

**RESPONSE TO ENTERPRISE, GROWTH AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON STREET LIGHTING  
PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE (PFI) IMPLEMENTATION**

*To:* **Cabinet**

*Date:* **22<sup>nd</sup> May 2012**

*From:* **Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment**

*Electoral division(s):* **All**

*Forward Plan ref:* **N/a** *Key decision:* **No**

*Purpose:* **To respond to the report from the Enterprise, Growth and Community Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Street Lighting PFI implementation.**

*Recommendation:*

- a) To thank the Enterprise, Growth and Community Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (EGCI OSC) for their report.**
- b) To consider and agree the responses to the Committee's recommendations.**
- c) To delegate sign-off of the proposed communication protocol to the Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure.**

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The street lighting PFI contract commenced on site on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011 after a short mobilisation period from financial close on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2011. The contract, which was developed in parallel with a similar arrangement for Northamptonshire County Council to reduce procurement costs, was awarded to Balfour Beatty (BB).
- 1.2 Highway Authorities have the power to install and maintain street lighting. In addition, there are lighting requirements associated with certain aspects of road design, but there is no specific duty placed on authorities to install lighting. The renewal programme provides a unique opportunity to secure full funding from Government to bring the Council's street lighting stock up to standard and suitable for the long term. The programme brings benefits of energy reduction, maintenance savings and generally higher quality white lighting. The purpose of the contract is to replace all County Council street lights which are not expected to be maintainable for the next 30 years (i.e. the 25 years of the contract plus 5 years) and to maintain all the street lighting, illuminated road signs and bollards so that within three years, 99% of the stock is always in illumination. It is important to note that in addition to the County Council's stock, there are street lights provided by District and Parish Councils, housing associations and under private ownership across Cambridgeshire. This contract only concerns the County Council's stock.

## 2. RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS (THE ORIGINAL RECOMMENDATION BEING IN BOLD)

- 2.1 Since the start of 2012 a substantial amount of work has been undertaken on improving the communications strategy and processes as a result of criticisms by some local members and local councils. Complaints have primarily been about the issue of reducing the level of street lighting on residential roads required to provide a 10% saving in costs stipulated by Government, and insufficient early communications with communities.
- 2.2 The enhanced communication is providing earlier and better information about the proposed changes to the street lighting in communities. It will also give communities options to invest in local street lighting and adopt street lights that would be removed under the PFI.

### 2.3 Recommendation 1 – Communication with Communities

**Ensure that the general public and local councillors from all tiers of local government are consulted appropriately about changes to local street lighting provision prior to works taking place.**

#### **Proposed Response- Fully Accepted**

- 2.4 In January 2012, the Service Director commissioned a review of the street lighting communications strategy by the Council's Transformation Team. Following this review:
- A dedicated communications resource was made available.

- The leaflet to residents was re-written to better reflect the extent of lighting reductions, but also to explain the significant benefits from the new output specification.
- The initial consultation with local communities was brought forward from 3 months to 6 months before work starts.
- District-wide consultation meetings, open to Parish Councils, District and County members will take place over the next few months.
- The street lighting website has been reviewed to improve information to customers and accessibility.

<http://www.lightingcambridgeshire.com/existing.aspx>

- 2.5 All the recommendations are now being implemented by the team, with the full support and co-operation of the service provider.
- 2.6 This wider engagement activity will help early identification of issues of local sensitivity, such as heritage and conservation matters and concerns regarding community safety; and, given the financial constraints on the Council and the programme, to explore whether there is scope for shared solutions to any issues of concern.
- 2.7 The reduction in street lighting columns has proved to be the most contentious issue in some areas and represents the highest number of individual enquiries. The option exists for communities to pay for the retention and operation of lighting that would otherwise be removed.
- 2.8 The new consultation strategy provides a much stronger approach to community engagement and providing more information to communities. Parish and Town Councils are now given information about the columns which we propose to replace and, where there are options, the opportunity to indicate their preference as to which of the columns should be replaced in each street and which should be removed (or retained under local ownership). This information will be used by BB in developing the final design. It should be emphasised that it may not always be possible to meet the locally preferred solution because of technical and safety issues.

## **2.9 Recommendation 2 – Communications Protocol**

**Develop a communications protocol between the Council and the service provider so that there is clarity about communications roles and responsibilities**

### **Proposed Response - Fully Accepted**

- 2.10 The Council and Balfour Beatty, the service provider are developing a communications protocol which sets out the respective areas of work each will be responsible for and ensures there are no areas where there is uncertainty about responsibility.
- 2.11 The protocol will ensure that the street lighting service is seen by the public as a single seamless service, and that it is clear to both parties involved

where responsibility lies, e.g. for organising public meetings and dealing with enquiries and complaints.

- 2.12 It is proposed that sign-off of the protocol is delegated to the Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure.

**2.13 Recommendation 3 - Undertake public consultations in order to gauge public satisfaction with new street lighting particularly in terms of optimum levels of dimming and perceptions about white light emissions.**

**Proposed Response – Fully Accepted**

- 2.14 The new white light provides a better light so that colour and detail is better than the old orange light. The new output specification allows for dimming of the lights over night when the streets are quiet.
- 2.15 As part of the contractual Communications method statement provided by Balfour Beatty, there is the requirement for a customer satisfaction survey to households who have been the subject of the core investment programme. It is proposed therefore that this satisfaction survey will be used to collect information about the public's satisfaction regarding the new white light, the light levels during the evenings and the levels of light over night where there is presently a dimming regime.
- 2.16 This survey will be used to review the present output specification and whether light levels in the new street lighting can be adjusted and provide opportunities for additional savings, and to address any concerns raised by the public.

**3. ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES AND WAYS OF WORKING**

**3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

**3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

**3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

**3.4 Ways of working**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

#### **4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Resource and Performance Implications**

- 4.1 The additional Communications staff used in the Street Lighting Team are existing staff and therefore there are no additional costs. However, one member of staff has been reassigned to this work on a part-time basis as part of the Communications review.

##### **Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications**

- 4.2 There are no significant implications expected.

##### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 4.3 There are no significant implications expected.

##### **Engagement and Consultation**

- 4.4 Improved information provide to members, Councils and individuals for them to be able to be better informed and able to be party to the decision making relating to the street lighting in their respective communities.

<b>Source Documents</b>	<b>Location</b>
Street Lighting PFI Communications Strategy Street Lighting PFI contract	Phil Crack Castle Court A Wing