

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**  
Date of meeting: **16<sup>th</sup> January 2020**  
Report Subject: **Street Lighting Service Review**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. G. Collier, Deputy Leader / Executive Member, Environment**  
Report Submitted by: **Clive Rogers – Head of Community Services.**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
10/12/19	17/12/19	05.01.20			16/01/2020	06.02.20		

1. **Purpose of the Report**  
To provide the Members of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Street Lighting review.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 Following a Member's briefing on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019 on Street Lighting, there was a desire by members for the service to undergo a full review.
  - 2.2 As a result, the Neighbourhood Services section set out a terms of reference (**Appendix 1**), which consisted of three overarching priorities:
    - Priority 1 - Financial Diligence
    - Priority 2 – Stock Management & Assets; and
    - Priority 3 – Legislative drivers and performance of the service.

Below outlines the outputs against the priorities to date. The outstanding elements will be reported in February 2020 upon the conclusion of the review.

- 2.3 **Outputs against Priority 1 – Financial Diligence**
  - a) Current revenue budget including Energy costs - (Completed)  
The Street Lighting Team met with the accountants in May to identify current and future energy costs. This allowed the service to identify the revenue budget available to cover ongoing maintenance on a month by month basis.
  - b) Capital programme – (Completed)  
As part of the review, the street lighting team identified capital investment that was required to bring industrial estates back up to an acceptable standard. As a result, all Industrial estate entrances, including Junctions and roundabouts are now lit. Furthermore, we have ensured the lighting as you enter into the Industrial units, are also lit to cover for shift workers.

c) Insurance claims – (Completed)

The Street Lighting Team has been working closely with Cardiff Council to identify the best approach for dealing with Insurance Claims. As a result, the Street Lighting team have mirrored their approach and have set up a system which is bespoke to Blaenau Gwent (**Appendix 2**). This method was tested following a recent RTA, and the Council was successful in reclaiming the monies back from the insurance company.

2.4 **Outputs against Priority 2 – Stock Management & Assets**

a) Redundant stock – (Completed)

The redundant stock within stores was also written off to reduce the ongoing deficit on the budget to the sum of £317,000. This stock is now going through a process of being auctioned off. The remaining stock will then be used as part of the ongoing maintenance budget.

b) List of assets on the various road networks – (Completed)

Held on Mayrise database [13000 street lights / 2000 signs & bollards / 36 traffic signal sites]

c) Monitoring systems – (Ongoing)

We need to reduce from three monitoring systems down to one system. Much of the day burning issues are associated with the outdated Mayflower system. The preferred monitoring system is Telensa. However, there are approximately 700 Mayflower nodes left to move onto Telensa [£45 per node = £31,500]. In 2016 there were 4,300 units, so significant strides have been made in this respect.

d) Examine new technologies – (Completed)

We are trialling Solar LED lanterns in Newtown, Ebbw Vale and some of the Industrial Estates. This is a new technology which doesn't incur any energy costs and are useful when there are expensive underground faults, which historically prevented the Council lighting certain areas. The department is also exploring digital reporting to eliminate paper output. Whilst this task is completed, it is critical for the department to ensure it looks for new technologies to ensure the service is sustainable for the future.

2.5 **Outputs against Priority 3 – Legislative drivers & Performance of the service.**

a) To understand and confirm the Council's statutory duties in relation to street lighting and highway based power supplies – (Completed).

A local authority does not have a duty to provide street lighting; however once provided, the local authority does have a duty to maintain the system in a safe condition. The standards for street lighting are laid down in British Standard: BS.5489 and European Standard BS EN 1320.

- b) To review how our duties are discharged, including how priorities are arrived at and how resources are allocated – (Completed)  
We have 3 engineers, plus 1 apprentice to carry out reactive maintenance, Electrical Testing and Structural testing. We have outsourced the 'Out of Hour' service, which is provided by SSE. For Traffic Signals, this, along with general maintenance is carried out by Centregreat. Having this in-house and external arrangement provides resilience to the Street Lighting department.
- c) To review recent performance and the methods of performance measurement that are applied to this area; (Ongoing)  
Recent performance at the end of 2018/19 was greatly affected by a significant budget overspend, the service was reduced to dealing with only essential / risk to life maintenance issues, all other routine maintenance ceased with the exception of electrical Testing. Since the review, the street lighting department is now dealing with complaints in a more, timely manner. That said, the Street Lighting department will be setting out a new 'Street Lighting Policy', which will be public facing and this will set out reaction times to complaints.
- d) To review what service improvements are being implemented and what improvements could be implemented, to improve performance still further. – (Ongoing)  
As part of the department's succession planning, we introduced a new Apprenticeship in 2019, which has created further resilience within the Street Lighting section. We are also upgrading some of the LED lanterns through the Refit programme, which will reduce future maintenance levels.
- e) To review whether the Council's own processes and response rate in dealing with street lighting is timely, effective and cost-efficient, and what effect the responsiveness of the utility companies can have on the service - (Ongoing)

The Street Lighting section will be setting out a new Policy as outlined above, which will be public facing through the Council's internet. Our aspirations within the policy will be as follows:

- 1) Lamps will be checked if a fault is found on the monitoring systems
- 2) Routine repairs will be carried within 5 working days of the fault being reported.
- 3) Communication (Monitoring) and underground cable faults will be dealt with in a timely manner.
- 4) Western Power Distribution will repair any faults they are responsible for within 20 working days.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1** to accept the information in the report.

3.2 **Option 2** to consider the information contained within the report and provide challenge and/or further action for consideration to make improvements.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

**Council Priorities**

The improvement of the Street Lighting departments performance supports the Council Priority '*Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities*' in particular 'To re-invest in highways maintenance particularly improvements to our residential roads, streets and pavements'

**Statutory Responsibilities**

A local authority does not have a duty to provide street lighting; however once provided, the local authority does have a duty to maintain the system in a safe condition. The standards for street lighting are laid down in British Standard: BS.5489 and European Standard BS EN 1320.

**Well-being Plan**

Street Lighting supports the Well-being objective '*Blaenau Gwent wants to look after and protect the environment*' by using our resources in a fair and sustainable way.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)**

As part of the service review we identified where the cost pressures were within the service area, whereby a growth item of £284,000 was put in place to cover current and future energy increases, whilst at the same time providing a revenue budget that will allow the service to react to complaints within five working days. Furthermore, the write off of obsolete stock to the sum of £317,000 has also put the service in a good position, making it more sustainable for the future.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

Failure to ensure that there is robust monitoring of the Street Lighting Service, including services provided by Contractors, carries with it a number of significant risks:

- Undetected and unaddressed decline in service performance and the quality of provision; and
- Negative impact on the reputation of the Council.

Regular monitoring of the Street Lighting performance is a key element in ensuring that the Council knows its services well and is able to support and intervene appropriately.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no direct human resource implications for the local authority in relation to this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

N/A

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

A more sustainable and reliable street lighting service which meets customer demands.

6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

We have engaged with other local authorities to enable us to proceed with future insurance claims, where street lighting columns have been damaged through road traffic accidents.

6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

Having a more sustainable street lighting service will ensure the service is resilient and meets the needs of residents living in Blaenau Gwent.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

Investment into the Street Lighting service through one monitoring system will ensure the service is fit for purpose and creates more control over the lighting network throughout Blaenau Gwent.

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The Street Lighting section will continue to work in collaboration with other authorities in Wales to seek best practice. It will also continue to work with the private sector through SSE, Western Power Distribution and Roman Builders. Having this diverse set of skills will ensure the service is resilient and meets the demands of the customer.

6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**

The Street Lighting Service works closely with its counterparts in Highways and this joined up integration allows the service to be more responsive to the demands on the service.

6.8 **EqlA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The performance of the Street lighting department will be measured through:

- Reaction times to complaints / service requests and outages

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference
- Appendix 2 – Insurance Claims procedure.

