

minutes



Meeting STREET LIGHTING SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 26 November 2007 (commencing at 10.30 am)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

John Knight (Chair)

A Andy Stewart (Vice-Chair)

A Jen Cole
Vincent Dobson
Jim Napier
Philip Owen

Ken Rigby
David Shaw
Kevan Wakefield

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 22 October 2007, having been circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chair, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Wakefield's apologies for absence.

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Stewart.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL PART-NIGHT LIGHTING PILOT

The Chair welcomed Lawrence McKeogh and Keith Tovee from Essex County Council. Mr McKeogh gave a presentation about their pilot project for part-night lighting, which had started in two of the county's districts. A number of energy saving options had been considered before deciding that, for a small capital investment, part-night lighting gave the quickest return on investment and large reductions in CO² emissions. Part-night photocells were predicted to give rise to savings of 29% of energy costs for street lights, with a return on investment over 3 to 4 years. Two districts with a mix of urban and rural areas had been chosen for the pilot, and extensive consultation carried out. Initial press coverage had been negative, though an on-line opinion poll by a local paper had showed 80% in favour of the project.

Mr McKeogh explained that before implementation, a list of exception criteria (for locations where lighting would continue all night) was drawn up, and a wide-ranging risk assessment carried out. New photocells were installed on a phased basis, which would turn off the street lights from approximately 12 midnight to 5.00 am GMT. A joint monitoring group was reviewing the project's success. Accident statistics showed no recorded accidents during the hours without lighting, and crime figures were inconclusive.

Councillor Knight commended Essex on a brave initiative. Councillor Napier felt that careful preparation for the pilot had paid off. Mr McKeogh referred to the value in having an enthusiastic Cabinet Member to steer the project through. He indicated that there would be a thorough review after the winter, with an intention to roll out the project over the whole county. There would however be careful consideration given to the larger urban areas. In reply to Councillor Shaw, Mr Tovee said that the photocells had cost £20 each.

Councillor Owen invited comment on RoSPA's view that fatal accidents increased on unlit roads. Mr McKeogh referred to the absence of accidents on the roads covered by the pilot. These were, he observed, mainly residential roads with slow traffic. Main roads into towns, for example, continued to be lit. In reply to Councillor Rigby, Mr Tovee said that 84% of the lighting columns in one district affected, and 71% in the other. In reply to Councillor Knight, he stated that complaints had petered out. Mr McKeogh pointed out that worries about the effect on the security of properties had not materialised. Mr Tovee indicated that West Sussex had operated part-night lighting since the 1970s.

Councillor Shaw asked whether on reflection they would wish to change their model. Mr McKeogh replied that they might better have consulted parish councils directly rather than asking the districts to do this consultation. Better publicity might have pre-empted criticism. He was pleased however that the local police commanders had come to support the project.

Councillor Knight thanked the guests for their contribution, which the committee would bear in mind in reaching its recommendations.

LIGHTING OF SIGNS AND BOLLARDS

David Beniston, Lighting and Signals Manager, informed the committee that new regulations meant that some signs and bollards no longer had to be lit. The department would have to consider which units were affected, and what the potential costs and benefits might be. He indicated an estimated saving of £4 pa per unit.

WORK PROGRAMME

The meeting on 10 December would receive evidence from the Institute of Lighting Engineers, and consider the draft final report.

The meeting closed at 11.40 am.

CHAIR