

From: Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member – Environment and Transport
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director – Growth, Environment and Transport

To: **Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 21 July 2015**

Decision No: **15/00065**

Subject: **Proposed consultation on the revised policy on Street Lighting post-LED conversion**

Key decision: Affects 2 or more electoral divisions

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: **N/A**

Future Pathway of Paper: **Cabinet Member Decision**

Electoral Division: **Countywide**

Summary:

Due to innovations in street lighting technology the County Council is proposing to convert to LED lighting which coupled with a Central Management System will enable it to manage its street light asset with a flexible approach that can deliver savings and provide suitable lighting provision to Kent residents. Prior to the commencement of conversion works, it is proposed to review the current Street Lighting policy. This paper outlines our proposed consultation process prior to this review.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member on the proposed consultation approach as detailed within this paper.

1. Background

- 1.1 Kent County Council is one of the largest lighting authorities in the UK and has 118,000 street lights and some 25,000 lit signs and bollards. The current annual cost of illuminating and maintaining the stock is over £9m, a cost that keeps rising.
- 1.2 Innovations in street lighting technology mean that Light Emitting Diode (LED) products and controls deliver ultra-efficient street lighting at affordable prices. Manufacturers now guarantee their LED products for up to twenty years. LED coupled with a Central Management System (CMS) enables complete

management of street lighting including dimming, switch on/off, fault reporting, metering, etc. It will also provide complete flexibility with regard to future policy change.

- 1.3 Further work showed that converting Kent's street lights to LED with CMS would reduce the energy and Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) costs by a further 60% and significantly reduce maintenance costs. The conversion works would cost around £40m and deliver significant annual savings. The estimated cost is the result of extensive research and engagement with the market and manufacturers of LED and CMS products and will be confirmed once tender process is completed, which is expected in October.
- 1.4 Due to the benefits of CMS, the County Council has an opportunity to manage its street light asset with a flexible approach that can deliver savings and provide suitable lighting provision to the Kent resident. Prior to the commencement of these conversion works it is proposed that it is timely to review the Street Lighting policy.
- 1.5 This paper outlines the consultation process that will be undertaken.

2 Scope of the Consultation

- 2.1 The County Council proposes to consult the residents of Kent on the following options for the LED Street Lighting Policy:
 - Option 1: Part night lighting - current level of service (12am to 5:30am). This will include the revised eligibility criteria for all night lighting.
 - Option 2: All night lighting but 50% dimmed
 - Option 3: Return to all night lighting.
- 2.2 The contents of the consultation document will be developed with the Consultation and Street Lighting teams. Details and costs/savings for each of the options proposed will be included. At this stage, the County Council's view is that the current policy works, but notes that it should be updated to reflect improved flexibility as a result of new technology through the CMS.

3 Consultation Approach

- 3.1 The County Council's aim is to attract a wide range of responses from different stakeholders that includes the residents of Kent, local businesses and parish/district Councils. Outlined below are the methods within this mixed approach.

Consultation document

- 3.2 The document will provide residents with information about each of the options being put forward, including the costs or savings associated with each of these. The Consultation Document will be available online via KCC's Consultation Directory (www.kent.gov.uk/consultations) and available in hard copy from main Libraries, Gateways and also by post upon request.

- 3.3 The consultation draft Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be published (in line with KCC best practice) to test the assumptions made and ensure that any potentially negative impacts have been identified and inform the final EqIA.

Online and hard copy questionnaire

- 3.4 The questionnaire is the main method of response, both online (preferred method) and also in hard copy for accessibility purposes, which can be returned via a freepost address.

Deliberative workshops (Optional)

- 3.5 Workshops can test the options with a statistically representative sample of Kent residents. It is proposed that three events are held in the East, Mid and West of Kent. This approach will both help establish if there are differences in views throughout the County and increases accessibility for all residents to attend.
- 3.6 This method allows a comparison of responses from a representative sample to those received from other methods. It also allows further exploration of the context behind the options.

Focus groups / meetings (Optional)

- 3.7 Focus groups/meetings will undertake targeted work with specific stakeholder groups, as identified in the EqIA and responses from previous engagement activity (e.g. elderly people, shift workers, religious groups).

Alternative Formats

- 3.8 Alternative format and Easy Read versions of all documents will be produced.

4 Timeline

- 4.1 It is planned that the consultation will run from mid to late August for eight to ten weeks until October.
- 4.2 A detailed consultation plan will be developed with the Consultation and Street Lighting teams to ensure maximum promotion to Kent Residents is achieved. Additionally a communication plan will be developed with Internal Communications to ensure all stakeholders are informed of the proposed consultation.
- 4.3 The results from the consultation will be used to shape the proposed Street Lighting policy. The revised policy will then be presented to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee in December, and subsequently implemented during the conversion works.

5 Financial

- 5.1 The initial cost of the consultation document would be in the region £4,000 which includes:

- Design cost and printing costs
- Hard copy questionnaires returned via Freepost address
- Design of an Easy Read document

5.2 The deliberative workshops will cost in the region of £17,000 as an external consultant would need to be commissioned to manage this on the County Council's behalf. The cost of focus groups/meetings is variable as this is dependent on the requirements and scope for the work.

5.3 This will be paid for by the Street Light budget as this will inform the new street light policy. Full costing of this proposal will be developed with the Consultation team and signed off by the Interim Director for Highways, Transportation and Waste.

6 Conclusions

6.1 The proposed consultation approach will allow Kent residents to offer their views of the street light policy going forward. Working with the Consultation team will ensure that the questions proposed detail cost/savings of each option and ensure the County Council is able to extract relevant information.

6.2 It is proposed that the County Council will adopt a mixed approach to ensure it attracts a suitable audience, including focus groups and deliberative workshops.

6.3 The consultation will take between 8 – 10 weeks with a report due to be completed in October. The findings will help develop the Street Lighting policy that is due to be implemented during the LED conversions works.

6 Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member on the proposed consultation approach as detailed within this paper.

7 Background Documents

None.

8 Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision

9 Contact details

Report Author:

Robert Clark – LED Street Lighting Conversion Project Manager
03000 41 59 15

Robert.clark@kent.gov.uk

Lead Director:

Roger Wilkin – Interim Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste
03000 41 34 79

Roger.Wilkin@kent.gov.uk