

The parish has received communication re the weedkilling policy (or lack there of) of the County Council. Discussion is needed to decide on any action Melbourn would like to take.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 September 2023 15:10
Subject: Weeds

Dear Parish clerk and chair,

I am sure you have become aware recently of the dreadful state of our roads, pavements and cycleways due to weeds. This is entirely due to a change in policy the current joint administration forced through in February of this year. As part of that change they promised to engage with Parishes and Towns, but we have seen no evidence of that at all. The County Council have stopped all cyclic weedkilling (ie annual spraying) as well as spraying before laying new surfaces such as slurry on footpaths. Residents across the county have asked us what we can do about it and we (the Conservative group) will present a motion to full council on October 18th. If you agree that the state of our roads, paths and cycleways are unacceptable and getting worse due to weeds there are two ways you can help.

- 1/ Please sign and circulate this petition, to show those in charge at County Council the will of the people on this matter. This is the link, <https://shorturl.at/dkFTZ>
- 2/ Please consider writing as a Parish or Town body to object to this current change in policy and ask for a reversal.

Please write in your own words or below is an example template you can use to personalise and alter to fit the wishes of your council as they see fit. At the end are the relevant people and officers you should consider including.

To Cambridgeshire County Council

Please accept this formal objection on behalf of **insert name of council** to the change in weedkilling policy the County Council implemented this year. Our roads, cycleways and footpaths are in a dreadful state due to the explosion of weeds since your policy change. This has an unacceptable detrimental effect on the look, usability, and cost of repair to our highways. Our residents are angry at how you have made our community look. Those who attempt active travel are angry at the state of the weed ridden paths they must dodge. We are deeply concerned at the effect this will have on flash flooding, as gully's and drains become blocked by weeds. We also are aware of the poisonous danger posed to horses by the rapid increase in Ragwort in our area.. As a council we cannot understand the short-sighted financial nature of this decision, as short-term gain will be overshadowed by future repair bills. We are further dismayed that the County Council would implement such a devastating cut to a vital service with no consultation (**or no meaningful consultation**) with our council. This blatant attempt at cost shunting onto our council is unacceptable.

We therefore call on those whose decision this was, the "Joint administration" to reverse their disastrous policy. *

We ask that the chief executive [REDACTED] takes urgent action to remove weeds across the County. [REDACTED]

We ask that the Chair of Highways, issues a public statement to reverse this dreadful decision and explain the immediate actions the County Council will be taking to address this. ([REDACTED])

We ask the monitoring officer to investigate how a major cut to services was allowed take place without engagement with Town and Parish Councils.

[REDACTED]

*(The Joint Administration is a pact between Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents, please copy in their leaders, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] for [REDACTED]

Mob; [REDACTED]

Replies to original email

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Friday, 1 September 2023 at 17:53

Subject: RE: Weeds

Dear Councillor [REDACTED]

I have indeed noticed the increase in weeds. You will be aware that funding to local councils has been cut by 13 years of underfunding from central government. I trust that on the 18th October you will have a proposal to find more money to spend on this. What County Council services do you believe should be cut to fund weedkilling. The other alternative would of course be to raise Council Tax even further.

Poor local services, including potholes and other highway maintenance problems are due to the economic mismanagement of the national economy and the disaster of 13 years of austerity.

[REDACTED]

Chair, [REDACTED] Parish Meeting

To all parish councils.

I couldn't agree more with the lack of general maintenance. We are also a small rural village who relies on the council to keep our village walkways and paths accessible and our roads up to a decent standard. It is a sad day when you can't rely on the council maintenance teams to perform their duties.

Cllr. [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

On 4 Sep 2023, at 2:17 pm, [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Cllr [REDACTED]

You have raised an issue that this council has been irritated by for quite a while. The lack of maintenance being carried out is causing many problems in this parish, from overgrown footpaths, blocked drainage leading to flooding, cracking tarmac from weeds, damaged road signs not repaired, huge potholes, verges left uncut and causing very limited visibility on bends, and road signs that are either too filthy or too overgrown to read. As a small parish we struggle to deal with this and as a result more comments about the village looking a mess are coming in.

I will make my councillors aware of your email.

Cheers [REDACTED]