

Cornwall Council report

Cllr Dick Cole

Covering 27th October – 23rd November 2025

1.0 Council and other meetings

Physical Cornwall Council meetings in the last month included the Central Sub-Area Planning Committee, Constitution and Governance Committee (and an associated pre-meeting), two informal meetings of the Budget Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and a meeting of a “task and finish group” from the Corporate, Finance and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee working on “Customer Philosophy: Face to Face Customer Services.”

Meetings via video-conferencing meanwhile included an informal session of the Corporate, Finance and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewing its work programme, two meetings relating to the work programme of the Constitution and Governance Committee, a member development session about the Cornish and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, a Group Leaders’ Meeting, a one-to-one with the Chief Executive, a briefing about the closed hydrotherapy pool in St Austell, and a get-together of Cornwall Councillors from across the China Clay Area and Luxulyan Community Area Partnership (CAP).

I attended about a Conference about Hate Crime in Cornwall, as well as the most recent meeting of Cornish Lithium’s Trelavour Liaison Group.

In addition to meetings of both St Dennis Parish Council and St Enoder Parish Council (2), I attended meetings of the Fraddon Village Hall Committee, Indian Queens Band Committee and Indian Queens Pit Committee.

2.0 First Bus

First Bus has just announced that it plans to withdraw all of its bus services from Cornwall on 14th February 2026. The Transport Team at Cornwall Council is now working to attract other bus companies to take over the routes. First Bus has also stated that it plans to withdraw from all five of its depots in Cornwall – one of which is Summercourt. I will report more when I hear more.

3.0 Cornwall Local Plan

In preparation for the next Local Plan, work at the unitary authority is ongoing on a Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). This is something that Councils preparing Local Plans are expected to do by central government. Linked to this, the leadership of the Council issued a “call for sites” and landowners and developers have put forward a total of 960 suggested sites.

The policy team at the unitary authority have carried out some potential assessment of the land put forward. Parish Councils had previously been asked for their comments and now Cornwall Councillors have been invited to give feedback by 30th January 2026.

For the record, I fundamentally disagree with this approach to the identification of development sites. I am also not happy with the approach to the assessment of the appropriateness of such land, and I will be making representations.

They have also just launched a new “call for large sites,” which they define as schemes for over 800 homes.

4.0 New highways scheme

In my last briefing, I confirmed that Cornwall Council has opened a new highways scheme, which will be called the Community Highways Improvement Programme. It has been confirmed that for each of the next three years, £47,320 will be made available to be spent on highway improvements or road safety measures within the four divisions of the China Clay Area and Luxulyan Community Area Partnership.

In a meeting with other Cornwall Councillors from across Clay County, we have decided to investigate a scheme for new parking restrictions (double yellow lines) across the whole of the CAP, which would only need one legal order.

Further information about potential schemes is included in the parish-specific parts of this report.

5.0 Hate Crime Conference

I have been heavily involved with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion matters on the unitary authority and, on 5th November, I attended a conference about hate crime at St Erme Community Hall. The event was organised by the University of Exeter and it was disturbing to hear about the increase in such incidents.

6.0 “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

7.0 Community Highways Improvement Programme

As noted above, the unitary authority has opened a new highways scheme and local Cornwall Councillors are investigating a scheme for double yellow lines. I am compiling a list of locations where new parking restrictions have been previously discussed or requested.

For St Dennis Parish, the present list of requests include:

- Southern end of Trelavour Road.
- Southern end of Hendra Road [around the new build-out].

I will be talking to St Dennis Parish Council about other potential locations.

8.0 Problems at the incinerator

Local residents will undoubtedly be aware that the incinerator had a major malfunction a short period ago and the second line feeding the burner has been out of action – with the plant working at half-capacity.

Cranes are arriving to remove the line two boiler in sections. These works will occur between the hours of 7am and 7pm and will be completed in December. The roof will be temporarily modified to include a sliding panel, allowing access to the boiler during the repair works.

There will be extra vehicles accessing the site due to deliveries and mobilisation works, but these will use the usual route on the haul road. The contactors will break for Christmas between 20th December 2025 and 6th January 2026.

Suez has also submitted a non-material amendment to temporarily locate six storage containers on the site during the repair works.

9.0 Cornish Lithium

I continue to attend the Trelavour Community Liaison Group meetings organised by Cornish Lithium. The last one was on 18th November and the focus was on the potential impact of their plans on rights of way and the proposed multi-use trail from St Dennis to the Goss Moor Trail. I was disappointed that there was a lack of structure to the meeting and the limited amount of information that was forthcoming. I have challenged Cornish Lithium on its approach to these meetings.

ST ENODER PARISH

10.0 Central Sub-Area Planning Committee

I have previously reported about the decision of the UK Government to impose a higher housing target on Cornwall. As a consequence, council officers have decided that we no longer have a “five-year land supply” and that therefore (i) housing policies in the Cornwall Local Plan can no longer be given weight in the deliberation of planning applications and that (ii) housing policies in most NDPs – including that of St Enoder Parish – are out-of-date.

In this scenario, it is stated in the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework that a “tilted balance” comes into play and housing applications should be approved unless “any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.” It clarifies what this means and adds that particular regard should be paid to “key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes ...”

Linked to this, I referred three planning applications to a meeting of the Central Sub-Area Planning Committee on 17th November, which would have been refused prior to the introduction of the new inappropriate, unsustainable and undeliverable new housing target.

St Enoder Parish Council and I had objected to the three applications. I spoke at the meeting, as did Ross Wimberley, the Chairman of the Parish Council. I was extremely disappointed that the majority of the councillors on the Planning Committee gave little weight to our representations.

It means that, in the last few months, a total of 19 open-market properties have been consented on land, which the St Enoder Neighbourhood Plan had protected from unfettered development. The consented developments in question did not include a single local-needs affordable home.

10.1 PA25/05351 / East of Redgate Court, Indian Queens.

This “planning in principle” (PIP) application was for a low-density development of seven-to-nine properties in open countryside, within a field measuring three quarters of a hectare. This application therefore fell below the threshold [of ten] for local-needs housing.

At the meeting, I pointed out that another very similar application in Probus had recently been turned down. It was also for nine open-market properties in an area of land, that measured three-quarters of a hectare, and opened up adjacent land for further development – just as the proposal to the east of Indian Queens would!

The refusal notice for the Probus development stated that the site was “located outside of the defined settlement” and it represented an “undesirable extension and incongruous pocket of development into the countryside.” It added that it would result in another field becoming developable, there was an inefficient use of the land and there was a failure to maximise the opportunity to deliver affordable housing.

I argued that both proposals should be treated the same, but that did not materialise. I even had to challenge statements from the planning team that a field outside Indian Queens did “not have the character of open countryside” but was a “transition zone” between the settlement and the countryside.

I am continuing to make representations about my conclusion that communities in Clay Country are not being treated with the same duty of care as some other communities across Cornwall – when it comes to the planning process.

10.2 PA25/05740 / Five properties in Higher Fraddon

This was also a PIP application, located next to a development of seven units that have just been built. Councillor Wimberley and I told the meeting that the site for the previous seven units had been developed on an old farmyard, which the owners allowed to fall into disrepair and that, for a number of years, it was a regular occurrence for roofing sheets and other debris to be blowing around the local community when there were high winds.

We made it clear that the Parish Council supported the redevelopment of this area, because we wanted the area to be made safe. But it was a compromise, as we sought a guarantee that the green fields around the farmyard would not be

developed and land to the west of Higher Fraddon would be protected from the spread of development away from the settlement.

We expressed the community's disappointment that this fresh application for a further five units had now been submitted – especially as Higher Fraddon has had to put up with a lot in recent years because of planning [ie. the biogas plant] and the road through this area was in a very poor condition and does not even have a footway for pedestrians.

I am also put-out by the claim in the committee report that “the current proposal would respond to the housing crisis by increasing the supply of housing and improving the availability and access to homes contributing towards a step-change in the supply of affordable homes across Cornwall ...” There were no affordable homes on offer and the properties on the indicative plan for the scheme mirror the bungalows that have been built to the south. These have been selling for £525,000 to £550,000. I pointed out this was doing nothing to assist people on lower local incomes getting a home that they could afford!

10.3 PA25/05705 / One housing unit in Higher Fraddon.

The final application was for a single unit in front of the five properties noted above. As these five had just been consented, this one was always going to be approved.

11.0 Crossing at St Columb Road Station

Network Rail has been consulting on a proposal to close the pedestrian crossing over the railway line at St Columb Road, which links the Station Approach to the Station. They have just confirmed that, following consultation, they have withdrawn their proposal.

12.0 Community Highways Improvement Programme

As noted above, the unitary authority has opened a new highways scheme and local Cornwall Councillors are investigating a scheme for double yellow lines. I am compiling a list of locations where new parking restrictions have been previously discussed or requested.

For St Enoder Parish, the present list of requests include:

- Land in and around the Indian Queens Industrial Estate.
- Junction of the Harvenna Heights estate in Fraddon.

I will be talking to St Enoder Parish Council about other potential locations.

I will also be exploring other requests for road safety improvements, which could be supported by the CHIP scheme, and recent representations have included concerns about traffic on the A3058 through Summercourt, traffic and lack of streetlights at St Dennis Junction, and the wish for calming measures through Trefullock near Summercourt.

13.0 Transfer of play areas / green spaces to St Enoder Parish Council

The transfer of the play areas / green spaces [Hanover Parc, Kingsley Court, Lindsay Fields, Penhale Gardens and St James View] from Cornwall Council to St Enoder Parish Council is nearing completion. I had requested that Cornwall Council / Cormac undertake some tidy-up works before the transfer. A meeting has been arranged with Cormac to agree these works, which will take place on 27th November.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL FAMILIES

14.0 Advice

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