

County Councillor Report - Melton Parish Council Meeting 8th November 2006

1. Budget 07/08

Last year Suffolk County Council needed a Government Settlement of £28M to “stand still” and we got £4M and roughly 10% reductions were asked for (and currently being achieved) from each directorate. The final Government Settlement for 2007/8 will be known late November at the earliest and indications are that the budget shortfall will be £22M. Scrutiny committees are discussing proposed savings this month and the level of council tax and budget will be set at full council in February 2007. Findings from the recent budget roadshows have indicated that the people of Suffolk think it is important to keep council tax increases low.

2. Local Government White Paper – Strong and Prosperous Communities

This long awaited paper was published on 26th October and claims to be “the first step on the road to devolution”. The paper says its aim is to give local people and local communities more influence and power. The paper states that quality Parish Councils will have general powers to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well being of their areas as well as the right to create local bye laws and enforce them through fixed penalty notices. As with most papers the devil is in the detail and what this actually will entail is not yet clear. There is little in the paper with regards to the financial settlement for local government and this is expected in the Lyons report due in December. More will be known then. More information can be found at www.communities.gov.uk.

3. Woodbridge Primary School

The last public meeting was held on 2nd October and was well attended. Many of the landscaping issues have been resolved following individual meetings with residents. The traffic problem remains a high concern and is currently being measured through the estate to ascertain current levels against levels once the school opens. The school should be open April 2007.

4. Melton Crossroad

Work has finally finished and as a regular visitor through the crossroads it certainly seems that traffic is flowing much quicker. With regards to the problems experienced in Station Road, I would suggest we look at this again in a few months time, as hopefully the free flowing of traffic through the crossroads will mean less traffic through Station Road.

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