

To: **Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board**

On: **18 March 2024**

Report by: **Director of Finance & Resources**

Heading: **AUDIT, RISK & SCRUTINY REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF STREET LIGHTING WITHIN RENFREWSHIRE**

1. **Summary**

1.1 Councillor James MacLaren has submitted a request for a review to be carried out by the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board in relation to the LED street lights not providing enough light for pedestrians and has requested that a report be submitted to the next Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board.

2.1 A copy of Councillor MacLaren's request is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

2. **Recommendation**

2.1 That the Board give consideration to carrying out this review regarding the closure of police stations within Renfrewshire and to choose one of the following four options:-

- (i) that the matter be considered immediately;
 - (ii) that the matter be considered as part of a future review;
 - (iii) that the matter be referred to officers for investigation;
 - (iv) that the matter be not considered.
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3. **Background**

3.1 The following motion was agreed at the Council meeting of 28 September 2023 which stated;

“Council recognises the investment of £9M into modernisation of over 30,700 lanterns in Renfrewshire. Renfrewshire Council was recognised in both the GO Awards Scotland and the National GO Awards for the innovation, sustainability and carbon reduction in street lighting across Renfrewshire. Council agrees that an update report on the operation of the street lighting service be made to the next appropriate meeting of Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board and that elected members are encouraged to engage with the service team and officers on any particular issues that require to be addressed in advance of that report. Council instructs officers to carry out a Renfrewshire wide street lighting survey to assess areas and levels of risk. This would include an action plan identifying the needs for replacement, renewal or additional lighting The results of this plan to be reported to the appropriate Board.”

3.2 Since the Council motion in September 2023 the Streetlighting Maintenance service has moved from Building Services to the Roads Service with a review of current arrangements for delivering the service being carried out.

3.3 An initial update report was submitted to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board held on 24 January 2024. The report outlined the current position in relation to the streetlighting service and how officers intended to address the Council motion outlined. This report is attached as Appendix 2.

3.4 It should be noted that the Roads Service have awarded two separate contracts for replacement of around 150 streetlighting columns as a result of complaints about dark areas or where columns have been damaged by road traffic accidents.

3.5 It is anticipated that when the works associated with these contracts conclude officers will then review areas where there are complaints that there is a lack of adequate streetlighting provision or dark areas. This is in order to minimise duplication as some of these areas will potentially be covered by the contracts associated with column replacement.

3.6 In January 2024, officers advised the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board that future reports on progress with the review will be brought back to the policy board to provide Elected Members with an update on progress.

3.7 Councillor MacLaren is seeking the review of street lighting arrangement to ensure that there are enough street lamps and where there is a deficiency, that additional lampposts are installed.

3.2 The Council's Scheme of Delegations dictates that members of the Board have 4 options:

The Board may agree:-

- (i) that the matter be considered immediately;
- (ii) that the matter be considered as part of a future review;
- (iii) that the matter be referred to officers for investigation;
- (iv) that the matter be not considered.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - not relevant to report recommendations
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – not relevant to report recommendations
3. **Community/Council Planning** – not relevant to report recommendations
4. **Legal** – not relevant to report recommendations
5. **Property/Assets** – not relevant to report recommendations
6. **Information Technology** – not relevant to report recommendations
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – not relevant to report recommendations
8. **Health & Safety** – not relevant to report recommendations
9. **Procurement** – not relevant to report recommendations
10. **Risk** – as per the subject matter of this report
11. **Privacy Impact** – not relevant to report recommendations
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not relevant to report recommendations
13. **Climate Risk** – not relevant to report recommendations

List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Paper - none

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AUDIT, RISK & SCRUTINY BOARD ANNUAL PROGRAMME



I would like to have the undernoted issue considered by the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board:

Issue:

Review of street lighting.

Are the LED lights providing enough light for pedestrians?

Why the review should be undertaken:

Vehicles now have super bright headlamps compared to what they used to have, and pavements throughout Renfrewshire are in a poorer state than previous times due to lack of finance. Parked vehicles can put pavements into shade particularly when street lights are restricted to one side of the road only, and this is exacerbated when the road is on a curve. Factor in the encroachment of vegetation coupled with more and more people parking on street this results in some pavements/roads having significant blackspots. I know the adoption of pavements is less likely just now but for the length of Watt Road (BoW) lack of light and people walking on the road because they have no alternative because of the state of the unadopted pavements, is a problem especially in winter.

The old sodium lighting provided much more light and seemed to filter through tree branches much better than the LED lighting does. For a large number of streets, the LED lighting does not seem to stretch from one lamppost to the next meaning there are dark areas. Council is running the risk of being sued if a pedestrian has a bad fall.

Expected outcome of the review

...A review of the street lighting arrangement to ensure that there are enough street lamps and where there is a deficiency, that additional lampposts are installed.

CouncillorJames W.H. MacLaren.....

Date27/2/24.....



To: Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

On: 24 January 2024

Report by: Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure

Heading: Streetlighting Service Update

1. Summary

1.1 This report provides an update on the current priorities and challenges faced by the streetlighting service as well as addressing the motion agreed at the Council meeting of 28 September 2023 which stated;

Council recognises the investment of £9M into modernisation of over 30,700 lanterns in Renfrewshire. Renfrewshire Council was recognised in both the GO Awards Scotland and the National GO Awards for the innovation, sustainability and carbon reduction in street lighting across Renfrewshire. Council agrees that an update report on the operation of the street lighting service be made to the next appropriate meeting of Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board and that elected members are encouraged to engage with the service team and officers on any particular issues that require to be addressed in advance of that report. Council instructs officers to carry out a Renfrewshire wide street lighting survey to assess areas and levels of risk. This would include an action plan identifying the needs for replacement, renewal or additional lighting. The results of this plan to be reported to the appropriate Board.

1.2 As previously highlighted to the Board, a review of the Council's streetlighting service has commenced. Previously, the service operated from two different teams, with the Capital investment side being delivered by the roads service and the maintenance function being delivered by Building Services.

1.3 The first phase of the review has resulted in bringing both sides of the streetlighting function under a single service recognising the important relationship between infrastructure investment and maintenance functions.

1.4 Now that the service has integrated under the Roads Service the next phases of the review have been mapped out to identify areas where the service is working well as well as prioritising areas for improvement on a short, medium and long-term basis to ensure the service functions efficiently and effectively.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board:

- 2.1 Notes the progress with the streetlighting review and quick wins already achieved.
 - 2.2 Notes that future updates will be brought to the Board through the Service Update Reports to provide details of progress with identified improvements.
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3. Service Review

- 3.1 The streetlighting service is presented with a number of different challenges, as outlined from section 3.2 below and the Roads Service is being assisted in the review with Amey Consultants, who are providing a 'critical friend' analysis of the service performance which will allow performance benchmarking as well as detailed review of systems and processes currently in operation.

Systems and Processes

- 3.2 The service currently uses the asset management system Symology to record details of all streetlighting inventory on the Council network, including details of when repairs were last undertaken on the infrastructure. As the Roads Service will soon begin the migration of data over to a new supplier in the coming months the inventory details will need to be updated to allow effective planning of resources.
- 3.3 The streetlighting service will now have an increased focus on performance information and the data recorded will now be measured against the time taken to repair a defect rather than the time taken to attend to a defect but not necessarily rectify the issue.

Infrastructure Investment and Maintenance

- 3.4 Early review work has identified a need for an enhanced testing and inspection regime as well as increasing planned maintenance activities. These essential maintenance requirements will be crucial to the service for forward planning purposes as part to inform capital investment planning requirements going forward.
- 3.5 Amey are focussing effort in this area to identify the appropriate level of resource required to carry out the appropriate testing & inspection and planned maintenance regimes.
- 3.6 The annual allocation of streetlighting capital investment has been approximately £500,000 per year, with this being split between the two teams for delivery. The integration of the teams will now ensure the capital delivery arrangements are more robust and priorities for investment are aligned.

Recruitment Challenges

- 3.6 Similar to challenges being faced across Council services, the service faces significant challenges in the recruitment field and has had to rely on the use of agency resources for a number of years to keep the service functioning. The role profiles are being reviewed for the workforce in order to ensure there is an appetite in the market for those who want to come and work for the Council.

4. Identified Improvements

4.1 Short Term Actions (3 – 6 months)

The service has identified areas where columns have been cut down as they have been either life expired or damaged as a result of road traffic incidents. An initial contract for the replacement of 65 columns and 33 cable loops was approved at the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board on 23 November 2023 with a contract value of just under £240,000. A further contract to replace a similar number of columns and cable loops is being put out to tender in the coming weeks to address this backlog.

4.2 This initial work programme will go some way to addressing concerns from members and communities about sections of dark areas within communities. A further programme of work is being compiled to address the remaining outstanding known locations of dark spots caused by knocked down or removed columns.

4.3 The service has identified opportunities to address some of the areas of overspend currently within the streetlighting area. This will include the removal of long-term hire vehicles from the fleet and replacing these with vehicles purchased through the Council's Capital vehicle replacement programme.

4.4 Medium Term Actions (6 – 9 months)

The joint work with Amey will result in a number of recommendations where improvements could be made to the service over a period of time. These will include changes to:

- The resourcing and delivery of maintenance functions, currently the service relies on the use of agency workers,
- Capital investment planning to ensure the investment is evidence led and focussed on areas of most need,
- A review of the streetlighting asset inventory to identify the levels of capital investment that will be required to maintain the asset at the required level, and
- Digitising the service to allow the maintenance function to be carried out in the most effective manner with the use of robust performance management information.

4.5 Longer Term Actions (9 – 12 months)

The short-term actions outlined to address backlogs of damaged and removed lighting columns will go some way to address concerns about dark areas within Renfrewshire. It is anticipated that the backlog of column replacements will be attended to by the end of the Summer 2024.

4.6 At this point onward this would be the most appropriate time for carrying out the Renfrewshire wide survey of street lighting. This will allow the Service to have the most up to date and representative survey information to take any decisions on any future investment requirements. As this process develops, we will provide updates to the Board through the Service Update Reports.

4.7 The Service will continue to respond to reports of areas of dark lamps with our reactive maintenance service to ensure communities are not waiting considerable lengths of time for dark areas to be resolved.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The ongoing level of capital investment in street lighting will be determined as part of the review of street lighting.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - none
3. **Community Planning**
4. **Legal** – none
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** - none
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** – Existing Framework contracts will be utilised.
10. **Risk** - none
11. **Privacy Impact** - none
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not applicable.
13. **Climate Risk** – The expansion of LED units has a positive climate impact in reducing energy requirements and associated emissions.

List of Background Papers - None

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