

CC Report for the Town Council Meeting 15th December 2022

This report covers the period 12 November to 9th December ensuring the report can be seen by all fellow town councillors with all other council papers prior to the above meeting.

November/December has been an extremely busy time and my apologies should I leave anything out and have to explain at the council meeting!

Firstly a number of questions were raised following the recent fatality on the A374, as promised I posed these questions to Highways, their responses are in bold italics

Q1 - Apparently long before, at least 3 years (approximately) both local Parish Councils and Torpoint Council raised concerns over the state of the A374 throughout its length both from the speeding along from Trerulefoot to Torpoint and the surfacing of same. I cannot find any record of this but my predecessor at Cornwall Council – Gary Davis - assures me that is the case. The aim was to have the speed reduced from the current 60mph to 50 mph same as A38 from Liskeard to Saltash with the obvious reduction through the villages.:

Response - ***The 50mph proposed limit has not progressed any further and has not been raised with myself. When setting speed limits the characteristics of the road have to warrant the speed reduction. I will be taking professional advice from the Road Safety Team and Police with any proposed changes.***

Q2 - Another point raised was at present there are some signs along the A374 that state 4 killed, well they have been there some time now and are looking pretty tatty, the other point being that at least counting the one earlier this month there has been 2 more fatal RTC's at least postdating that signage. Could, if the signs are to remain, these be updated to reflect the dangerous nature of this road.

Response - ***The signs have not been updated since they have been installed in 2005. The information is based towards motorcyclists and the influx of collisions at that time period - There are no plans to renew this type of signage.***

Q3 - Last and final point concerns were expressed by those coming out of the car park at Torpoint Cemetery in vehicles have less than a minute to join the road going both West and East before a car travelling at 60mph is on them, there was even anecdotal evidence of near misses as a result of the speed of passing cars. Would it be possible to have some signage on the approaches along the lines of "Caution Concealed Entrance/Exit Ahead"?

Response - ***This type of 'near miss' information is not held by Cornwall Council. "Caution Concealed Entrance/Exit Ahead" is not legal signage from the Traffic Signs Regulation and General Directions manual. As this is not a junction onto another road that is public maintained.***

Both Kate and I have now registered an Expression of Interest as regards making the whole of the A374 from Trerulefoot to Torpoint a 50 mph zone, with obviously, the 30mph zones remaining in place in built up areas. We have re-emphasised that this is not a knee jerk reaction to the recent fatality but quite rightly I feel the response at this stage is to await the reports from the Police, Road Safety Section and recommendations by the Coroner before further action is taken.

I have mentioned the Torpoint (as opposed to Horson) Cemetery above and on that subject the recent rains have really taken their toll on the surfacing. Although I did not get approval for asphalt resurfacing of the whole car park patchwork surfacing has been undertaken and improved the area. I have requested that the area is monitored on a regular basis and more specifically after prolonged periods of heavy rain to prevent it falling into such a state of disrepair as previously, records show that the last "re-surfacing took place in 2015".

I requested the Town Clerk to forward to you all some information reference the possibility of a Banking Hub in Fore Street. It is some time since we lost both our banks, Barclays and Lloyds in 2015 and 2017 respectively and we have managed to cope without. However as per the information you already have I believe this is worthy of further exploration, it is a total no cost to the council and as we are always trying to encourage small businesses into the area, plus the proposed houses to be built by 2030 it could possibly be a win/win scenario for the town and possibly resolve the ATM problems we currently have.

There was a report of a rat infestation in the town nesting in a house that has remained empty since the owner died some 5 years ago. It is a 3 bedrooed terrace and could easily be cleared and used to accommodate a family again. I arranged for the Environmental Health Team (EHT) along with the Executor of the Will to visit the house to substantiate any rumours of the infestation. The EHT could find no evidence of infestation and the Executor is now working on clearing the rest of the house and tidying up the garden with a view to renting out same. The residents who originally complained of the infestation have all been made aware of the EHT report.

I undertook a visit with the new Assets Manager of Cornwall Housing to Salamanca Flats and again pointed out the mould/damp problems still affecting residents and their young children and suggested that possibly a short term solution could be the use of desiccant de-humidifiers as against refrigerant types which he duly noted. I also pointed out to him one of the down drainage pipes from the roof that was damaged/broken off some 18 months ago and has still not been repaired, I think we will need to wait and see how long this takes to be repaired following his re-assurance that "he will get right onto it"?

There has also been some ongoing problems with the bin stores in and around Harvey Street Flats, the key codes were recently changed, unfortunately some residents were not made aware of this which resulted in the scattering of debris both by birds and the wind. The area has now been cleaned but I am still waiting to see evidence that the residents are aware of the new codes.

There has also been some progress as regards the Promenade furniture, the roofing is now going to be replaced and it has been suggested that a team of volunteers is sought to regularly maintain the area. This was discussed at the last Development and Localism Meeting where it was determined that the benches etc., be brought up to a reasonable state of repair before any further discussions are entered into as regards ongoing responsibility for same in the future.

I have received an email literally this afternoon (12:07) reference EV Charging points in Torpoint. Unfortunately, although the original intention was to have x 2 charging points at the car park by the Library and a further x 2 at Sainsbury's car park both have caused problems. The former has been deemed as financially non-viable and the latter has so many covenants wrapped up in it that although negotiations have been ongoing with Sainsbury's since pre Covid these have still not been resolved. I have replied asking that as there is a car park opposite the school could this be surveyed for possible installation there or as has also been suggested x 2 charging points in Elliot Square.

CC Meetings attended this month:

Wednesday 23 November NCH Truro – Children's and Families OSC – A very interesting meeting with a presentation on Academy Schools by Hannah Woodhouse who is the Regional Director for the South West DfE. Also noted that Cornwall is recognised as the lowest funded in England.

Friday 25th November NCH Truro – Audit Committee, the main finding being that Cornwall Housing regarded as a significant issue.

Monday 28 November Chy Travail Bodmin – East Cornwall Planning Meeting.

Tuesday 29 November NCH Truro – Full Council – Of note the 10 week Public Consultation on Devolution Deal commences 9 December.

Friday 2 December Plymouth – Joint Bridge and Ferry Management Meeting. Of note the turbulence in the financial sector since August/September has resulted in current financial forecasts coming under scrutiny yet again and with that in mind a date (yet to be determined) will be forthcoming for a full workshop in January 2023. From that it is hoped to have a further meeting with representatives from the DfT and local MP's before the next scheduled meeting in March 2023.

Thursday 8 December NCH Truro – Pensions Committee Meeting.

Unfortunately, due to a diary clash I was unable to attend the CNA Meeting on 7th December as this clashed with RBL Committee Meeting where reports are required for the National Poppy Appeal which I had compiled.

Additionally, I could not attend the Tamar Valley AONB Meeting as this clashed with an additional virtual meeting of the Children's and Families OSC.

Numerous virtual meetings.