

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TO CABINET 7 SEPTEMBER 2016

Report Title	RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – NBC OWNED STREET LIGHTING
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Agenda Status: PUBLIC

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present to Cabinet for consideration, the comments and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the findings of the Review – NBC Owned Street Lighting.
- 1.2 Members of Cabinet have been issued with a copy of the full report. All Overview and Scrutiny review reports are published on the Overview and Scrutiny page on the Council's Webpage and a copy of this report can be located: www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny - Previous Scrutiny Reviews.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet that:
 - 2.1.1 The Working Group has pursued this Scrutiny activity as far as it can whilst accepting the Corporate Asset List is incomplete. It therefore recommends to Cabinet that the work is continued in the form of a Member/Officer Working Group. The purpose of this Working Group would be to complete the aims and objectives of this Scrutiny activity.
 - 2.1.2 An Invest to Save Programme for NBC owned street lighting commences. The Programme should include:
 - Energy costs
 - Maintenance Costs
 - Energy efficient lighting
 - Need and appropriateness of lighting
 - Areas that should/should not be lit

- 2.1.3 Consideration is given to entering into an agreement with Balfour Beatty for the ongoing repair and maintenance of NBC street lighting including a replacement programme.
- 2.1.4 The Business Case in relation to the Revenue and Capital budget for the Invest to Save Programme for NBC owned street lighting is completed in the 2016/2017 financial year and incorporated into future budgeting procedures.
- 2.1.5 Discussions between NBC, Northampton Partnership Homes and Northamptonshire Police are held regarding the need and appropriateness for NBC owned street lighting and what areas should/should not be lit.
- 2.1.6 A reference number, identifying that the street lighting is under the ownership of NBC, is placed on each street lighting column with instructions how to report.
- 2.1.7 A clear reporting mechanism for issues with NBC owned street lighting is published and is easily accessible for both Officers and members of the public.
- 2.1.8 Discussions between NBC, Northamptonshire County Council and Balfour Beatty are held to ascertain whether it would be possible for NBC to “dovetail” onto its interactive mapping system. The NBC owned street lighting details is also plotted onto the NBC interactive mapping system.
- 2.1.9 The location and reference number of NBC owned street lighting is included within the Report It App.
- 2.1.10 Relevant Officers receive training about Northamptonshire County Council and NBC owned street lighting regarding where maintenance issues should be reported and how the location of the street lighting can be identified.

3. Background and Issues

- 3.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Working Group was to differentiate between Northampton Borough Council (NBC) and Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) owned street lighting.

Key lines of Enquiry

- Investigate all NBC owned street lighting, not just those in situ on housing land
- Differentiate between Northampton Borough Council (NBC) and Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) owned street lighting
- How the public can report problems and issues with street lighting
- Cost of NBC owned street lighting and energy consumption
- On-going costs for NBC street lighting

- 3.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 29 July 2015, received a briefing paper on street lighting from Northampton Partnership Homes. Following discussion of this briefing paper, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a Working Group to investigate NBC owned street lighting. A short, sharp Scrutiny activity commenced in September 2015 and concluded in May 2016.
- 3.3 This review links to the Council's corporate priorities, particularly corporate priority 2 - Invest in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods - Creating an attractive, clean and safe environment.
- 3.4 The Working Group established that the following needed to be investigated and linked to the realisation of the Council's corporate priorities.
- 3.5 Background data, including:
- Maintenance costs for NBC owned street lighting
 - Street Lighting data
 - Energy costs for both NBC and NCC street lighting
 - Corporate List of all NBC owned street lighting to include:
 - Details of public knowledge to NBC owned street lighting columns
 - Reference numbers of street lighting columns
 - Energy costs for both NBC and NCC street lighting
 - Further maintenance and repair costs – street lighting
 - Report it app. – inclusion of reporting street lighting
 - Site Visits
- 3.6 In considering the evidence the following conclusions were made: -

Energy Costs – NBC Street Lighting

- 3.6.1 NBC is recharged for electricity used for specific events such as the Christmas lights. Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) purchases its electricity from Laser Group.
- 3.6.2 The Working Group acknowledges that there is a need to ensure the Council is getting the best possible price on electricity. It would be useful for NBC street lighting to be of low energy lighting. The Working Group noted that NCC turns down its street lighting during night time hours, therefore reducing energy consumption.
- 3.6.3 There is no record of dedicated funding in respect of NBC owned street lighting with the exception of Christmas lighting.

3.6.4 There is no current identified revenue budget for the additional 744¹ street lighting.

Identification of Street Lighting

3.6.5 The Working Group highlights the need for the inclusion of reference numbers on NBC owned street lighting columns that identify clearly they are owned and maintained by NBC.

3.6.6 It is felt that there is a need for discussions to take place between NBC, NCC and Balfour Beatty to ascertain whether it would be possible for NBC to “dovetail” onto its interactive mapping system. NCC will be provided with details of the NBC street lighting columns.

Public access to NBC owned street lighting columns

3.6.7 When eastings and northings referencing is completed; the NBC owned street lighting will be plotted onto the Council’s interactive mapping system.

3.6.8 The Working Group emphasises the need for one clear reporting mechanism for the public regarding all NBC owned street lighting. It felt that the majority of street maintenance issues will be reported by the public to Street Doctor. The production of the Corporate Asset List will inform ownership of the street lighting.

Maintenance and repair costs – street lightings

3.6.9 Evidence received details that each street lighting column costs around £30 -£50 per year in electricity, depending on wattage, which can range from 30-150 watts. Maintenance costs for 744¹ lighting columns equates to approximately £50,000 per year. It is acknowledged that this amount could change when the Corporate Asset List is finalised. The Working Group felt that it would be beneficial for consideration to be given to looking at a shared street lighting specialist, with NPH, for the 744¹ NBC owned street lighting columns. It is further felt that maintenance would be cheaper if the test was undertaken in a programmed way; such as a number of columns tested in a day rather than on an ad hoc basis.

3.6.10 Evidence received highlights that there is no revenue or capital budget for NBC owned street lighting and discussions will have to take place regarding assets and maintenance.

Invest to Save Programme - Street Lighting

3.6.11 From the evidence received, the Working Group acknowledges the need for an Invest to Save Programme for NBC owned street lighting. Electricity costs for the 744¹ street

¹ The figure of 744 street lighting columns could increase or decrease when the Corporate Asset List has been finalised.

lighting columns are in the region of £50,000 to £70,000 per annum. It recognises that NCC has installed energy efficient lighting.

- 3.6.12 The Working Group recognises that discussions between Northampton Borough Council, Northampton Partnership Homes and Northamptonshire Police regarding the need and appropriateness for lighting and what areas should/should not be lit should take place.
- 3.6.13 The Working Group acknowledges that there is a need to ascertain whether the current level of 744¹ lighting columns is required; for example the lighting of parks. The views of Northamptonshire Police would be useful.

Report It App.

- 3.6.14 The Working Group highlights the value of the Report It App. and felt it would be useful for details of NBC owned street lighting to be included within the App.

Training

- 3.6.15 Evidence received highlights the need for training of relevant officers, such as customer services staff, regarding the difference between NCC and NBC lighting and to which Authority maintenance issues should be reported to.
- 3.6.16 One clear reporting mechanism for problems with NBC owned street lighting need to be easily available for the public. A clear reporting mechanism, together with the interactive active mapping system, will make identification and reporting of street lighting columns easier.

4. Options

- 4.1 Cabinet will need to consider the possible options as part of its response to the recommendations.

5. Implications (including financial implications)

5.1 Policy

- 5.1.1 The work of Overview and Scrutiny plays a major part in the development of the Council's policy framework through its work programme.
- 5.1.2 The report and its recommendations have policy implications in relation to NBC owned street lighting. Cabinet's response will need to consider these issues in detail.

5.2 Resources and Risk

5.2.1 Cabinet will need to consider the resourcing issues for the recommendations made.

5.3 Legal

5.3.1 Legal issues will need to be considered as part of Cabinet's response to the recommendations.

5.4 Equality

5.4.1 Equality issues will need to be considered as part of Cabinet's response to the recommendations.

5.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

5.5.1 The Committee received evidence from a variety of sources as detailed in paragraph 3.5 of this report.

6. Background Papers

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee report – NBC Owned Street Lighting
- Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 13 June 2016

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