

**Cllr Lisa Spivey**

**County Council Report March 2023**

Since we last met, the Full Council met on the 15<sup>th</sup> February to set next year's budget.

I outlined the challenges in my previous report.

I am pleased to say that the administration accepted all of the amendments made by my group and the other opposition groups which has meant increased spending in key areas for your community – notably the introduction of a scheme for grit bins to help during the cold snaps to keep vital infrastructure like schools open, increased spending on foot paths so that we can more easily transition to active methods of travel, additional spend on road safety, including looking at 20mph zones and measures for early intervention in the public health sphere focussing on alcohol consumption which has increased since the pandemic.

These are of course, a drop in the ocean, and the critical demand led services – children's social services and adult social care – still take up the vast bulk of the £560million budget and until those services are adequately dealt with at an early enough stage, all other departments will face a squeeze. This is especially true for Highways which I know affects many of you directly.

I hope that the increased spending in Children's care will see some positive results over the next year.

I was appalled, but unsurprised to see the state our local roads were left in after the heavy rainfall in January – literally roads disintegrating before our eyes and under our wheels. Whilst most areas have now been addressed, I was disappointed to see that many of the repairs were of a very temporary nature and we will no doubt see further degradation as we move to spring and beyond.

I will continue to lobby for far more substantial work to be carried out in this area. The piecemeal approach is not delivering good quality roads and must inevitably, cost us more in the long run.

The County is beginning to look closely at its transport decarbonisation strategy which will be challenging in our area of the County. The likelihood is that we will need to reduce all car journeys by 25% and of the remaining 75%, at least one third should be on public transport – fine if you have it!

I am part of a bus improvement working group and will be using that platform to lobby for huge increases of services in our area. This will require investment from central government and/or entirely new ways of travelling. I'd be interested to know if you have any ideas about what is needed.

If you have any specific questions or issues, please contact me on:

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