

Cornwall Council report **Cllr Dick Cole**

Report for 1st August – 20th September 2026

1.0 Council and other meetings

Physical Cornwall Council meetings over the last two months included Full Council; Strategic Planning Committee and the Constitution and Governance Committee. I also had a catch-up with the local Cormac Manager about a range of highway issues.

Meetings via video-conferencing meanwhile included a briefing about the unitary authority's commercial strategy through the Corporate Finance and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee; two pre-agenda sessions for the Constitution and Governance Committee; two catch-ups for Cornwall Councillors on the China Clay Area and Luxulyan Community Area Partnership; and a meeting about the Newquay-Par branchline and the Mid Cornwall Metro project.

I also attended two meetings of St Dennis Parish Council and one of St Endover Parish Council. Other physical meetings included the Trelavour Community Liaison Group; the Board of ClayTAWC; Fraddon Village Hall Committee; Indian Queens Band Committee; and Indian Queens Pit Committee.

2.0 Leader's visit to Clay Country

As the chair of the China Clay Area and Luxulyan CAP, I continue to do my utmost to ensure that "County Hall" is aware of the needs of our area. Linked to this, in the middle of September, I was pleased to host a visit of the leader of the unitary authority, Leigh Frost, to the China Clay Area to discuss a range of issues of local importance. Places visited included ClayTAWC, Wheal Martyn and the new hall at Whittemoor.

3.0 Full Council

One of my roles on the unitary authority is to chair the Constitution and Governance Committee and, at the last meeting of Cornwall Council on 15th September, I presented (i) revised terms of reference for the Audit Committee and (ii) constitutional amendments about the scrutiny of budget development and in-year financial management (through the Budget Development OSC and then Corporate Finance and Performance OSC).

4.0 Devolution

As a lifelong campaigner for devolution for Cornwall, I must acknowledge that in his first formal address to the House of Commons as Prime Minister, Andy Burnham specifically commented on the calls from Cornwall for a devolution deal. He told MPs that he had "asked No. 10 North to begin work with Cornwall Council and its six MPs on a devolution deal with or without an elected mayor."

This has been widely welcomed, though I am extremely nervous that the present government will not be offering a new democratic settlement that is similar to what exists in Scotland and Wales. The Prime Minister did not talk about us as a Celtic nation but simply as a "rural area." He also spoke about local government tweaks, rather than a meaningful restructuring of political power.

I would respectfully say that Cornwall merits a more meaningful arrangement- and one that properly recognises and builds on the national minority status of the Cornish – rather than the sort of "deal" being suggested in these initial parliamentary discussions.

As the leader of Mebyon Kernow, I have appealed to the leadership of the unitary authority and Cornwall's six MPs to be ambitious in their demands for Cornwall and to seek a meaningful Celtic-style democratic settlement.

5.0 "Report it"

I continue to report a number of local issues of concern to residents. If you spot any problems, you can also report it yourself through Cornwall Council's website at: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/report-something/>

ST DENNIS PARISH

6.0 Trerice Solar Farm [PA24/09234]

On 11th August, the Planning Inspectorate confirmed that the proposal for a 32MW solar farm at Trerice had been consented by a government planning inspector.

The original application was recommended for approval by planning officers at Cornwall Council, but was turned down by councillors at a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee on 10th July 2025. The applicants went to appeal and a hearing was held at the Pitch on 12th May, to which I had presented a 4,000-word representation on behalf of the Parish Council.

In her ruling, the planning inspector stated that the solar array will have a "significant adverse impact on the local landscape," as well as "limited harm as a result of the long-term loss of best and most versatile land, and harm at the lower end of 'less than substantial' harm to the setting of two designated heritage assets."

Planning officers at Cornwall Council had accepted the applicant's assertion that the harm was "moderate to slight adverse," but getting the inspector to agree that the landscape harm was indeed significant was not enough. She also gave significant weight to the "national benefits associated with renewable or low carbon energy" and, in her conclusion, took the view that the "totality of benefits of the proposal outweighed the harms."

The applicants also lodged an application for an award of costs. This was refused. The planning inspector noted the following:

"Local residents and councillors raised pertinent matters in respect of character and appearance and heritage, amongst other things. Even though my final decision was to allow the development, it was not, in my view, a case which could be described as one which should clearly have been permitted, as the various matters raised needed to be weighed in the planning balance. Members are, in any event, entitled to disagree with officer's recommendations, and in this case they did so on reasonable grounds and engaged proactively throughout the appeal process."

7.0 Highway works

As residents will know, I have been making representations about the need to resurface Carne Hill, Fore St and Trelavour Road and I am delighted that these works were carried out during August. In addition to this, I can confirm that the resurfacing of the roadway around Domellick Bridge has been timetabled to be done in October.

8.0 Cornish Lithium

I attended the latest meeting of the Trelavour Community Liaison Group and Cornish Lithium are still working towards the submission of their Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate in November 2026. As I reported in my last update, individuals and local groups who wish to fully participate with the planning process must register as "interested parties." Once the application is "live," I will ensure that local residents are aware of what they need to do register, etc.

9.0 Litter pick

I was pleased to take part in the litter pick organised by St Dennis Parish Council in August. There is something quite rewarding in going out with a couple of black bags and clearing rubbish in the countryside. But it is also ever so frustrating. Each time that I help out with the litter pick, I always do the same section of the parish on the outskirts of the village. It is an understatement to say that having to collect "new" rubbish, from areas cleared only months before, is disappointing.

10.0 New Clerk

I would like to welcome Tamsyn Moore as the new Clerk of St Dennis Parish Council, who I look forward to working closely with. Local residents will be aware that Tamsyn was previously an administrator for the Parish Council and knows the area well. I am confident that she will be a fantastic Clerk for the Parish.

ST ENODER PARISH

11.0 Highway works

There have been quite a lot of roadworks in the Fraddon area in recent weeks, not least with the excavation of the cable route for the Tregonning Solar Farm from the Barton Lane junction to Fraddon Hill. They are presently working on

Highbate Hill and will soon be digging sections through Indian Queens and then past Gaverigan to the power station in St Dennis Parish.

Improvement works for the roundabout at the bottom of Fraddon Hill have also been carried out, while the resurfacing of various stretches of the road between Fraddon and Scarcewater were also completed in August.

A road closure is still in place in St Enoder Churhtown in advance of repairs to the wall of the churchyard, which was undermined in last winter's storms.

12.0 Newquay-Par branchline and the Mid Cornwall Metro project

I am working with a number of officers at the unitary authority in terms of representations to the Great Western Railway and Network Rail. This relates to the closure of the pedestrian crossing over the trackbed to the station and the possible provision of road safety measures on the remaining access to the station, as well as concerns that so many of the trains are not stopping at St Columb Road and a considerable number of trains also being cancelled.

13.0 Thanks to Amanda

In this report, I would like to record my thanks to Amanda Kendall, who had been the Clerk to St Enoder Parish Council for over 15 years, before recently standing down from the role. It was an absolute pleasure to work with Amanda over the last decade-and-a-half on a wide range of projects for the Parish and I would like to send my best wishes for the future.

Amanda will be sorely missed and I was pleased that councillors came together to present an inscribed glass vase (and flowers) to her as a thank you at the meeting in August.

14.0 New Clerk

I would like to welcome Jenny Mitchell as the new Clerk of St Enoder Parish Council. I was a member of the interview panel and I am confident that she will also be a fantastic Clerk for the Parish.

15.0 A "Band" book

In recent weeks, I have also been working on a fundraising book to mark the 170th anniversary of Indian Queens Band. I am presently seeking sponsorship to cover printing costs, so that all income from the sales of the publication will go to the Band. I am hopeful that it will be available in early December.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL FAMILIES

16.0 Advice

In addition, I have assisted numerous households and individuals with guidance and advice on a range of topics.