

Occold Parish Council 8.11.2010

County Councillor Report

New Strategic Direction

I reported to your last meeting that the County Council were looking into how we might save huge sums of money, and that the county council is looking to “divest” most services within a decade. Attempts to explain this process are at last being communicated to the wider public, workshops are being set up for councillors to investigate the different areas that will be effected by this process. These are Democracy, Divestment, and Strategic council & community capacity.

Park And Ride Axed

The County Council has taken the decision to close the Bury road Park And Ride in an attempt to save money, One of the reasons given for this move is that the Borough Council has allowed derelict land to be used as temporary car parking. The problem with this is that these car parks are at the west and south of the town, not the west. One proposal not acted upon was to charge those with concessionary travel passes to use the service.

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.

Light's Out

The last cabinet meeting a vote was taken to adopt a new program of dimming control to the county councils street light's. This will mean that lights will be able to be controlled to the minute, rather than the dawn to dusk regulation at present. It will provide a lamp by lamp control capability. The borrowing needed to achieve this (2.5 million) will be paid for from Energy savings from the network as a whole.

John Peel Centre

The John Peel Centre (Corn Exchange Stowmarket) has been selected to be televised on 25th of November for a people's millions bid (£50,000.00) so please support us with a phone vote on the day. If you would like to appear in the film come along on the 12th of November at 12.00 noon to the market place Stowmarket dressed as an Artist Dancer, Sculptor etc.

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