

# **Occold Parish Council 6.6.2011**

## **County Councillor Report**

### **Residential Care Homes**

The results of the consultation into the future of residential care home provision, has been announced. In a consultation that ran from 1.11.2010 to 24.1.2011 53% of people favoured selling care homes as going concerns, in which existing residents are not required to move. The findings of this report were put to the Cabinet on May 24th with a recommendation to approve inviting expressions of interest to run the homes as “going concerns” and this would also include interest in Community wellbeing centres. This process will be overseen by KPMG, I have questioned why we need such a big multinational company to “Market” these facilities at a cost of £495,000 when Suffolk companies could have been given the chance to market these assets.

### **Plan Bee**

Last week at our full council meeting Mark Bee was chosen as the new leader of the Council, this choice draws a line under the County Councils big idea for cost savings in the future known as the New Strategic Direction. He has correctly identified that this whole endeavour relied upon an open and honest discussion with our communities, and to date that conversation had not taken place in any meaningful way, to propose cutting Lollipop people and Household Waste sites from communities for instance, with barely 3 months notice did not give anyone confidence that this whole media lead campaign had not been thought through sufficiently. I for one look forward to working with Mr Bee to make sure that the cost savings we all know have to come, are carried out in a reasoned and practical way that can be communicated to Parish Councils like this one with credibility.

After months of being told by SCC that “there is no plan B” I am glad there is now a chance to take a long hard look at how we get back to a council we can all be proud of.

### **Suffolk Better Broadband Programme**

The “Choose Suffolk” to BDUK for central government funding has proved unsuccessful in the first round; if our bid had been approved then the County Council was to be the accountable body for administering the funding of up to 40 million pounds. It has been noticeable in the media that our M.P’s have decided to blame the County Council for the bid failing. I can honestly tell you this could not be further from the truth, I have reported numerous times the steps that SCC have taken to try to find a solution to Suffolk’s woeful Broadband provision. We have also had meetings with various small providers that could roll out a “Local solution” as soon as possible if the central government money is not likely to come Suffolk’s way in the near future.

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