

Highlights from the Altarnun Parish Council meeting on Thursday 21st November 2013

In the absence of Chair Retallack due to ill health, Vice Chair Dowler led the meeting. 25 members of the public joined the 6 other Council Members present, Grounds manager Smart, Project manager Parsons and WPC Lawson and her colleague. Apologies were received from Councillors Jasper; Kendall and Hoskin.

The Public Representation slot heard from a local resident wishing to provide preliminary information about a potential application to open an equestrian goods retail outlet at Trelin; several members of the public representing either personal or group concerns about a proposed wind turbine at Tregrenna; representation from a homeowner objecting to the continuous siting of a caravan in Penpont Woodland; a young member of the community pressed the Council to take action to slow traffic down in the centre of the village following an incident in which his dog was hurt; and finally, requests for improvements to the quality of Cormac/Highways road repairs, road signage and drain clearance across the Parish but particularly at Tregirls Bridge. The Vice Chair thanked all for their input.

In response to a casual, seemingly critical observation by one of the public that the Parish Council had not been “elected”, the Clerk took the opportunity to remind all those in attendance that the 11 seat Altarnun Parish Council had been legitimately and officially appointed following the general elections in May 2013. Seven individuals from the community had openly and willingly put themselves forward to take part in these public elections. Unfortunately, for at least the second time running in recent history, the community had failed to find more applicants than seats and as a result under Government rules and regulations, the seven candidates were all accepted by Cornwall Council and deemed to be “uncontested”. The parish was then instructed to fill (co-opt) others into the remaining four seats. In line with Parish Council process and practice, the consequential selection exercise was publicised and a new group of individuals put their hat in the ring to be considered. Ironically, had these people applied the first time around there would indeed have been a formal public election exercise. The Parish Council recruitment selection panel then carried out a competitive selection and the full Council endorsed the appointment of the remaining members and elected the current Council Chair in time for the inaugural meeting of the new Council earlier in the year.

The public should note that not all parish councils in Cornwall managed to secure full membership, let alone create such a richly diverse Council as that currently serving Altarnun Parish. All current members live and work locally; the members cover all age groups; represent both sexes/homeowner/family/socio-economic status types. Most importantly, all are equally committed in their desire to serve the Parish, as witnessed at the recent Parish Council coffee morning. The Clerk hoped that this would re-assure the public present and put an end to such remarks which are at best mis-informed and at worst potentially harmful to the successful running of Parish Council affairs; either way they are discourteous to the individual members. She encouraged those present to explain the situation to anyone they know who may hold, or voice, similar views.

The Parish Council considered four planning applications at the meeting:- PA13/09465 and PA13/09975 – Listed building consent & planning application to construct a 2 storey extension with entrance porch to east at Lower Trethinna Cottage, Trethinna Hill, Altarnun, PL15 7SY. They raised no objection to this application. PA13/09299 – Application to modify planning obligation at Higher Tregirls Farm, Altarnun, PL15 7 SA. The Council were concerned about the impact of the removal of the old planning obligations on any future applications to convert the dis-used barn. After reflection it determined to raise its concern with Cornwall Council Planning Office and decided to oppose the application at this time. PA13/08862 – Application for certificate of lawful development for an existing use – namely continued siting of a caravan in Penpont Woodland @ Trerithick Bridge, Altarnun. The Parish Council were concerned about endangering by default the long term status of this area as woodland and therefore opposed the application suggesting alternative solutions for the applicant. Finally, PA13/09900 – Installation of a single, small scale (75KW - 39.6m x 29.3m x 20.8 m) wind turbine with associated electricity cabinet, underground cable to pole & temporary access @ Tregrenna Farm, Altarnun, PL15 7RR. After a lengthy debate and due consideration of the material previously studied from the Cornwall Council Planning website; Government rules, regulations & guidelines and feedback from both the evening’s public representation slot and the recent coffee morning, the Council determined to oppose the application on the basis that it failed to meet current Govt rules and regulations in terms of distance & noise, and concerns about its environmental and highways safety impact.

The Clerk confirmed that the successful 2012/2013 Audit Report publication obligations had been successfully fulfilled and the exercise was now formally closed. Guidance on the formulation of the 2014/15 precept submission had now been received. These were due with Cornwall Council by 31st December 2013.

The Parish Council noted that the long awaited “unsuitable for buses and HGV” signs had now been erected on entrances to the road between Occaziny and Penhallow Manor. The winter supply of salt and grit had been ordered along with the new rubbish - bin requested for Rose Hill. They were then informed by the Clerk that the traffic calming/ 30 mph road signs to be painted on the A30 exit slip road at Trewint had been delayed due to wet weather. The work was now scheduled for the week commencing 25th November, weather permitting. WPC Lawson agreed after discussion to schedule traffic speed monitoring exercises at Trewint, and in the Altarnun Centre, to try and gauge if they have made a difference.

The Council then discussed the successful and well attended Coffee morning on Saturday 16th November 2013. Councillor Baker-Pannell and volunteer Carole Smith were thanked for their excellent refreshment operation which had been much appreciated by all. The Clerk had earlier distributed a seven page document in which all 230 plus comments had been catalogued and typed. The Council was asked to read and reflect on the input and be prepared to discuss follow on actions and/or responses to the points made at the December meeting and subsequent meetings. The Clerk mentioned that the Chair had suggested that a similar scaled down event be staged at Bolventor in the first quarter of 2014 to engage with the local community and possibly focus more directly on Bolventor and Moor dweller concerns. This will be discussed at the December meeting. The Council then reviewed general correspondence received during the month and discussed other business including a heads up from WPC Lawson that the Police were talking with the village school about inviting the class of 2014 to re-do the children's murals in the Parish bus Shelters. The Chair confirmed the Council's support in principle for the idea and said it would await a formal request.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 19th December 2013 @ 7.30pm in the Bolventor Reading Rooms. As ever, all Parishioners are welcome to attend. Christmas festivities will then be upon us and so the Council expressed their best wishes to all across the parish for a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and hope filled New Year.

Clerk to Altarnun Parish Council – November 2013.