

Occold Parish Council 13.9.2010

County Councillor Report

New Strategic Direction

A number of work shops are being held in September to discuss The County Councils “new strategic direction” in the workshops covering letter it stated, “We shall need resources to fund our wellbeing role. Ideally the concept of localism means relying less on central government funding. Whilst the Coalition Government has talked of reviewing local government financing this will undoubtedly be a longer term change. In order to fill the short term gap, do we want to investigate new income generation schemes in the short term?”

Possible sources of funding could be:

- Using our property to generate revenue income
- Could we become an energy company selling electricity generated on our land and buildings as well as our Energy from Waste Plant.

“We might also want to be the holder of strategic infrastructure that enables smaller enterprises, As we move towards divesting our services there may need to be an interim step of payment by activity and to start creating more commercial skills within our services.”

Or in planer language here come the cuts!

Bridge Open at Last

After a mere wait of around 40 years the Bridge enabling Stowmarket to stand a chance of being gridlock free is at last open. This vital link is the largest single piece of infrastructure the county council has been involved in this year. As reported in earlier reports the bridge has artwork etched into the parapets depicting scenes of the industrial past of Mid Suffolks largest settlement. The opening of this link will also better integrate the near on a thousand houses on Cedar’s Park to be able to not only drive to town but also Cycle and walk.

Scrutiny Committees

The Scrutiny committees that sit at the County Council are being reviewed. All of these panels are chaired by the governing group at the moment, and after serving on one for over a year, I am sceptical as to how much real scrutiny is achieved. Our groups submission to the powers that be at County Hall is that the present regime should be scrapped in favour of a more open form of scrutiny were “task and finish” Panels are used to actually tackle specific issues, rather than the present arrangement were we are told the parameters of the questions we might ask. Hopefully, allowing us mere back benchers a more meaningful role in holding the Leaders and Cabinet to account.

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