

## **Cornwall Councillor Paul Wills Report –PC meeting 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

Since we last met,

I sincerely hope you all had a lovely Christmas and New year.

Obviously, it's a quite month in the run up to Christmas and over the festive period.

The big thing coming our way is the governments white paper on devolution. The new Labour government wants to see local county authorities combine to form regional authorities. The plan is for Cornwall and Devon to combine. I can tell you that the current administration has held meetings with Plymouth City Council, Devon County Council and Torbay Council to discuss the issue. No formal agreement or Expression of Interest has been sent to Government to date. It is my understanding that Cornwall Council will not be sending an E.O.I to government by the deadline which is the 10<sup>th</sup> of January. Personally, I believe this to be a mistake because without an E.O.I we will have a decision imposed on us by Central Government. One Cornwall Councillor is proposing to put before Full Council on the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month a motion which states that: Quote: That the Council advises the Leader not to give HM Government a positive expression of interest in a cross border devolution deal. I am unsure if this motion will be accepted by the Chairman or not. The leader of Cornwall Council recently wrote to all six Cornish MP's this is the collective response from all six (Quote): On 17<sup>th</sup> December, all six Cornish MPs met the Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner. It was a clear and open exchange of views. She was aware of the Cornish situation, engaged and listened intently. She laid out the Government's position exactly as per the English Devolution Bill White Paper. She explained that there were two possible paths broadly open to us. One was to engage early in the process for a Combined Authority and a Mayor. The other was to remain on the Foundation Level. We could then continue to campaign for a Cornwall-only footprint; however, no guarantees were given. One this is certain; change is coming because of the white paper, and it will be here sooner rather than later. I will of course keep you informed.

I attended the public meeting at Trevarrian to hear what local people think of the plans for the former creamery. Once again, the developers have put forward plans for the site, as you know they are almost identical to the previous plans except now they have the inclusion of containers for commercial use. I have been invited by the planning officer dealing with the application to meet with him and the applicants to discuss the plans. Following the public meeting and considering my previous views on the matter, I will be informing them my position has not changed. I will urge them to meet with residents, as suggested at the public meeting, to see if they are willing to change their plans to remove housing from the roadside and include perhaps more affordable housing on the site. I don't think this is unreasonable. I think most people expect that something will happen on the site but if the developers can keep the roadside clear of housing and build behind the current bunds, out of site from the main road, this would be a far more acceptable solution.