

REPORT TO: Cabinet

4th December 2019

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Handley, Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Health and Licensing

LEAD OFFICER: Trevor Nicoll, Assistant Director for Waste and Projects

Streetlighting Policy and LED upgrade program

Executive Summary

1. This report presents to Cabinet a policy for South Cambridgeshire District Council's (SCDC) Streetlighting Service (Appendix A) for approval.
2. Under the priority of 'being green to our core', SCDC has committed within its current Business Plan to upgrade its stock of around 1800 streetlights to LEDS by March 2021, to save between 60-70% in energy for Parish Councils.
3. The policy document details this commitment, including a specification for the LEDs and captures SCDC's role and the principles and standards for the streetlighting service generally.

Key Decision

4. Yes. The key decision was first published in the October 2019 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

5. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the SCDC Streetlighting Policy document.
6. Following its approval, the policy will be included on the SCDC website and will inform the communications plan. The service will work closely with parishes and Members throughout the delivery of the upgrade.

Reasons for Recommendations

7. The policy will enable the commissioning of LED upgrade works in accordance with SCDC's requirements and the completion of works by March 2021. It also supports the ongoing delivery of the streetlighting service and sets out what residents and stakeholders should expect of the service.

Details

8. The policy document captures the current streetlighting service and role of the Council in its undertaking, which includes service standards under the current streetlighting maintenance contract shared with Fenland District Council.
9. The document includes, in line with new national guidance, a position on attachments to its streetlights and a requirement for the approval of attachments by SCDC in order to ensure the safety of its streetlights. This has been developed with reference to Cambridgeshire County Council's (CCC) policy and tailored to SCDC streetlights.
10. The policy document also includes SCDCs commitment to improve its streetlighting stock by upgrading lamps to LEDs, which will include the replacement of units where conditions require this and where more cost effective. LEDs are shown to improve lighting quality, achieve considerable energy savings and offer the best solution for replacement of traditional sodium lamps currently used within the majority of SCDC streetlights, which are being phased out.
11. The LED specification for SCDC streetlights includes dimming lights by 40% to give 60% light output between the hours of 10pm and 6am, in line with the CCC street lighting specification, which will improve the consistency of lighting across the district and support any potential future alignment of services.
12. Dimming LEDs by 40% to 60% light output also helps to achieve further environmental benefits without a visible reduction in the lighting quality. A dimming effect becomes more visible to the eye when dimming levels exceed a reduction of 60%.
13. The LED specification has been demonstrated within a successful trial of the LEDs on SCDC streetlights within the parishes of Ickleton and Hardwick, which were set up to obtain learning as part of preparations for a wider roll out.
14. Modelling of the LED specification on SCDC streetlights indicates energy savings will meet SCDCs intended aims of between 60 and 70% savings, with resulting financial savings benefiting Parish Councils and their communities. SCDC will also benefit from reduced maintenance costs due to the increased lifespan of LED lamps and the replacement of older units. Both environmental and financial benefits will be monitored and reported upon.
15. Officers will work closely with Parish Councils throughout the delivery of the upgrade, which will include identifying all heritage/ornate streetlights, to be included with within a second phase of works.
16. The LED upgrade is a first step in the development of SCDCs streetlighting stock, following which a range of other potential 'smarter' developments can be explored which make use of this existing infrastructure, including their use as electric vehicle charging points.

Options

17. In contrast to current sodium lamps LEDs can be programmed to varying lighting levels to suit requirements. Nationally night-time street lighting approaches vary, with some authorities opting to switch off lights, usually between 12 midnight and 6am, some applying various dimming regimes, and some choosing to maintain lights at 100% output throughout the night.
18. CCC operate most streetlights (around 52,000 across the County) with SCDC's relatively small stock of streetlights (around 1800 units) distributed amongst these lights. CCC lights are set to dim down to 60% of light output between the hours of 10pm to 6am in residential areas. The lights have been dimmed to these levels since the PFI replacement program concluded in 2016, following periods of testing and consultation.
19. Any regime adopted by SCDC as part of the upgrade to LEDs that was visibly different to the current regime operated by the County Council would create inconsistencies in lighting within the district. Part-night lighting (switching lights off for a period), for example, would result in the same street within a parish having some lights on and some off during the night.
20. Alternative regimes within an acceptable range of the CCC lighting regime were modelled by way of comparison, in view of SCDCs environmental aims, and revealed that whilst further energy savings could be made from the inclusion of CCCs dimming (an additional 6%) when compared with not dimming, minimal further savings (an additional 2%) could be achieved by decreasing dimming further to within an acceptable lighting level.

Implications

Financial

21. SCDC has committed budget of £0.750m for the LED upgrade and unit replacement program, largely from the Renewable Energy Reserve. With a further £0.545m being requested as part of the 2020/21 budget process. This report details no additional budget requirements.

Consultation responses

22. LEDs were installed on all SCDC streetlights in the parishes of Ickleton and Hardwick, working closely with Parish Councils, and operational by the autumn 2018. Since installation positive feedback has been received from the parishes. The policy is also similar to that in place by CCC.

Effect on Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

23. No effect on this priority area.

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

24. No effect on this priority area.

Being green to our core

25. The LED upgrade aims to achieve energy savings of between 60 and 70% in the operation of SCDC streetlighting.

A modern and caring Council

26. The LED upgrade program is a move towards modernising the streetlighting stock and from which a range of potential opportunities to provide additional services to communities can be explored.

Background Papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A: South Cambridgeshire District Council Streetlighting Policy

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