

# Councillor Phil Tucker's report

## 'Please repeat my Mantra'

Very few people would doubt the need for the Council to save money and most would agree that spending cuts need to be urgent. Most would equally agree that the council historically is not very good at being frugal. I would agree with those points myself and would certainly say that the council tax payer should get better value for money.

However there are times that reducing costs can so adversely affect the community that the savings are outweighed by the extra costs incurred by a community least able to sustain those costs.

This is often true of rural area where small changes can make a huge difference. If for instance a toilet is closed in Truro or Penzance there is obviously an inconvenience (excuse the pun) of walking an extra 400 metres to get to a provision perhaps in a restaurant or supermarket or indeed another public toilet. However closing of a toilet in a rural area can mean a 5 mile drive. Equally if a bus route is lost in Saltash then it will be inconvenient to wait an extra half hour to get to Plymouth. Lose a bus route in my division and we'll probably have lost the only bus that day.

I have voiced reasoned arguments to stop those seemingly inconsequential changes which officers have identified as saving money. They might slightly inconvenience an urban area but I explain how those changes will affect our rural community

Every chance I get when communicating at Council meetings or by letter I repeat my little mantra, ***"urban changes affect more people but rural changes affect people more"***. I have been uttering this for many months.

Last week I was at a meeting where we were discussing a project which I am trying to get through council. The first stage of this is to get officer understanding and 'buy-in'. It was a tough argument because it demanded a capital cost but it would repay that in hard cash within 8 or 9 years (including interest) and would have a real benefit after that of £100,000 per year. The astounding thing during this meeting, which filled me with a feeling that perhaps council officers were not all autotrons from the land of 'companyline', was that one of the officers quoted my mantra.

I think the message is getting through. **Urban changes affect more people, Rural changes affect people more.**

Regards Phil Tucker

*I am here to help my electorate. If you have a problem then, if I can't help, I bet I know someone who can. Please call me. 01288 341617 philip.tucker@homecall.co.uk*