

## **County Councillor's Report March 18<sup>th</sup> 2018**

Dear residents of Braybrooke,

I have attended many PC Meetings and other community activities in Braybrooke over the last year, but there will always be some non-attendances with nine parishes to represent. After Desborough and Wilbarston, Braybrooke is my next largest parish and I have witnessed the commitment and enthusiasm, of this community, in organizing events, resolving parish problems and in developing the general wellbeing of the residents.

Braybrooke has many community problems which are highways related and I am pleased that we continue to enjoy a great working relationship with members of Kier WSP staff, who are instrumental in helping resolve many of these issues.

Despite the dire financial position at NCC, all essential services and most other services were maintained by the County Council during the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. The pressure to deliver services, within a very tight budget, is enormous but priority services will always include Adult Social Care and Children's Services.

The most contentious cuts to NCC Services for 2018/19 are libraries, bus subsidies, winter highways maintenance, Trading Standards and Councillors' Empowerment Funding. Sadly, these cuts were incorporated into the final budget for 2018/19, following public consultations and robust scrutiny meetings, which challenged these Cabinet recommendations.

Much recent media and press coverage has highlighted the current financial woes at NCC. The Government Inspector's Report is expected sometime after 16<sup>th</sup> March and no one knows what the outcomes of this report will be yet. Our Local MPs are predicting that the report will hasten the change, from the current County Council plus seven Districts or Boroughs, to a two hub Unitary Authority for the county?

Apart from the [potential] savings in duplicated managerial posts and service operations, a Unitary might allow Parish Councils to deliver some services within their own communities. It is difficult to predict a timetable for such a dramatic change to local government, but I believe that a transfer could happen within two years, if Government decides to implement a Unitary in Northamptonshire!

I will do my best to support Braybrooke and its residents for another year and be able to report to you again in 2019.

Kind regards,

Cllr Allan Matthews