

# RESIDENTS' & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE REVIEW OF STREET LIGHTING

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Keith Burrows
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Cabinet Member for Planning & Transportation
<b>Officer Contact</b>	Nadia Williams, Deputy Chief Executive's Office
<b>Papers with report</b>	Residents' & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee Review of Street Lighting

## HEADLINE INFORMATION

<b>Purpose of report</b>	To receive the Residents' & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee's report which sets out recommendations for minor improvements in the way in which the public is made aware of street lighting repair process.
<b>Contribution to our plans and strategies</b>	To improve the perception and delivery of the service to residents whilst contributing to a safer and greener Borough.
<b>Financial Cost</b>	Contained within existing budgets.
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	Residents' & Environmental Services
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	All

## RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet:

1. **Note that the Committee, following the review, concluded that it was very satisfied with the Council's street lighting function.**
2. **Welcome the report from the Residents' & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee and endorse the recommendations for minor improvements in the way in which the public is made aware of the street lighting repair process as set out below:**
  - a) **NETWORKING AND INFORMATION SHARING:** That officers should continue with the practice of Networking and Information Sharing by meeting regularly with other London Boroughs to share information and best practice.
  - b) **NOTIFICATION OF WARD COUNCILLORS:** That Ward Councillors be notified by the Street Lighting team of the placing of new lights. In particular, Ward

**Councillors to be informed where new lighting is being installed for lighting improvements.**

- c) PUBLICITY IN RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS: That the Council should embark on a publicity campaign in raising public awareness, raise awareness of some of the causes in the delay in repairs, and highlight some of the improvements that had been implemented. One such improvement being, attaching stickers on faulty lamp posts to indicate that the fault had been notified to the Council and alerting members of the public that the fault was being followed-up. Communication with members of the public could be improved further by:**
  - i) Placing an article in the Council's free monthly magazine (Hillingdon People), which is distributed to all homes of Hillingdon residents.**
  - ii) Setting up a frequently asked questions section on the Council's website, in answer to common concerns and problems encountered or raised by members of the public.**
- d) ALERTING RESIDENTS OF LIKELY DELAYS IN REPAIR WORK: That residents should be alerted of likely delays in repair work: Where there were likely to be delays in repair works, Ward Councillors to be notified with reasons for the delay, so that residents could be informed.**
- e) NEW TECHNOLOGY AND IMPROVED EFFICIENCY: That the Street Lighting department should continue to use new technology to improve efficiency, particularly in the areas of long lamp life and energy reduction.**
- f) THAT THE COUNCIL WORK CLOSELY WITH HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS: That the Council should work closely with Housing Associations to improve responses to queries relating to Street Lighting in private areas. This could be to ensure that where private lighting is installed, adequate provision is made for its future maintenance; or increasing the areas on new developments that are adopted as public highway.**

## **INFORMATION**

### **Reasons for recommendation**

This first ever Committee review of Street Lighting gave Members the opportunity to look at how the service operated, how it was dealing with increasing financial pressures due to energy costs, environmental pressures relating to energy, and emerging technologies. The evidence gathered during the review focused on street lighting from the residents' point of view and to this end, the Committee made some minor recommendations to improve communication with Councillors and in the way in which the public was made aware of the street lighting repair process.

### **Alternative options considered / risk management**

The Cabinet could decide to reject or amend the Committee's recommendations.

## Supporting Information

1. The Committee chose Street Lighting as a review topic in 2009/2010. The aim of the review was to look at Street Lighting under three headings; 1) where the Council was now with street lighting, 2) key issues the Council was faced with and 3) where the Council would like to be in terms of current Street Lighting Policy, Statutory Duties, Service Delivery and Budget. The review was not an investigation into the service, but an enquiry set up to help the Committee understand the framework within which street lighting operated, and the role the Council could play in improving the experience of residents in the borough in terms of lighting the streets. This could range from how quickly repair work was done, to installing new lighting.
3. The review took place on 8 September 2009 and consisted of a scoping report and a briefing paper. A witness session was also held at this meeting and sought the views from a neighbouring local authority. Witnesses included the Council's Street Lighting officer, the Street Maintenance officer, a Procurement officer and a Street Lighting officer from London Borough of Harrow. The Committee also made use of the views of the Councillors on the Committee (as Ward Councillors), to gauge public views on this matter.
4. The review looked at the policies and priorities for Street Lighting in Hillingdon and came to the conclusion that the Street Lighting Service demonstrated Best Value and Best Practice. Whilst the Committee was very satisfied with the Street Lighting function, its processes and performance, it made some recommendations to improve residents' satisfaction.
5. The Committee's report (attached) gives full details of the review.

## THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

The Committee's recommendations to Cabinet and their context is summarised below:

- A) That officers should continue with the practice of Networking and Information sharing by meeting regularly with other London Boroughs to share information and best practice.**

The custom and practice of officers networking and sharing information with colleagues from other local authorities has long been established. This has enabled officers to share similar concerns and to keep abreast of new technologies being trialled. By networking, officers are able to Benchmark with other local authorities and share best practice.

- B) That Ward Councillors be notified by the Street Lighting Team of the placing of new lights. In particular, Ward Councillors to be informed where new lighting is being installed for lighting improvements.**

It was important that Ward Councillors were informed when new lighting was being installed. Notifying Ward Councillors would keep them up to date about activities in their area and allow them input into the lighting scheme.

- C) That the Council should embark on a publicity campaign in raising public Awareness, raise awareness of some of the causes in the delay in repairs, and highlight some of the improvements that had been implemented. One such improvement being, attaching stickers on faulty lamp posts to indicate that the fault had been notified to the Council and alerting members of the public that the fault was being followed-up. Communication with members of the public could be improved further by:**
- i) Placing an article in the Council's free monthly magazine (Hillingdon People), which is distributed to all homes of Hillingdon residents.**
  - ii) Setting up a frequently asked questions section on the Council's website in answer to common concerns and problems encountered or raised by members of the public.**

Raising public awareness of some of the work of the Street Lighting department would keep residents better informed, by highlighting some of the reasons for the longer timescales required for some repair work. Corporate Communications have agreed to investigate and consider appropriate publicity.

- D) That residents should be alerted of likely delays in repair work: Where there were likely to be delays in repair works, Ward Councillors to be notified with reasons for the delay, so that residents could be informed.**

Ward Councillors would be well placed to respond to concerns or queries raised about delays in repair work. This can occur when works are required by the electricity boards to complete the repairs. If Ward Councillors are aware of any delays in their areas, they will be in a position (when contacted by residents) to give the reasons for the delay.

- E) That the Street Lighting department should continue to use new technology to improve efficiency, particularly in the areas of long lamp life and energy reduction.**

There has been an ongoing programme of gradually replacing old lantern technology with new as part of both routine maintenance and asset renewal schemes This reduces the failure rates.

- F) That the Council should work closely with Housing Associations to improve responses to queries relating to Street Lighting in private areas. This could be to ensure that where private lighting is installed, adequate provision is made for its future maintenance; or increasing the areas on new developments that are adopted as public highway.**

This recommendation seeks to avoid situations where lighting is not working and it proves problematic to actually get the maintenance work done to get the lighting working again.

## **Financial Implications**

The Committee's recommendations can be accommodated within existing budgets.

## **EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

The Committee's recommendations would improve communications with local residents through their Councillors. It would also raise public awareness of some of the causes in the delay in repair work and highlight some of the improvements that had been made.

### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

The Committee took evidence from officers and sought the views from a neighbouring local authority as well as the views of the Councillors on the Committee (as Ward Councillors), to gauge public views on Street Lighting.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

Corporate Finance has reviewed the report and is satisfied that any financial implications, arising from the recommendations set out in this report, will be contained within existing budgets.

### **Legal**

Legal Services are not of the view that there are any significant legal implications arising from this report, which appears to recommend a series of administrative and operational changes without any direct legal implications.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil