

**Report of Head of Planning and Local Development**

**STREET LIGHTING POLICY**

**1 Purpose of report**

This report seeks to provide an update on the current position with street lights in the borough and gain approval for a street light policy for the town centre, residential areas and rural areas.

**2 Executive summary**

This report identifies the issues that have arisen regarding street lighting, summarises the discussions had at the street lighting advisory group and identifies the recommendations made by them.

**3 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – town centre lighting  
Appendix 2 – lighting maintenance policy

**4 Proposed action:**

**The committee is invited to RECOMMEND that:**

- 4.1 town centre option B, other lights option B , rural option C are progressed**
- 4.2 the councils inventory is updated to reflect the current lights we own and it is recommended to Resources Committee that the budget is amended to reflect this**
- 4.3 further information is sought on the possibility of transferring responsibility for the wider town and all lights to another body.**

**5 Background**

- 5.1 Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) is currently replacing or upgrading all of the highway street lighting for which they are responsible as the Highway Lighting Authority.**
- 5.2 There is no legal requirement for the adopted highway to be lit, and if NCC does light an adopted highway, they will light it to the standard required for visibility of traffic, cyclists and pedestrians.**

- 5.3 NCC has entered into a twenty-five year street lighting contract which commenced on 1 October 2011. The initial five years of this will see the replacement or upgrading of all NCC maintained street lighting. This investment phase has now been running for almost three years and has seen approximately half of the replacement work completed.
- 5.4 These works involve the replacement of:-
- All lamps where existing columns are being retained.
  - All street lighting columns more than ten years old.
  - Town Centre lighting.
  - All heritage style lighting columns and lanterns.
- 5.5 Where new columns are installed, they will be at a greater spacing than the old, so most new columns will not be in the same positions as the existing ones. The new lights will consume less power than the existing, produce a white light, and there will be no lights switched off.
- 5.6 As the upgrades are carried out, the NCC interactive maps will be updated, and any lamps which are not NCC's responsibility will be removed from their mapping. <http://maps.northamptonshire.gov.uk>
- 5.7 All street lights are powered from unmetered supplies. NCC and BCW provide inventories of the installed lights to Western Power, and Eon produce electricity bills based on that information.
- 5.8 BCW is currently responsible for approximately 47 lights which are located in the parks and open spaces, 37 in the town centre, 51 in car parks and industrial estates. There are also 184 street lights on roads owned by the council, and missing from the inventory. The budget for maintenance and electricity is £7,050 in 2014/15.
- 5.9 A detailed report has been written identifying the investigations undertaken on the current situation regarding lights in the borough. This has brought about a number of issues with lights in the borough, which include:
- Town Centre Lighting levels being reduced under the NCC modernisation.
  - Lights on BCW land lighting Wellingborough Homes owned car parks.
  - Lights on roads to be adopted.
  - Lights on both BCW and NCC inventories.
  - Other lights not on BCW or NCC inventories.
- 5.10 This detail has been presented to the Street Lighting Advisory group who have discussed it and recommended the options identified in this report.

## **6 Discussion**

- 6.1 The lights shown on the map in appendix 1 are the current lights in the town

centre, the majority of these are owned by NCC as they are on adopted highways.

- 6.2 NCC is proposing to replace the town centre lighting with the standard lighting which will provide an average of 7.5 lux. The light level in the town centre is currently 25-30 lux. This will be a reduction in lighting of 75% and could make the town centre feel dark.
- 6.3 The CCTV cameras within the town centre are due to be replaced with a newer model. The suppliers have confirmed that the cameras will work in the reduced light level, but better images would be recorded with brighter lights.
- 6.4 Therefore the options are:
- (a) **Town centre option A** – continue with the NCC replacement of lighting and take no responsibility for further lights. This option requires no additional budget from the council but could result in a darker town centre.
  - (b) **Town centre option B** – seek capital funding of £40,000 to replace town centre lighting with an upgraded scheme. This will maintain the current level of lighting in the town which would make a brighter environment creating a perception that it is safer. The capital costs and the additional energy consumption would need to be covered by the council. The annual cost of £2,400 for ongoing maintenance and electricity consumption would need to be covered by an increase of £1,320 to the revenue budget.
- 6.5 The street lighting advisory group recommends that town centre option B – seek capital funding of £40,000 to replace town centre lighting with an upgraded scheme to maintain the lighting at the current levels is progressed. In order to ensure funding was available for this option quickly, a capital bid was submitted for this element and was considered at Resources Committee on 4 February 2015.

### **Wellingborough Residential Areas on roads to be adopted**

- 6.6 The council currently owns a number of roads in Wellingborough, mainly around the Redhill farm area, which we are working with NCC and its contractors to get adopted by NCC.
- 6.7 In order to get these roads adopted BCW must either have in place a lighting maintenance policy see appendix 2 or NCC can take over the lights as part of the road adoptions process.
- 6.8 Therefore there are three options
- 6.8.1 **Wider town Option A** – the council retains 184 lights and maintains as per the draft policy (appendix 2). It is estimated that this would cost £1,300 for the maintenance and £6,300 for the electricity. This would

allow the council to maintain the street lighting to the spacing it currently is. In order to progress with this option a further £7,600 of revenue budget would be required.

6.8.2 **Wider town Option B** - the council retains lights, upgrades them to LED lanterns and maintains as per the draft policy (appendix 2). It is estimated that this would cost £37,000 - £46,000 with running costs estimated at £1,300 per year, this upgrade would be self – funding over some seven years, and then save the council up to £6,300 per year. This would allow the council to maintain the street lighting to the spacing it currently is. In order to progress with this option a further £1,300 of revenue is required.

6.8.3 **Wider town Option C** – that the council replaces the lights to meet NCC specifications at a cost of £92k - £148k (final cost available once detailed design is undertaken) and asks NCC to adopt them. This would mean that the number of street lights is reduced as per the position throughout the borough and county.

- 6.9 The option agreed will then form the basis of the council's policy going forward and would apply to lighting in all residential areas of the town.
- 6.10 All of the options were considered and officers were asked to investigate further the possibility of NCC or its contractors taking on all of the council's lights in order to ensure one point of contact for the public, and report back to the next street lighting advisory group and then Services Committee meeting.
- 6.11 Officers are still waiting for further information on this to inform the street lighting advisory group.

### **Wellingborough Residential Areas on roads and footpaths NOT to be adopted**

- 6.12 There are eight existing lamps identified which do not light adopted highways, and are on BCW owned land. NCC do not wish to retain and will therefore remove them as part of this process unless a new owner is identified or BCW add them to the inventory. Four of these light Wellingborough Homes land. Of the four lighting BCW owned land, one is located on the multi-storey car park, one on the Castle Theatre access road, and the other two light garages and a footpath.
- 6.13 There are other lights being identified, as NCC progress the upgrade, within ex-council estates where lamps remain on BCW ground and light a non-highway footpath. The options here include:
- 6.13.1 **Other lights option A** – do nothing - NCC will switch off and possibly remove the columns.
- 6.13.2 **Other lights option B** - take ownership of the lights, amend our inventory with Western Power. Lamps will become the responsibility of BCW, and remain switched on. Four of these, electricity cost £270

per year.

6.13.3 **Other lights option C** - upgrade lights to LEDs. Installation cost approximately £1,600 to £2,000. Electricity cost £55 per year.

6.14 There are a number of lights that are on both BCW and NCC inventories that need to be addressed, 14 lights are already on the BCW inventory and should remain ours. 25 lights to be removed from the BCW inventory which would reduce the electricity bill by approximately £870 per year, in addition to removing them from BCW maintenance, saving a further £135 per year. Approval is sought to agree this element.

6.15 The street lighting advisory group recommends that the council progress with other lights option B - take ownership of the lights, amend our inventory with Western Power and discuss the lights relating to Wellingborough Homes with them.

### **Rural areas**

6.16 NCC has been replacing the street lighting in the rural areas where they have responsibility for them. In a number of parishes, the Parish Councils have the responsibility for all of their lights.

6.17 In 2012/13 the council contributed £56k from the capital programme for the upgrade and transfer of street lighting in Irchester to Irchester Parish Council.

6.18 Grendon Parish has recently submitted a bid for £20,000 to replace their street lights. This has been considered as part of the capital programme governance procedures and is currently in the waiting pool until limited capital resources become available.

6.19 The options in the rural areas are:

6.19.1 **Rural Option A** – lights remain with the Parish Councils, this will have no cost implication to the council.

6.19.2 **Rural Option B** – bids can still be submitted by Parish Councils and will be considered through the corporate capital programme governance procedures.

6.19.3 **Rural Option C** - where lights remain with the Parish Councils, and if other sources of funding are found by the Parish council that they can apply for match funding via a bid to the council which will be considered through the corporate capital programme governance procedures

6.20 The street lighting advisory group recommends that a hybrid of the first two options is proposed where lights remain with the Parish Councils, and if other sources of funding are found by the Parish council that they can apply for match funding via a bid to the council which will be considered through the

corporate capital programme governance procedures.

- 6.21 There are also a number of anomalies where neither NCC nor BCW are paying for the electricity for lights on Redhill Farm and other unadopted roads. The work that NCC is doing is likely to bring this to the power company's attention and we have recently been asked by the electricity company to provide them with our current inventory. This could increase the revenue budget by £6,300 per year, plus up to £38,000 for the electricity costs for the 6 previous years which the power company is allowed to claim back. It is proposed that this is addressed with the power company now. If this is left then the cost will only increase. The budget for lighting would also need to be increased to include this additional electricity cost.

## 7 Legal powers

- 7.1 In considering the legal powers of the council in relation to street lighting there are two categories:

7.1.1 Lighting serving footpaths roads or streets where the footpath street or road itself is maintainable at public expense under the Highways Acts. In that case it is only Northamptonshire County Council as highway authority that has power to provide and maintain street lights unless it delegates the power to a Lighting Authority pursuant to section 98 of the Highways Act 1980. Both the Borough Council of Wellingborough and parish and town councils may be Lighting Authorities. If there is such a delegation then the Lighting Authority must act in accordance with the directions of the County Council.

7.1.2 Lighting serving such ways which are not maintainable at public expense under the Highways Acts. That includes such ways passing across parks and similar areas. In that case the council has all the powers of an owner of land but in doing so it must take reasonable steps to ensure that persons using the way are reasonably safe for the ordinary purposes of using it. That may include ensuring the way is lit at night, but may also include giving appropriate advice or warnings by notice or otherwise.

- 7.2 It should also be borne in mind that some roads or ways in the borough may be intended to be adopted under the Highways Act 1980 but have not yet been so adopted. That may be because the relevant adoption agreements have not yet been completed or if they have the relevant works periods and maintenance periods have not yet passed. Such cases fall within 7.1.2 above.

## 8 Financial and value for money implications

- 8.1 The financial implications of each of the options is shown below:

Option	Revenue cost	Capital cost
Town Centre A	£0	£0
Town Centre B	£1,320	£40,000

Wider town A	£7,600	£0
Wider town B	£1,300 running costs (self-funding over seven years and then save the council £6300 per year)	£46,000
Wider town C	£7,600 saving which would mean a 20 year pay back.	£148,000
Other lights A	£0	£0
Other lights B	£270 a year	£0
Other lights C	£55	£2000
Rural A	£0	£0
Rural B	£0	Unknown (Current bid for £20,000 for Grendon)
Rural C	£0	Unknown (Current bid for £20,000 for Grendon)

## 8.2 The recommended options would cost the following:

8.2.1 Town Centre Lighting Option B – seek capital funding of £40,000 to replace town centre lighting with an upgraded scheme to maintain the lighting at the current levels.

8.2.2 Wellingborough Residential area – all of the options were considered and officers were asked to investigate further the possibility of NCC or its contractors taking on all of the councils lights in order to ensure one point of contact for the public and report back to the next meeting.

8.2.3 Other lights option B - take ownership of the lights, amend our inventory with Western Power and discuss the lights relating to Wellingborough Homes with them.

8.2.4 Rural lighting – a hybrid of the two options A and B was proposed Option C where lights remain with the Parish Councils, and if other sources of funding are found by the Parish council that they can apply for match funding via a bid to the council which will be considered through the corporate capital programme governance procedures.

## 9 Risk analysis

Nature of risk	Consequences if realised	Likelihood of occurrence	Control measures
Street lighting matters not addressed.	Lighting reduced.	High	Secure funding in order to upgrade lighting and put in place a

			maintenance programme.
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**10 Implications for resources**

The staff resources are in place within the planning policy and regeneration section to deliver the changes proposed. The reduction in lighting will mean less officer time could be spent on street lighting once the changes are made but there are other projects for the officer to progress.

**11 Implications for stronger and safer communities**

Maintaining a good level of street lighting will help with the perception of community safety.

**12 Implications for equalities**

An initial equality impact assessment (EqIA) screening has been completed and there is no adverse impact if the action identified above it taken.

**13 Author and contact officer**

Victoria Phillipson, Principal Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager

**14 Consultees**

Julie Thomas, Head of Planning and Local Development  
Liz Elliot, Head of Finance  
Bridget Lawrence, Head of Resources  
Paul Burnett, Principal Property and Facilities Manager  
Samantha Knowles, Principal Accountancy Manager  
John Udall, Project Manager  
Stephen Blyth, Technical Officer  
Tracey Cave, Service Accountant  
Julie O'Connell, Service Accountant

**15 Background papers**

None

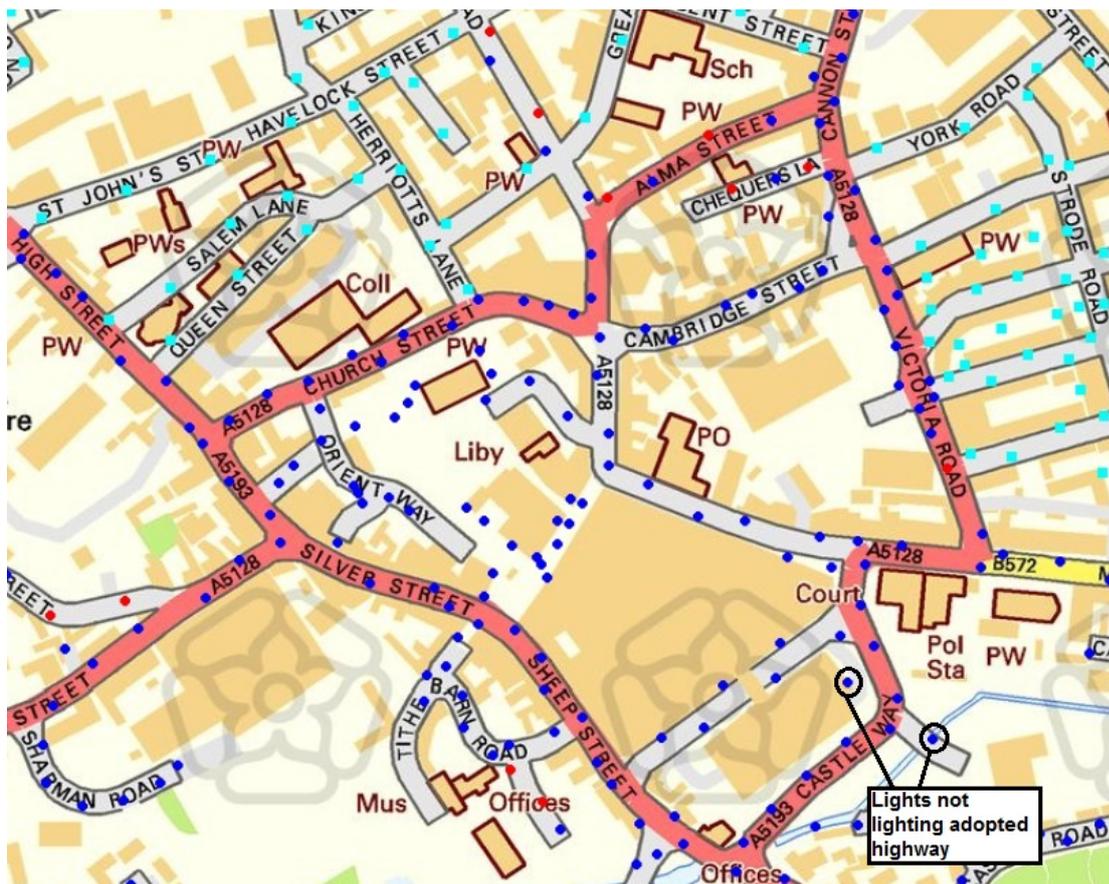
## Appendix 1

### Town Centre Lighting

Dark blue dots include the town centre area not yet upgraded by Northamptonshire County Council, within which BCW may wish to increase the proposed design light levels of the upgrade.

Red dots are lights currently switched off; light blue are new columns.

One light on the multi-storey car park and one light on the access road to the Castle Theatre do not light adopted highway, will not be upgraded by NCC, and may be removed.





**Lighting Maintenance Policy**

- A safe and efficient system of street lighting will be maintained to aid users of the highway.
- The provision of new, or the replacement of existing street lighting in conservation areas will take into account the effect upon the historic character and appearance of the area.
- On new street lighting columns a marking system to increase conspicuity of the lighting column to aid pedestrians with visual impairment will be used.

ITEM	STANDARDS	
	WBC Policy	Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Lighting Recommendations
Scouting for illumination (patrols)	Winter 6 times (every 4 weeks) Summer 6 times (every 4 weeks)	Winter 12 times Summer 6 times
lantern cleaning	Every 36 months	Every 24 months
Electrical / Structural inspection (Visual)	Every 36 months	Every 24 months
Electrical testing	Every 6 years	Every 6 years
Fault Repair (Equipment)	5 working days	5 Working Days
Fault Repair (Supply)	As electricity supply standard	-
Emergency Call-out	Make safe within 2 hours repair within 5 working days	-
Structural Column Replacement	Planned replacement if Structural inspection shows unsafe (Ultrasonic testing)	-

Scouting at monthly intervals gives rise to lamps being out for up to four weeks during winter and does not meet the Code of Practice.

The electrical and structural inspections are visual inspections only. Minor faults are recorded for a more detailed inspection.

The existing system of lamp replacement is to change lamps as they fail.

### **Emergency Call Out**

In normal working hours incidents reported by the public or by other agencies ( including NCC) to BCW will be dealt with by our normal contractors EON or by Western Power Distribution.

Out of normal working hours incidents are reported by the public or by other agencies directly to Western Power Distribution or to Highways via streetdoctor. Responsibility is then determined afterwards.