

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.

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.

Where parishes [such as Sawston] have been helping to fund overnight street lighting costs, the County Council will take over these costs as from 13 December 2016.

This means that the money set aside in 2016-17 by the Parish Council for overnight street lighting costs will not all be used. **We do not** see the likelihood of any similar proposals for turning off street lighting overnight in 2017-18, so the Parish Council will not need to budget for overnight street lighting in 2017-18.

Cycleways

Work on a cycleway through the Babraham Campus from the roundabout on the A1307 to The Close began in the Autumn and was completed by the New Year. The official opening ceremony will be held on 3 February 2017.

Completion of this section of cycleway will allow an almost complete cycleway route between Sawston and Wandlebury

Meanwhile work on cleaning out the cycleway between the parish cemetery and the Sawston bypass was carried out in the week before Christmas. Subsequent complaints about leaves on that part of the cycleway between Bridge End Cottage and the 30 mph signs at Stapleford were taken up by Stapleford district councillors.