



meeting	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	
date	16 February 2009	agenda item number

Report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Progress Report - Review of Street Lighting Repair

Purpose of the report

1. To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) with an opportunity to consider the progress of recommendation 7 of the review of Street Lighting Repair – **the County Council should continue to receive quarterly monitoring of Central Network's performance in relation to street lighting repair and make official complaints wherever they are unsatisfactory.**

Background

2. The Highways Select Committee, which concluded in March 2007, recommended that the issue of the street lighting repair performance be looked at in more detail. Street lighting repair is included as a performance indicator that the County Council is judged by, however delivery of this service is by Central Networks.
3. On 26 March 2007 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned a Select Committee to examine the issue over the course of two meetings in April and May 2007. The scrutiny review was chaired by the Hon. Joan Taylor.
4. A response to the recommendations of the Street Lighting Repair Select Committee was provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 15 October 2007. Members requested a progress report on the implementation of recommendations which was provided to OSC on the 9 October 2008.

Issues

5. At the meeting on 9 October 2008 Members received figures for BV215b. The indicator measures the average time to repair a street lighting fault, where the fault is under the control of the Distribution Network Operator (Central Networks). The County Council has a target of 15 days.

	Q4 06/07	Q1 07/08	Q2 0708	Q3 07/08	Q4 07/08
BV215b (target 15 days)	29.52	22.66	27.81	18.51	28.66

The figures for the last 3 quarters are:

	Q1 08/09	Q2 08/09	Q3 08/09
BV215b (target 15 days)	18.95	21.58	17.20

Whilst these figures show some improvement they are still significantly above the target of 15 days. Additionally there are individual instances where the timescale has been significantly greater than this. These matters have been raised by officers from the Communities Department with Central Networks (EON) on a regular basis.

6. At the meeting on 9 October Members agreed that a representative from EON and the Cabinet Member be invited will attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss what action is currently being taken to bring about an improvement in these response times.
7. Appendix 1, attached, shows the Central Networks East region figures produced against OFGEM standards for the last 3 quarters. These are issued to local authorities prior to issuing to OFGEM. Column D provides the standard and columns I, J, K show the actual performance against the standard with the most recent in column I. Unlike the BV215b measures these are pass or fail only and do not give an indicator of time taken. The BVPI215b also relies on EON notifying the local authority rather than the time the lights were restored or repaired on site. The completion of planned work e.g. transfers and connections are showing an improvement since external activity has been insourced during 2008. Appendix 2, attached, shows the Central Networks West figures for Quarter 2, the performance is in line with previous quarters and is stronger than the East mainly as traditionally the West have sourced the work internally. Members of the Committee may wish to question why residents in the Central Networks East area receive an inferior service to those living in Central Networks West.
8. The review of street lighting repair recommended that BV215b be abandoned by the government as it is not a fair measure of the local authority since influence over this is minimal. Members may recall that at the meeting on 12 May 2008 the Chief Executive introduced the new national indicator set (NIS). This indicator does not form part of the new performance framework (NIS).
9. Performance against target is now measured as a local indicator using the levels that were agreed in the Street Lighting Code of Practice.

Whilst this is not a measure by which the County Council will be assessed it is a measure of the standard of service that the County Council would expect to receive. It also reflects the Council's role to procure services that meet the expectations of the people of Nottinghamshire which the County Council could be assessed against.

10. The Street Lighting review recommended that the County Council should continue to receive quarterly monitoring reports from Central Networks Performance (EON) in relating to street lighting repairs. The Cabinet Member fully supported this recommendation. Members were informed at the October 2008 meeting that the quarterly data was considered by the now disbanded Environment Committee and were concerned that Member input and a system for monitoring repairs no longer exists.
11. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would not expect to receive quarterly reporting on an indicator that is not a priority one; however Members may wish to consider options such as Member Briefings and Portfolio Meetings.
12. Gary Wood, Service, Manager Policy and Standards and Rob Ludlow, Electrical Services Manager, Communities Department will be attending the meeting to answer questions and discuss issues relating to the additional information.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended that
 - I. the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the information provided
 - II. agree if further action is needed to establish a scheme to allow Members to receive yearly reports of Central Networks performance in relation to meeting the local indicator
 - III. agree that further reporting of progress towards the target is provided in six months time

Councillor EDW Llewellyn-Jones
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Background papers: nil.