

## **Annual report (2023-2024) from Cllr Dick Cole, Cornwall Councillor for the St Dennis and St Enoder division**

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This report includes a few examples of the work that I have carried out over the last 12 months. As this report is for the St Dennis Annual Assembly, I have focussed on my activities in this Parish. It is not an exhaustive list.

### **1.0 Council positions**

During the last year, I was elected as the chairman of the new China Clay Area and Luxulyan Community Area Partnership (which replaced the Network Area for the China Clay Area) and I also continue to chair 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 attended a wide range of related meetings – both in person and via TEAMS / ZOOM video-conferencing.

In addition, I have attended the main council meetings of St Dennis Parish Council and associated meetings of the Neighbourhood Plan working group. I am a member of the St Dennis and Nanpean Community Trust (which distributes the funding generated by the planning agreement linked to the incinerator) and I attend the incinerator liaison group.

### **2.0 ClayTAWC**

A highlight for me during the last twelve months was to secure grants totalling £170,459 for ClayTAWC to purchase the Old School building from which we operate and to replace the kitchen. The monies came from the Community Levelling Up fund (£96,560) and the St Dennis and Nanpean Community Trust (£73,899).

The conveyancing is taking quite a while, but we should be there soon. The Board are planning a special event later in the year to celebrate the 25th anniversary of ClayTAWC and the purchase of the building.

### **3.0 Other funding applications**

In addition to the grant funding for ClayTAWC, I also secured the following funding for projects in St Enoder Parish.

- £10,000 towards the cost of resurfacing the parking area in the Recreation Ground, next to the Youth Club (Lottery Awards for All).
- £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).

#### **4.0 Homechoice review**

Twelve months ago, I reported that Cornwall Council and registered providers had commenced a review into the Homechoice system, through which publicly-owned rental homes are allocated. Council staff proposed that the "local connection" aspect of the allocations should be reduced. I led the opposition to these changes and forced an extra period of consultation, but my views were not taken on board by Cornwall Council's Cabinet.

However, one positive change is that 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. Having pushed for stronger "local connection" criteria, I am also the first councillor to be in negotiation for such plans, which are presently being drafted for both St Dennis and St Enoher parishes.

Such a plan should mean that a higher percentage of homes should go to households with a connection to St Dennis Parish than in the recent past.

#### **5.0 Cornish Lithium**

I have also been in regular contact with Cornish Lithium, so that I can understand how they are working up their plans for mining in our area. I am aware that, as the company works up its "feasibility study" during 2024, I have an important job to do in trying help local residents know what is progressing.

#### **6.0 Multi-use trail to the Goss Moor**

At last year's Annual Assembly, I reported that I had secured funding for a study into the possibility of a multi-use trail along the old railway line between the village and Goss Moor. Since then I have been trying to persuade Cornwall Council to develop this as a project. This has proved to be problematic and council officers have asked St Dennis Parish Council and I to initially approach the people who now own segments of the trackbed to see if they are willing to support the initiative. This work is about to be done.

#### **7.0 Road safety matters**

Residents have brought a wide range of concerns to me about the condition of local roads and related safety matters, which I continue to report to Cormac / Cornwall Council.

In addition, the recent bad weather has also been causing a great deal of flooding, which has meant dangerous road conditions and damage to the surface of many local roads. I have been making representations about this and Cornwall Council is in contact with the Environment Agency about working with landowners to mitigate water runoff from fields.

## **8.0 My work with St Dennis Parish Council**

I have worked with the councillors on the Parish Council throughout the last year, giving advice and support as best I can. I have enjoyed helping out with some local initiatives, such as the recent community litter pick. I really enjoyed clearing the stretch of road between the Domellick car park and the entrance to the power station – a distance of less than 200m – and I picked up five bags of waste, some shelving and a few fragments of cars.

## **9.0 My work at Cornwall Council**

I have been heavily involved with a range of matters. There were a lot of discussions about a “devolution deal” for Cornwall, but everything offered by the Government was so weak and not about devolution at all. An extremely limited “level 2” deal was finally agreed by Cabinet late last year.

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, planning policy matters, the sell-off of council offices (which I opposed) and much more.

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

## **10.0 Community Chest**

As the local Cornwall Councillor, I am allocated £3,000 to grant to local community organisations. I can confirm that, for 2023-24, I supported ClayTAWC (supplies for small foodbank), Indian Queens Pit, Indian Queens Under-5s Pre-School, St Dennis Bells and Ringers, St Dennis Youth Football, St Enoder Youth Club and Summercourt Academy PTFA.

## **11.0 Reporting back**

I present a monthly written report to meetings of St Dennis Parish Council and also contribute a monthly news update for publication in the St Austell Voice.

I hope to deliver a regular newsletter around St Dennis Parish. The last newsletter I sent out, about nine months ago, included feedback on the work towards a neighbourhood plan, and I am hoping to distribute another one within the next two-three months.

## **12.0 Helping local people**

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

I continue to be available on 07791 876607 and [cllr.dick.cole@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.dick.cole@cornwall.gov.uk).