

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....4th January 2007

1. Title of Item/Report

Street Lighting

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet was informed that the Environment and Regeneration Select Committee had been tasked with examining Stockton Borough Council's street lighting services. The Committee was asked to address issues relating particularly to service costs incurred as a result of rising energy prices and an ageing stock, with increasing maintenance requirements.

The Committee also considered strategic and operational issues relating to service efficiency, sustainability, community safety and customer satisfaction as additional concerns.

Members initially received a technical overview of the service, in recognition of the highly complex nature of the subject. This was followed by receipt of oral and written evidence from SBC Street Lighting Engineers, Financial Officers and Officers from Regeneration. Members also received evidence from external witnesses i.e Websters (DWL) and Integrated Utility Services, who were partly responsible for the Distribution Network. The Committee was unable to take evidence from Northern Electrical Distribution Ltd.

The Committee also considered desk based comparative and information gathering work relating to various schemes operated by other Councils in the same family group, and considered national 'best practice' guidance in terms of energy efficiency and general operation of the service.

The Committee was happy that SBC was achieving best value for money in terms of energy procurement, but noted the shortfall in the 2006/07 budget as a result of rising energy costs, that was covered by the repairs and maintenance budget. The Committee recognised the concerns, in both the short and long term, of rising energy costs and SBC's ageing street lighting stock. Members also noted the need to create a fuller and more coherent policy for management of the service, and a requirement to undertake a comprehensive data verification exercise in order to fully calculate the required investment level.

It was also noted that trials were ongoing to experiment with mechanisms to reduce energy costs, and that successful trials should be rolled out across the Borough in order to achieve energy efficiencies.

It was stressed though, that any experiments with dimming or reduction of street lighting should be undertaken in full consultation with safer Stockton partnership and the local communities in order that safety in the community was not compromised.

Members were also keen to ensure that the performance indicators outlined in the Webster's Partnership Agreement were measured and updated on a regular basis to ensure that the partnership was providing the best value for service and value for money.

RESOLVED that

1. a data verification exercise be undertaken to determine the condition of stock, to begin by the start of the next financial year.
2. performance figures encompassed in DWL Partnership Agreement be recorded for the duration of the arrangement in order to ensure that the partnership was achieving good value for money.
3. a cost benefit ratio be created for different scenarios relating to investment and replacement, to include an investigation of the potential of utilising the software, created by Jacobs Babbie for Telford & Wrekin Council, for this purpose.
4. a policy document based on the recommendations outlined in the UK Lighting Board's Code of Practice for Highway Lighting Management be produced.
5. an assessment of the level of finance required, based on stock condition and outcome of cost benefit ratio (see recommendations 2 & 3) be undertaken.
6. a Business Case outlining the preferred option for investment be created.
7. an advert be placed in a national journal inviting expressions of interest from companies interested in entering into an agreement for the advertising rights on street columns.
8. Officers fully explore the options outlined in the 'invest to save' document.

9. a report of the conclusions of the dimming trial be reported back to Environment and Regeneration Select Committee and Safer Stockton Partnership in 2007.

3. Reasons for the Decision

This topic was identified as an area meriting a scrutiny review at a meeting of the Scrutiny Liaison Forum held on 8 March 2006. The issue was subsequently referred to the Environment and Regeneration Select Committee for approval, and passed to a meeting of the Executive Scrutiny Committee as part of the work programming procedure.

The objectives/aims developed by the Committee for the review were as follows: -

- To advise upon strategic and operational policy relating to energy cost, service efficiency, sustainability, community safety and satisfaction
- To complete the scrutiny review and make recommendations on future policy regarding delivery of street lighting services
- Findings and recommendations from the review to be reported to Cabinet/Council

The review addressed the following strategic corporate objectives:

- Resource management – Improve operational efficiency
- Community Safety – Respond to residents' concerns and fears of crime and anti-social behaviour, as part of the safer Stockton partnership

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in this item as he worked as an energy consultant.

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not Applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

By no later than Midnight on Friday 12th January 2007

Proper Officer  
08 September 2007