

**Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
5 July 2017**

REPORT TITLE:	STREET LIGHTING - MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT UPDATE
REPORT OF:	STRATEGIC COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENT

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a brief update on the current position with respect to the maintenance and improvement of the Council's street lighting stock within the Borough.

Maintenance and improvement of street lighting contributes to the Wirral Plan pledges to: provide transport and technology infrastructure fit for the future; ensure Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe and an attractive local environment for Wirral residents.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Members note the contents of this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

The large volume of enquiries currently being received suggests that street lighting is of particular concern to residents and Members.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

This report provides an update on a number of issues and initiatives relating to street lighting service provision. Where appropriate, options appraisals have been considered to ensure best value for money and service efficiency within the applicable constraints.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Wirral has approximately 37,500 street lights on the adopted highway network. At the end of March 2017, approximately 2,000 lights (less than 6%) were identified as not working. There are a further 4500 illuminated road signs and bollards.

3.2 As with many Council service areas, the street lighting service in Wirral has seen a reduction in resources over the last few years, reducing revenue budget (excluding staffing) by 21% and capital budget provision for life-expired stock (excluding capital programme and LED funding) by 80% since 2008. Dedicated street lighting staffing support has reduced from eight FTE in 2009 to two FTE.

3.3 The street lighting operational service provision in Wirral is delivered by external suppliers. The service is now managed within the Commissioning Support Unit (CSU) in Business Services. Routine and reactive maintenance is supplied by BAM Nuttall Ltd (BAMN) under the Highway Services Contract (HSC), which expires in March 2018 but is potentially extendable by a further two years subject to performance. Other contracts are delivered by suppliers appointed following competitive tender in accordance with the Council's procurement rules.

3.4 The street lighting service has recently been supplemented with an additional part-time staffing resource attached to the CSU Service Support team, to help deal with the current volume of customer enquiries. An improved access strategy, including standardised and timelier customer updates as well as improved web-based customer information is being explored in order to better assist with enquiries.

4.0 ROUTINE AND REACTIVE MAINTENANCE

4.1 Historically, the performance on reactive repairs to street lighting has been a concern for the Council. This can be a result of fluctuating demand management, due to funding reductions or supplementation, increases in street lighting reports during the winter months and night inspection frequencies, which can create additional spikes in demand for repairs. There

has also been a steady increase in vandalism and road traffic accident damage in recent years, particularly to illuminated street signs and bollards.

- 4.2 It had been identified that a backlog of reactive repairs appears to have been building again since early 2017. BAMN has addressed this issue by providing additional resources (supplementing two existing crews with an additional repair crew) during early May 2017 and has indicated the reactive 'backlog' has now been cleared. A new repair strategy policy is being developed with BAMN whereby the Council secures better value from limited financial resources. This includes a request that BAMN ensure they test all electrical components when they visit a street light that is identified as not working, replacing all defective components on the first visit. This means BAMN should not 'condemn' the lamp as in need of a full lantern replacement, which is a more expensive outcome and may not be necessary. Senior Officers are working with BAMN to review the current HSC contract key performance indicators (KPIs) for street lighting, in accordance with good performance management practice, so that revised outcome focused targets are set that are stretching but achievable. The new targets will be jointly measured and recorded in an agreed performance management reporting framework in a simple format. To provide further assurance, and as part of on-going performance management of our provider, the Council will commission an independent technical audit to spot-check BAMNs work and ensure compliance with our specifications and repair policy and to ensure completed work is being correctly closed out on our asset and payment systems.

5.0 PLANNED MAINTENANCE

- 5.1 As well as reactive maintenance of lights which are reported as out, a known backlog of failed electrical and structural equipment exists. At present the Council has a potential total value of £950k in failed equipment, including lanterns, lighting columns and underground cable supplies. This work must be prioritised to make best use of the currently available financial resources.
- 5.2 A contract is currently being drafted to deliver some of this work from a total budget of £500,000 provided through the Council's Capital Programme. The contract will be competitively tendered this summer and will include performance based payment mechanisms. It is expected that the site works will start in Autumn 2017 and be completed in early 2018.

6.0 LED REPLACEMENTS

- 6.1 Where appropriate for the location concerned, new lanterns installed as part of the routine, reactive or planned maintenance programmes described above will be modern, energy-efficient, LED units. However, the Council also has a strategy of replacing lanterns with LED on a wider scale to improve energy efficiency, lighting levels and asset management system communications.
- 6.2 Phase one of the LED replacement programme, where 7,500 of the Council's worst performing lights (in energy efficiency terms) were replaced, was completed in 2016 in a £3m contract with Scottish Hydro Electric and

Southern Electric (SSE). A full condition survey of all the Council's lighting stock is currently underway by SSE / KIWA.

- 6.3 Phase two of the LED programme may involve about 15,000 of the Council's remaining 28,000 lighting columns that have not yet been upgraded to LED lanterns, but numbers are subject to review following the condition survey, being dependent on cost-benefit calculations and how many columns require replacement as well as just lanterns. Funding applications will be necessary to secure funding on an invest-to-save basis for LED lanterns and through a Council Capital programme business case for any structural column replacements. LED phase two is likely to be implemented in 2018/19.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Reactive and planned routine maintenance is funded through the Revenue service budget allocated to street lighting maintenance (circa £525,300 in 2017/18) and capital budget allocated to lighting maintenance as part of the Highways Structural Maintenance programme (circa £60,000 in 2017/18).
- 7.2 Following the contract to be awarded in 2017 a further maintenance backlog of at least £450,000 will remain. This work will address about 6% of the Council's street lighting asset stock. Inevitably, as the current backlog of damaged or condemned equipment is replaced other units will have been damaged or condemned. Consequently, a substantial increase in Capital funding investment, consistent over a guaranteed number of years, or a large one-off investment for column and lantern replacements as part of the phase two LED programme will be the only means of bringing the whole stock up to a high standard. A further Capital Programme business case submission will be presented later in 2017 to cover some of the remaining works, together with structural column replacements identified in the current survey and necessary for the LED phase two project.
- 7.3 Phase one LED replacement funding has been secured on an invest-to-save basis via a government loan. This will be explored further for phase two.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific legal implications relating to this report, which is a general position update.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

On-going Digital staffing support is required to ensure the effective management of the systems used to ensure the street lighting service can function effectively. There are no additional specific ICT, staffing or assets implications relating to this report.

10.0 RELEVANT RISKS

All contracts for the supply of services relating to street lighting have contract-specific risk registers monitored by the appropriate contract management

hierarchy. There are no specific risk implications relating to this report, which is a general position update.

11.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

There are no specific engagement or consultation matters relating to this report, which is a general position update.

12.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

No, because there is no relevance to equality.

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APPENDICES

None.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

No specific background material has been used in the preparation of this report.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date