

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 19 MARCH 2015**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (STREETSCENE AND
TRANSPORTATION)**

SUBJECT: **STREETLIGHTING POLICY**

1.00 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To seek a recommendation from the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet to approve the Councils revised Street Lighting Policy.

2.00 **BACKGROUND**

2.01 There is no statutory requirement on the Council to provide Street Lighting at any location other than those defined in the Highways Act 1980 however, where lighting is provided the Council has a statutory obligation to maintain the system in a safe state of repair. The Council also has a duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to exercise its lighting function with due regard to their effect on crime and disorder in an area.

2.02 The Council owns and maintains approximately 20,500 street lights and 3,250 illuminated signs across the County and in addition the Council maintains the Trunk Road Street Lighting on behalf of Welsh Government.

2.03 The annual consumption of electricity for these units is 8 million kilowatt hours (kwh) at an annual cost of £864,000 per annum, based on a unit cost of 10.8p/kwh. This gives an annual cost per lamp of £36.38 (10 pence per illuminated asset per night).

2.04 Road lighting (illumination) encompasses the lighting of all types of highway and public thoroughfares, assisting traffic safety and ease of passage for all users. It has a wider social role, helping to reduce crime and the fear of crime, can contribute to commercial and social use at night of town centres, shopping areas and tourist locations.

2.05 The Council is responsible for the structural integrity of the street lighting columns as well as the electrical apparatus within them. Any faults which may occur with this equipment are repaired by the Council, utilising the Council's in-house Street Lighting service within Streetscene.

- 2.06 Some Town and Community Councils (T&CC's) own and maintain their own footway lighting columns which total approximately 3,500 units. Approximately half of the T&CC's subsequently contract the Council to carry out the necessary repairs and maintenance on their behalf with the remaining Councils contracting the work to private contractor's or organisations.
- 2.07 Options to change how street lighting is managed, sustained and delivered is now possible with the new technical advancements within the industry. These new advancements offer a compromise in the Councils aim to reduce energy consumption, carbon footprint and wasted illumination against simply turning the street lights off.
- 2.08 The Council's current Street Lighting Policy was approved by Cabinet in March 2013 and the content is now reviewed to include the 2015-16 Business Planning proposals.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

Summary of changes to existing policy

1. Extension of Part Night Lighting

- 3.01 The part night lighting option obviously delivers a more cost effective solution than dimming alone and it is proposed that the Council's Policy will in future be to turn off selected Street Lights in defined areas during the period 00.00 hrs – 05.00 hrs or 00.00 hrs – 06.00hrs in line with the protocol defined within the Policy.
- 3.02 By extending the part-night lighting a financial saving of approximately £12k per 1000 lanterns will be delivered. This will be achieved by replacing the photocells on the lanterns installed at locations defined within the policy.
- 3.03 The proposal will also increase the life expectancy of the lamp (bulb) because of the shorter period of operation There is no evidence that the performance of any other components within the light are reduced by the introduction of the part night lighting options.

2. Changes to Fault Repair Standard

- 3.04 The current standard for repairing Street Lighting faults (within our control) is 3 days. The standard was set at the formation of Streetscene in 2012 and is applied to all lighting units across the Council irrespective of location. The operational resource required by the service is clearly dependant on this standard and a reduction in the response time will reduce the level of resource required.

3.05 A high portion of lights are situated on main routes and in some cases on dual carriageways. The cost of traffic management required to allow the repair a single light cannot be justified and a review of the standard is necessary. The new standard will not be the same for all lights in every location but will be risk based as follows:

- Lights adjacent to Sheltered Housing Centres – 3 days
- Lights in CCTV and other defined critical sites – 3 days
- Residential areas and all other locations - 10 days

The resource required to deliver the above revised standard is 4 FTE electricians – a reduction in one post from current levels.

3. Reduced Night time Inspection Regime

3.06 The Council currently carries out evening inspections to identify faults on a 14 day cycle with all street lighting units being inspected during the hours of darkness within this period. The proposal is to extend this period to 28 days and consider the most cost effective option to provide this service in future. Dependant on cost and overall value for money considerations, this may include utilising an outsourced provision

3.07 Two full Member Workshops have taken place to discuss these revisions to the policy. The specific areas for feedback from the Workshop are as follows:

- Hours for part night operation (0.00 - 05.00hrs or 06.00hrs)
- Residual lighting levels in residential areas (1 in 3 to lights remain operational)
- Scope of define locations for new repair standards

A verbal update on the feedback from the workshop will be provided to the Committee

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommends approval of the Council's revised Street Lighting Policy to Cabinet.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The proposals will deliver the saving identified in 2015-16 Business Planning proposals with a limited rollout during the year. Additional benefit in future years will be accrued as the rollout of part night lighting arrangements are completed.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

Not applicable.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 As well as reducing CO₂ levels, light pollution is another environmental issue that should be considered. The use of appropriate new lanterns and technologies with high performance optics, electronic control gear, shielding etc. can show reductions in energy consumption and also reductions in lighting pollution with the light distributed downwards at the target area which reduces in intensity at suitable locations.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 An EIA has been completed and concluded that the new Policy will not impact on any individual or group disproportionately.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 The reduced standard for repairing faults will reduce the number of electricians by one post. This will be achieved through the surrender of a vacant electricians posts currently within the service.

10.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 10.01 With Cabinet Member.
10.02 With All Member workshop

11.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 11.01 With Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
11.02 With stakeholders prior to introducing part night lighting – in accordance with Policy.

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 Appendix 1 – The Council's Street Lighting Policy.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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