

Comments by Cllr M. Goward on errors in Draft Minutes of 27 August 2014.

Re the draft minutes of the council meeting on 27 August. I have the following comments to make in respect of what has and has not been recorded.

1. Page 1462. In the public session, you refer to a process which includes approval by the TPC before documents are published on the website. I am not aware of any such process or even the council discussing this. To date nothing published on the website has been put to the council for approval. Can you give details on when this process was discussed and voted upon; otherwise this should be deleted from the draft.
2. Page 1462 – Approval of Minutes. I pointed out that the procedure as recorded in the minutes did not comply with Standing Orders in relation to the rules of debate. When asked if I wished to propose an amendment to the minutes, I replied that the minutes recorded what had occurred, but that the procedure was ‘not in order’. Your draft version that I made no comment is incorrect. Also, I did vote in favour of approval.
3. Page 1463 – Neighbourhood Development Plan. Firstly, I pointed out that the proposed Advisory Committee would compromise the whole of the Plan, because it would make the NDP Team, a committee of the council. The Localism Act brought in Neighbourhood Planning whereby the Local Planning Authority (Cornwall Council), authorised local parish councils, as Qualifying Bodies, to set up a Team, after an application to the LPA. Under the Cornwall Council guidelines, the parish council gives the authority to an NDP Team to make key decisions in the process on their behalf.
4. Cornwall Council has issued comprehensive instructions and guidance, under the Act, in relation to Neighbourhood Planning. All the seminars and meetings I have attended have stressed that the project must be community based and not council based – it is about what the local community want for its parish. There is a strong risk that a parish council Advisory Committee would breach these guidelines and it would probably cause the official Examiner to reject the proposed plan.

You comment that I continue to dispute the advice you give. This is a personal observation and is not part of the councillors’ discussion and should not be recorded in the minutes. The Team has obtained advice from Cornwall Council as the lead authority and is following the Council’s guidelines. I believe you have got your advice from another non-council source.

5. Page 1463 - Funding. Only the parish council can make the application for funding. The Team has no authority to do so. The Team has been preparing a budget, which will be finalised soon and presented to the council. The previous chairman was conducting this process.
6. Page 1463. The personal comment by Cllr Wickett shows a lack of understanding of the respective roles. The project manager has spent countless hours on background investigation to keep the project to schedule, in accordance with the guidelines. The liaison councillors are on the Team to ensure that possible proposals do not conflict with council policies and, possibly, to be the go-between to maintain the distance between the council and the community based team. I again asked all councillors present to be the 2nd representative but no volunteers were forthcoming.
7. Page 1463. I also explained briefly the process so that councillors could understand it. I said the Team was appointed by the council and has the authority to investigate, consult the community and also take note of national and county strategic plans to prepare a draft plan. This is presented to the parish council for approval and the council can reject it or suggest areas to cover or expand. The draft plan will take note of official Examiners’ reports of other councils’ plans to ensure it complies. If the council approves the draft plan, it is submitted for official examination and, if approved, is then the subject of a parish referendum. If approved, the LPA has a duty to refer to it when deciding planning applications.