

Occold Parish Council 6.12.2010

County Councillor Report

New Scrutiny Arrangements

I reported to your last meeting that the County Council were looking into how we were going to scrap the existing scrutiny system and replace it with something a little more fit for purpose. We have had a meeting regarding any proposed new arrangements.

One idea I am hoping to make sure does not see the light of day, is the idea to pay every member of the new scrutiny committee (10 members) a special responsibility allowance of £3600.00 per year to sit on this panel. I felt in these times of austerity we should set an example, and to pay extra allowances for a member to sit on a panel will inevitably open a complete can of worms regarding all committee places.

New Strategic Direction

Last week we took the vote that agreed that we have found substantial “community capacity” in our County to be able to move forward with “divesting” our services. We have noticed how ever a distinct change in language and attitude regarding this issue from those at the top of the tree at S.C.C. during my now quarterly meeting with the Chief, she did suggest that using the word “Divest” may have been a mistake! During the national press interest in this issue the County Council were very gung ho regarding the potential of “outsourcing” every service, we have now had a mellowing of this position, now we have entered a time of sober reflection I trust this will generate more light than heat, There undoubtedly is capacity to save money and make services more responsive and accountable, In pursuing this we must build from the grass roots up and not impose from the top down, I think this message may now at last being listened to.

Demand Responsive Bus Set To Launch

The County Council has launched a demand responsive Bus service for our area. This new service will be able to be booked by telephone to enable passengers to access more services by public transport. It is envisaged that passengers will telephone to book a space on the 12 seater Bus to connect to out of range transport services from i.e. Mendlesham, Occold, Debenham or Stowmarket Station.

Contact 01449 616000 This service went live yesterday

John Peel Centre

As reported to the last meeting, the John Peel Centre had been selected to be televised on 25th of November for a people’s millions bid (£50,000.00) I am delighted to report that with over 11000 votes we won! This means that the building work for phase one and two can now progress, allowing the building can come into use again early next year. Thank you to everyone that supported this project so far. We will also be informed early in the new year if we have been successful

With getting through to the next round of a £500,000.00 grant from Biffa.

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