

# Occold Parish Council 7.3.2011

## County Councillor Report

### **Budget Setting**

At the last full council meeting the budget setting was a rather long drawn out and brutal affair, spending a lot of time discussing national politics and not focussing enough on likely impacts on Suffolk residents. Among the cuts contained in the budget was the withdrawal of County Council funding for Lollipop People, and the closer of 7 household waste sites out of 18 in the county.

Stowmarket's house hold waste site survived this years cut but Brome and Bramford both in our area are identified for closer.

The budget however did secure funding of £3000,000.00 to Manage "transformation" on top of another £4000,000.00 of annual management costs, given the tiny sums involved in savings related to Lollipop People (less than £180,000.00) the budget does seem to be heavy on cuts to services without commensurate cuts to management.

This budget for me has brought into sharp focus the huge task we all face in negotiating with a council that is insisting that it remains at the strategic core of funding and decision making but wishes to devolve services to the voluntary and charitable sector.

### **Waste Core Strategy**

The County Council has been forwarding the final issues surrounding its "Waste Core Strategy" this is the document that sets out the broad plan for the future needs of Suffolk in its dealing with waste. The details regarding residual waste treatment sites (Eye Airfield Gt Blakenham etc) has been in the public domain for a while, but as the implications of the strategy become more apparent a number of shortcomings in this policy are arising.

### **Bus Subsidy Cut.**

As you probably already know the county council is set to cut most of its subsidised bus routes. This may not be as drastic as it at first seems. Officers are busily making sure that routes to work remain untouched and are trying to stretch the rest of the funding as far as possible however the fares look set to rise and the now approved budget proposes axing the explore card, that gives concessionary Bus travel to teenagers.

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