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Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 6:38 PM
To: Parish Clerk <littlebardfieldparishclerk@gmail.com>
Cc: Cllr Tayler <cllrtayler@uttlesford.gov.uk>; martin.foley@hotmail.co.uk
Subject: LITTLE BARDFIELD CLLR MARTIN FOLEY REPORT YEAR -2023 some Highlights

New Booking System at Recycling Centres (ECC)

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/news/bookings-required-from-monday-at-essex-recycling-centres>

As you know R4U think the new system is a sledgehammer to crack a small nut and they would have done well to speak to Parish Councillors/District Councillors and gone out to proper consultation first.

I am strongly opposing it still, as in the trial that has already been done recycling has gone down amongst other problems!

Youth/Youth Club Support

Over the past year I have secured funding for Youth Clubs across this county ward ...it came from the locality fund.

Pam's Place in Thaxted

After the pandemic not every Day Centre came back...some shut for good. However, Pam's Place/The Old Day Centre in Thaxted which is used by some folk from Little Bardfield has been reborn again with better facilities and already is seen as a success and worthy of the investment made by but now run locally. All credit to Mike Tayler and all the staff, volunteers and helpers who are making Palms Place such a success.

Libraries

You may recall Dr Mike Tayler and myself amongst other things headed a campaign to keep Libraries open. Well, we succeeded with the help of several people who came and lobbied at County Hall with us. We need to keep Libraries open by using them...so please if you haven't got a library card go in and get one and use it or we may be faced with closure again one day. ECC are not in a great financial situation and the current administration in County Hall have shown they don't have much time for public libraries. I am concerned they may try and close it again when you look at the state of ECC finances.

School Assemblies

I have done several school assemblies in the area including Thaxted with Dr Tayler and with John Starr from my Youth Strategy Group, I am planning to visit others in August. I am delighted to see so many well-run schools despite funding issues from Central Government and teacher unrest with conditions.

Mental Health Practitioners in Senior Schools – Through a motion I took through County Hall last year we have secured funding for help in this area for secondary schools in Saffron Walden and Dunmow.

Highways

One annoying thing is how quickly fixed potholes deteriorate ... often doing things on the cheap is not the cheapest in the long run. ECC needs to "Take Control" of the work and check work done by contractors are up to scratch. I am making a point in spelling this out to the appropriate people.

Shortage of staff in Highways Department and helping at Thurrock (another failed and deeply in debt council being looked after by ECC) seems to be adding to the problem according to some staff at ECC.

ECC - BUDGET 2023/2024

At a lengthy meeting of County Council on 21 February 2023, the 2023/24 ECC Budget was set and an increase.

of the UDC share of Council Tax precept of 3% was approved in order to arrive at a balanced budget. EEC share was 3.5%

A real achievement at Essex (although ECC a way short of funding Highways) and even more for UDC given the huge cuts in central government support with other councils begging to increase further like Croydon, Kent, Surrey and of course Thurrock asking for almost 10% increase.

Local Plans

Local Plans are very much on peoples' lips in Essex as well as UDC. We have been waiting 15 years in UDC on a plan that will not fail (all plans failed under last administration – costing tens of millions of pounds now) so it needs to be right this time. Flaws were found in previous evidence submitted but should go to next step still by year end.

There are at least 30 other local Councils like this, and some seem to be treading water waiting on numbers to come down.