

Cornwall Councillor update – St Austell Bay Parish – July 2024

I hope you are all well as we go through July.

At the time of writing this update (15 July), we have had a bit of nice weather over the weekend, but then it's been torrential rain all day so far today, so hopefully that's not our summer over!

Talking about flooding, Cornwall Council continues to work with Charlestown harbour company in relation to Charlestown Leats, there have been some reports to the council of fly tipping in the Boscoppa area, however a site visit has been undertaken and no dumping was noted, only some clearance of vegetation.

At the parish council's request, I have asked if a representative from the history group could be invited to the next meeting in order to share local knowledge and help deliver a positive result.

I am looking forward to Charlestown Regatta Week and will again be involved in judging the Carnival entries, and helping out behind the bar, which last year was a real unexpected highlight for me! Let's hope the weather is kind.

Up at County Hall, you might remember a few months ago that there were concerns raised after Cornwall Council's Constitution and Governance Committee voted to restrict its members from questioning members of the public and Town and Parish Councils during its meetings.

I believe it is important that as fuller debate as possible is heard when planning committees determine applications, and this decision in my mind did not allow this, and in still allowing the committee to ask questions of the applicants, could even be perceived as weighting the process in a way that it shouldn't.

Along with several other councillors, I raised concerns about this at April's Full Council meeting, and I was pleased to subsequently get the backing of all four of the parish councils in my division in calling for these changes to be reversed.

I'm pleased to see that the Constitution & Governance Committee recently met and reconsidered its decision.

The Committee resolved:

1. That all Members be permitted to ask questions of clarification of all speakers at Planning Committees;
2. That the guidance be updated to reflect what clarification should be, reflecting paragraph 2.2 of the report;
3. That the changes take effect immediately;
4. That the Monitoring Officer issues a communication to all Members following the meeting to advise on the decisions made; and
5. The guidance is otherwise updated to ensure that it is consistent with the Committee's decisions on paragraph 12.

This is a good, common sense decision, and I thank the members of the Constitution and Governance Committee for listening and acting accordingly.

Cormac have given me details of several areas on the SWCP where they are doing coastal access improvements, i.e. putting in or mending steps. I can't go into more detail as to where these are at the moment, because discussions are ongoing with the various landowners, but this is a welcome commitment in terms of funding and resource from Cormac and I look forward to seeing the works completed.

Next week we have a South Cornwall Community Area Partnership event and AGM.

There will be a market stall event with a focus on Community, Health and Wellbeing. Come along to find out from local groups and organisations about the different activities and support available in our communities and to meet your local Cornwall, Town and Parish Councillors, Wednesday 24th July, 6pm at the Cornubia 31 Eastcliffe Road, Par PL24 2AQ. Parking at Par Track.

As ever, should anyone wish to contact me about any issues, please contact me at 07885277670 or cllr.james.mustoe@cornwall.gov.uk