

## **Newsletter January 2017 Tony Orgee and Gail Kenney County Councillors**

**County Council motions** At its December 2016 meeting the County Council considered two important motions, one relating to winter gritting and the other to street lighting.

In its spending plans for 2016-17, the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee decided to reduce funding for winter gritting and on street lighting. This then formed part of the overall budget approved by the council in February 2016.

There was an expectation that there would be consultation with parishes before any winter gritting reductions were implemented but there was no such consultation and parishes were surprised to be told in the autumn about how many roads would no longer be gritted whenever the gritting teams went out but only in prolonged periods of very cold weather. Following many public expressions of concern, the County Council decided to reverse the decision and reinstate its previous pattern of winter gritting. Roads will be gritted as in the 2015-16 winter.

The decision could not be implemented immediately because fewer vehicles were being leased and a smaller number of drivers had been trained. In the event, sufficient vehicles and drivers were available by noon on Thursday 12 January 2017 for the previous pattern of winter gritting to be implemented.

**Street light reduction.** The County Council had decided to turn off some street lighting in the middle of the night and to further reduce the illumination levels of street lights earlier in the evening. Unsurprisingly this also proved to be controversial, and the County Council decided to re-instate lighting overnight and to stop reducing the illumination levels. Unlike the winter gritting decision, this decision could be implemented almost immediately.

[The street lighting turned off overnight was in those villages connected to the street lighting central management system.

### **The County Council's Budget 2017-18**

The County Council's General Purposes Committee will be meeting next week to make a recommendation to the Full Council about setting the budget for the next financial year, and hence the level of council tax.

From what we have heard, proposals are likely to range between no increase at all to a total of 5%, that is a 2% council tax increase plus 3% for social services.

**Cycle Path Stapleford to Sawston** Mike Davies has looked into cycle safety on A1301 in December. It is an ongoing problem. The crossing from Sawston to the cyclepath was improved in 2014 and there have been no accidents since the scheme came into effect. However the number of cyclists has grown since then and there are now capacity issues. Mike is working up a system of Greenways or cyclepaths from the city to the near villages which will be funded from the Citydeal, S106 and DfT. It would look to widen the pathway and resurface it. Some 'bikeability' training has been instituted in the primary schools. Steps are underway to "sideout" the path where it is most narrow and create as much width as possible. However residents are still complaining about the state of the pathway which is slippery with mud and leaves. I have suggested that the capacity of the pathway is relooked at for school children safety until the new pathway is built. Contact [mike.davies@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:mike.davies@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)