

Annual report (2024-2025) from Cllr Dick Cole, Cornwall Councillor for St Dennis & St Ender division

This report includes some examples of the work that I have carried out over the last 12 months. It is not an exhaustive list.

1.0 Council positions

During the last year, I served as the chairman of the new China Clay Area and Luxulyan Community Area Partnership and also the unitary authority's Working Group for the Cornish National Minority. I am a member of the Customers and Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Constitution and Governance Committee. I have also attended a wide range of related meetings – both in person and via TEAMS / ZOOM video-conferencing.

2.0 Projects for the community

In my report to last year's Annual Assembly, I reported that I had secured a number of significant grants for local projects in the St Dennis and St Ender division.

These included:

- £170,459 for the ClayTAWC centre in St Dennis to purchase the Old School building from which it recently operates. The monies came from Community Levelling Up (£96,560) and the St Dennis and Nanpean Community Trust (£73,899).
- £70,000 towards the refurbishment of the Indian Queens Under-Fives Pre-School building in the Recreation Ground (Community Infrastructure Levy funding).
- £42,000 for the Fraddon Millennium Green Trust for a wooden tractor and trailer slide, and the replacement of the existing safety surfacing (Community Infrastructure Levy funding).

This year, I am pleased to report that these projects were all successfully delivered during the summer months of 2024.

3.0 Planning matters

I have been involved with a wide range of planning applications in St Ender Parish. Listed below are updates on some of the larger applications in our area:

- Park homes at Gnomeworld. This application for 69 residential units, in place of the holiday caravans at Gnomeworld. It was approved with an agreement that a significant financial contribution be provided by the applicant for affordable housing elsewhere in the Parish.

- A planning application in Lindsay Fields, Fraddon. This proposes 28 properties to take the place of the existing permission of 20 houses. Discussions are ongoing between the applicant and staff at Cornwall Council.
- Tourist accommodation to the rear of Silver Birch Gardens, St Columb Road. A number of local people and the Parish Council objected to development in this area. It was refused on by the unitary authority.
- Five dwellings off Pit Lane, Indian Queens. This application is in an enclosure, which had been part-developed without first securing planning permission in the past. It was refused by Cornwall Council's Central Planning Committee, though the applicant has appealed the decision. I have lodged a detailed objection with the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Parish Council.
- Summercourt housing. An application for 18 residential units [50% affordable] opposite New Row was opposed last month. This had been with the planning authority for a number of years .
- Tourist accommodation at Carvynick. Planning was approved for additional holiday accommodation at the site, but with a condition that should the tourist use cease the land would need to revert to being agricultural land.

4.0 Road safety improvements

I continue to lobby for road safety improvements on the stretch of road from Penhale and through Fraddon and St Columb Road. Progress is slow – not least because of cuts to road safety measures. I am expecting consultations in the near future for improvements around the roundabout at the bottom of Fraddon Hill and a build-out / protected parking area outside of Ridgewell Terrace in Fraddon.

Following lobbying from myself, a 40mph speed limit was installed at Seaview Terrace on the road to St Stephen. Unfortunately, within a matter of weeks there was another accident at this location and, a few weeks ago, there was a second incident when a car crashed into some of the new signage. I am making further representations about what else Cornwall Council might be able to do.

A number of poles were erected for the Parish Council's speed visors, but sadly one of our devices has been vandalised for a second time.

5.0 Homechoice review

I led the opposition to changes in how affordable properties for rent are allocated and, in particular, how local connection criteria would be weakened. I was unsuccessful, but the new approach allows for "local lettings plans" for parishes where there is a need to safeguard the provision of proper local-needs housing for parish families. I am pleased to report that individual LLPs have just been agreed for St Dennis and St Enoder parishes – the first two such agreements in the whole of Cornwall.

6.0 Support for Parish Council projects

As the Cornwall Councillor for St Enoder, I have also worked closely with the Parish Clerk and other parish councillors on a range of projects. This included working with Cllr Mark Kessell to make representations to the supplier of the play equipment in the Thomas Playing Field about problems with some of the installations and the ground surfacing. I am really pleased that we able to get the company to replace much of the equipment, deal with areas of ground slumpage and refresh the safety surfacing.

7.0 My work at Cornwall Council

As the leader of the MK / Green Group on the unitary authority, I have made representations on numerous subjects ranging from the lack of funding for Cornwall Council and planning policy matters.

I have also been involved with discussions around responses to the changing political situation across the UK following the election of the new Labour Government. This includes the imposition of an unsustainable housing target on Cornwall, which undermines the weight that can be afforded to the Cornwall Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans, and the plan to create large Mayoral Strategic Authorities. I moved a motion at Cornwall Council to oppose a SW MSA and to continue to campaign for meaningful devolution to Cornwall. It was passed by 56 votes to four.

I also continue to play a lead role in the Council's work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

8.0 Assistance for local people

Over the 12 months, I have given advice and support to a large number of people on a vast range of issues.

I am available on 07791 876607 and cllr.dick.cole@cornwall.gov.uk.

9.0 Thank you

As this present term at Cornwall Council comes to an end, I would like to thanks parish councillors and others for their help and support over the last four years.