; some small repairs have been undertaken on the play equipment; gaps in the rubber surfacing around the equipment have also been filled; while contractors have trimmed around the field and cleared vegetation from the path.

Many people probably don't realise that, unlike the Recreation Ground at Indian Queens and Summercourt's Thomas Playing Field, the Green is not owned by the Parish Council. The Millennium Green is actually an independent Trust, run by five volunteer trustees, though we are very grateful for the annual grant from the Parish Council towards our running costs.

I can also report that a contractor will be on site during September / October, when all of the play equipment will be repainted.

6. Thomas Playing Field

Now that the longstanding project to construct the new play area in the Indian Queens Recreation Ground has been completed, I can report that it is the intention of St Enoder Parish Council to review what is being provided in the Thomas Playing Field in Summercourt.

Local residents may recall that the last new equipment to be provided were a replacement climbing frame and a replacement roundabout in 2010 and the skate park, which was built in 2012.

I will be circulating a newsletter in the autumn which will seek views from local people about what improvements they would like to see.

7. Planning hearing; Land to east of the Kelliers

On 16th August, I attended the informal hearing into the part-retrospective appeal into the proposal for seventeen caravans on land to the east of the Kelliers (PA15/06186).

Councillors will recall that the landowner placed seven caravans on the site without any form of planning permission in the autumn of 2014. Subsequent applications for 12 and then 17 caravans were refused by Cornwall Council and the landowner went to appeal.

Cornwall Council was represented by two planning officers and an enforcement officer, while I was there with Cllr Michael Bunyan on behalf of the Parish Council. I did however address some of the policy issues relating to Cornwall Council's position.

In our detailed representations, we made the case that this was an inappropriate location for such a development, that deliberate unlawful development is now a material consideration and the applicant did not even own all of the land on which he wished to build.

The landowner was represented by a planning agent, a consultant on transport matters and, even though this was meant to be an "informal" hearing, a top-level barrister or QC (Queens Counsel).

I had a number of meetings with affected local representatives in advance of the hearing. A number of these residents were present at the hearing and made a series of points against the development.

8. Planning hearing; biogas plant at Higher Fraddon

On 2nd September, I attended the informal hearing relating to the "non-determination" appeal into the "regularisation" application for the biogas plant (PA15/03073) and the associated appeal of Cornwall Council's

decision to refuse the related application (PA15/05220) to modify traffic movements to the site.

Councillors will recall that I had produced a quite comprehensive statement on behalf of St Enoder Parish Council, which ran to over 11,000 words, and this was the basis of the arguments at the hearing which lasted from 10.00 through to around 7.00.

Cornwall Council was represented by a planning officer and an enforcement officer, while Greener for Life (GfL) were represented by one of their members of staff, a legal representative, two transport consultants and a noise consultant.

I had a number of meetings with local representatives in advance of the hearing. A number of these residents were present at the hearing and made a series of points against the development.

Topics covered were wide-ranging, as previously detailed in my updates to the Parish Council, such as the weight to be given to the non-material amendments which allowed the consent to be modified, the extent of traffic movements, the impact on the amenity of local people and more.

GfL did put forward a statement setting out their recent traffic movements, which contradicted what they had claimed in previous documents. Residents meanwhile put forward their records of GfL traffic movements, which showed them to be much more extensive.

9. Pines Tip

I have just been informed that REG Windpower Ltd has appealed the refusal of their application for three wind turbines on Pines Tip (Strategic Planning Committee; 10th March 2016). It is my understanding that they have requested the appeal should be by written representations, and I will update members when I have more information.

10. Other planning matters

There have also been a range of other planning applications or associated matters, where I have been in regular contact with planning officers. These have included the potential changes to the conditions controlling the holiday village at Carvynick near Summercourt, and the discharge of conditions relating to the redevelopment of Kingsley Village, where the issue of surface water drainage is presently being considered.

11. Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

The most recent meeting of the Working Group took place on 2nd August, when the next consultation document was scoped. This is presently being worked on and it is planned that this document will be distributed this autumn.

I am also pleased to report that I have secured a grant of £3,950 towards the cost of this work, which must be spent by the end of this financial year.

12. Road traffic issues in St Enoder Parish

I can further report that two projects have been placed on the unitary authority's capital programme following requests from me. The first will be the problem area to the east of Queens Garage, where water regularly rises up through the pavement. The second is the road drains through Fraddon, but in this case, the initial work includes further investigation to understand more about how the below-ground pipework is interlinked.

13. South West Water works at Trevarren

I am pleased to report that the main works to realign part of the foul sewer around Trevarren and the construction of an associated attenuation tank, to end flooding problems in the hamlet, have been completed. I am presently liaising with South West Water about future monitoring and other related issues.

14. Ocean Housing properties in Fraddon

The new properties on Ocean Housing's Harvenna Heights scheme in Fraddon are nearing completion. The company is presently seeking expressions of interest in the six shared ownership properties (three 2-bed and three 3-bed). For the 15 rental properties, there will be a "coming soon" advert on Homechoice on 29th October while the actual opportunity to bid will open on 12th November. This will be for four 1-bed, seven 2-bed and four 3-bed properties.

An open day was held by Ocean Housing on 21st September, which was attended by many local people.

15. The Kelliars

I have been pushing Cornwall Council to speed up the transfer of the land known as the Kelliars into the ownership of the Parish Council so that it can be improved as a countryside area. This is now happening and I can confirm that, on behalf of the Parish Council, I have requested a grant of £4,950 from the unitary authority's "devolution fund" for some of the works on the site. I understand this application will be supported at "County Hall."

16. War memorial at St Enoder

One hundred years on from the First World War, I am very pleased that St Enoder Parish Council has successfully requested that the war memorial in St Enoder Churchtown be Listed. Well done to the Clerk for all her hard work on this.

17. My Community Fund

I can confirm that I will be awarding the £2,000 in my personal Community Fund for 2015-2016 (allocated to all Cornwall Councillors) as follows:

- Fraddon Millennium Green – £500
- Indian Queens Pantomine Society – £500
- St Enoder Age Concern – £500
- Wesley Under-5s – £500

18. Political campaigns

In addition to my local activities, I have been involved in a range of political campaigns. These include the battle against the creation of a cross-Tamar “Devonwall” seat for the 2020 General Election, and I spoke on this topic at the Conference of the Cornish Gorsyth in St Keverne on 2nd September.

19. Inquiries

During the last two months, I have also helped numerous people with advice and guidance. Issues have included planning concerns, housing problems, various enforcement matters and so much more.