

## **Annual report (2024-2025) from Cllr Dick Cole, Cornwall Councillor for the St Dennis & St Enoder 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 was also 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.

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**

In my report to last year's Annual Assembly, I reported that I had secured 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).

I am pleased to report that the conveyancing was completed in August 2024 and we celebrated with a community event that also marked the Centre's 25 years at the heart of St Dennis.

### **3.0 Homechoice review**

Earlier this year, Cornwall Council and registered providers finalised a review into the Homechoice system, through which publicly-owned rental homes are allocated. I opposed the changes and, in particular, how local connection criteria would be weakened. I was unsuccessful, but the new approach subsequently allowed for "local lettings plans" (LLPs) 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. 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.

### **4.0 Cornish Lithium**

The UK Government has decided that the Cornish Lithium project at Trelavour should be considered a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, which means

that key planning decisions will be taken in London, not by Cornwall Council. I have made my view clear that I did not agree with this.

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. The company is working up its "feasibility study" and I understand that more detailed plans about how they might extract the mineral at Trelavour will be made public towards the end of June. I will be doing my best to find out what local people think about the proposal and to ensure that these views are well-presented during the planning process which will follow.

Local people will know that I have been exploring the possibility of a multi-use trail along the old railway line between the village and Goss Moor. Cornish Lithium are wishing to lay an electric cable along this route and have confirmed that they could also create the multi-use trail as a benefit of their development.

## **5.0 Solar Farm at Trerice**

A planning application for a 32MW solar farm in the Trerice part of St Dennis Parish was submitted in 2024. I have also just been informed by officers at the unitary authority that they are minded to approve the scheme and I am liaising with the Parish Council about this, as they have raised a range of objections. I am also seeking further information about the impact of the proposed scheme on the character of the local area.

## **6.0 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.

Specific interventions during the last 12 months include the construction of an additional pinchpoint to slow traffic at the southern end of Hendra Road, while pavements in the Hall Road, Halimote Road and Manson Place area were patched following representations.

I have also ensured that Carne Hill and Trelavour Road are on Cornwall Council's provisional list for resurfacing and I continue to make representations about this. I have also made representations about the need for a full assessment of all traffic and road safety issues in St Dennis. I have not made much headway with Cornwall Council officers on this as yet, but I am keeping up the pressure.

## **7.0 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. This has included the work towards a Neighbourhood Plan, but this work is now on hold because of top-down changes in planning policy from the new Government.

Projects that I hope to bring to fruition by working with the Parish Council over the next 12 months includes (i) the provision of welcome signs to St Dennis Parish and signage for a number of rural settlements including Enniscaven,

Gothers and Trerice Terrace, and (ii) the transfer of the play area in Hall Road from Cornwall Council to the Parish Council so that it can be improved as a facility for the local community.

## **8.0 My work at Cornwall Council**

Over the last 12 months, I have made representations on numerous subjects including 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.

## **9.0 Community Chest**

As the local Cornwall Councillor, I was allocated £3,000 to grant to local community organisations for 2023-24. I can confirm that I supported the funding of music tuition at St Dennis School, help with the School's play area through the Friends of St Dennis Academy, the Over-70s Christmas Party, the community fireworks display and supplies for foodbank at ClayTAWC.

## **10.0 Reporting back**

I continue to present a monthly written report to meetings of St Dennis Parish Council and also contribute a monthly news updates for publication in the St Austell Voice newspaper and the St Dennis News magazine. Over the last 12 months, I have twice distributed newsletters around the Parish.

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

## **12.0 Some thanks**

My first term (2021-25) as the Cornwall Councillor for St Dennis and St Enoder division recently ended and I would like to thanks parish councillors and others for their help and support over the last four years. I was pleased to be re-elected on 1st May. I would like to thank everyone who voted for me and I look forward to working hard for local people for the next four years.