

Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Tuesday, 5 March 2019, County Hall, Worcester - 10.00 am

Minutes

Present:

Mr A A J Adams (Chairman), Mr G R Brookes,
Mr M E Jenkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr J A D O'Donnell,
Ms C M Stalker and Ms R Vale

Also attended:

Mr A P Miller, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for
Environment
Dr K A Pollock, Cabinet Member with responsibility for
Economy and Infrastructure
Mr L C R Mallett
Mr P A Tuthill

Rachel Hill (Strategic Commissioner, Major Projects),
Nick Twaite (Infrastructure Asset Manager), Trevor McGill
(Lighting Engineer), Liz Alston (Sustainability Manager),
Steph Simcox (Head of Strategic Infrastructure Finance
and Financial Recovery), Dave Corbett (Management
Information Analyst), Samantha Morris (Scrutiny Co-
ordinator) and Jo Weston (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Available Papers

The Members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. Presentation handouts for item 5 (circulated at the Meeting)
- C. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 January 2019 (previously circulated).

(Copies of documents A and B will be attached to the signed Minutes).

325 Apologies and Welcome

Apologies had been received from Mr B Clayton and Mr P Denham.

326 Declarations of Interest and of any Party Whip

None.

327 Public Participation

None.

328 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 January 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Meeting

329 Street Lighting

Officers from the Economy and Infrastructure Directorate had been invited to attend the meeting to provide an update on Street Lighting, in particular on progress with both the LED roll-out and concrete column survey which was first discussed at the 7 March 2018 Panel meeting.

The Panel received a presentation, copies of which were circulated during the Meeting.

Members were reminded that the Street Lighting Service was led by the Council and delivered by Prysmian, the Council's Lighting Maintenance contractor who was responsible for maintaining all of the County's street lights. The Council's street lighting service was supplemented where required by the current street lighting Contractor, Prysmian and Jacobs. The support given by the two external suppliers included assistance with specific project management, undertaking new designs and additional lighting engineer capacity.

Officers reported that over the last twelve months, progress had been made in several areas:

Concrete Column Survey and LED Replacement Schedule

As of August 2017, the Council maintained 49,819 lighting columns, with 10,884 of these shown as being of concrete construction, probably from the 1960's and 1970's.

During 2018, a detailed survey was undertaken to rank the condition of the concrete columns, from 1 (good condition) to 5 (requires immediate attention). 326 were either in category 4 or 5.

All category 5 concrete columns had now been replaced with a new steel column and an LED lantern and all category 4 concrete columns would be replaced by the end of April 2019. The remainder of concrete columns would be scheduled for replacement in line with the County's footway reconstruction programme if possible.

As a result of the completed works, the Council's LED asset was around 22%. Members also learned that low-pressure sodium (SOX) lamps were now no longer being manufactured, however, technology was developing quickly and retro-fit lamps were available to directly replace an old SOX lamp in an existing lantern with an

LED lamp.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Members were interested in learning more about electric charging points and whether existing columns could be converted to charging points. The Panel was advised that it was not feasible to convert existing columns as it would mean a complete re-wire of the entire lighting network to cope with the increased load. In addition, there was a risk of exposed cable-ends being cut and stolen and the majority of columns were currently at the rear of the footway resulting in trailing cables when in use.

General Discussion Points

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- Street Light Part Night Switch Off, which was introduced from 2014, had resulted in around two out of three residential SOX lights being switched off between midnight and 6am. The reduction in energy and ultimately cost savings had been beneficial (NB major traffic routes which were exempt from the scheme).
- In answer to a question about whether there had been an increase in crime as a result of the Switch Off, Officers reported that they believed that crime hadn't increased, however, it was agreed that the situation would be clarified with to the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner
- It was confirmed that where the Council were responsible for column maintenance, no area was ever completely dark; 1 in 3 lights would remain on
- A Member asked whether motion sensors (PIR) could be installed on columns, to be informed that yes, they could and there were local examples of this. Further information was requested on this topic, especially for other Local Authorities taking this approach
- Furthermore, Members were keen to know more about whether the internet could provide further advances, similar to changes in maintaining the home with technology. Officers reported that a central control system would be needed and would be more suited to new estates with 5G fast broadband connectivity
- SOX bulbs were now obsolete, so any bulb replacements were now LED, which increased the

life expectancy of the bulb from around 4 or 5 years for SOX to around 15 years for LED. This however, meant that bulk maintenance lamp changes had been temporarily suspended due to the prohibitive cost implications of replacing all of the SOX lamps that were scheduled to be changed with complete new LED lanterns. However, by ceasing bulk lamp change, the objective of ensuring an average of 98% of lamps working at any one time would no longer be achievable

- In relation to energy savings, it was reported that LED bulbs ran at 14W compared to SOX at 58W
- Those concrete columns which were inspected as category 3 would need to be inspected again after 2 years
- A Member, not on the Panel, enquired whether Section 106 funding was used for lighting improvements, to be informed that it was if funding was available
- During 2019/20 it was hoped that the Council's LED asset would rise to 35%, however, this was dependent on whether individual lamps needed replacing, which was less efficient than bulk replacement in an area
- It was noted that the number of faults reported had doubled, but Officers agreed with the Panel that communication with residents could be improved and perhaps an electronic interface could be investigated. The Panel was concerned that this lack of communication could taint the reputation of the Council
- When asked whether the Council's Lighting Team was staffed sufficiently, Officers reported that it was difficult for the Council to recruit Lighting Engineers, however, resourcing was not a factor in terms of effective communication with residents
- A question was asked about whether the County Council was getting the best energy price to achieve value for money. It was confirmed that the Council's energy was commissioned from West Mercia Energy and Officers would check the price tariff and report back to the Panel. It was confirmed that a saving of £350,000 was expected this financial year and £100,000 for 2019/20
- The Panel was pleased to hear that although it was not possible to retrofit columns to become electric charging points, some funding had been secured to trial a 3kWh charge from a newly installed column

330 Performance Monitoring

- Members believed that with advances in technology, electric charging was an area which had opportunities for the future and some District Councils were already looking at this, for example in car parks, which Members felt would be more comprehensive if County and District colleagues worked together and urged Officers to consider this.

It was agreed that:

- Further information would be sought from the Police and Crime Commissioner about crime during part night switch off hours
- A briefing note on advances in technology in relation to motion sensors (PIR) and examples of other Local Authorities using this technology would be prepared
- It was confirmed that Officers would check with West Mercia Energy, the price tariff paid by the County Council for energy and report back to the Panel.

As part of the Agenda, the Panel had received performance and financial information for services relating to Economy and Environmental Services and the Strategic Commissioner, Management Information Analyst and Head of Finance had been invited to the Meeting.

The Panel Chairman thanked Officers for the information provided and felt that it had much improved since the last report. He asked whether the information was manually inputted to be informed that it was.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were raised:

- Performance Indicators (PI's) in respect of the Archives and Archaeology Service were requested for future reports
- Although the performance for the percentage of potholes fixed on time had been a constant 100% for recent years, the Panel requested more detailed information on this indicator, specifically figures relating to the class of defect
- Further detail was requested on traffic regulation order requests and a glossary of terms. There was concern that the process was slow and delays could be avoided. It was agreed that the appropriate Officer would be contacted for clarity
- It was clarified that the PI relating to the Condition

331 Work Programme 2018/19

of Roads and Footways (Coarse, Visual Inspection-CVI) was not a safety inspection, rather the integrity of the road, however, SCANNER inspections were about safety and these were a requirement of central Government. It was also noted that the edges of roads were not inspected as the detector and camera was at the front and covered a 2.4m wide spread. Officers acknowledged that CVI results had dipped in satisfaction levels

- The Panel requested further detail on the PI of Highways Public Enquiries (PEMs) completed within 28 days
- Members were reminded that the EnviRecover energy from waste facility at Hartlebury opened in 2017, hence the positive spike in the percentage diverted from landfill
- The Panel requested further information on Highways Licences and Permits and believed that this area of work could be a lucrative income generation stream for the Council
- In relation to financial performance monitoring there were no queries, although Members requested that in future, forecasts were included alongside some benchmarking information.

Finally, although the Performance Dashboard was the complete set of performance indicators, Panel Members felt that not all indicators were relevant to the work of the Panel nor ones which they could influence.

8 May meeting

It was agreed that cycling groups would be invited to attend the meeting for the discussion on Delivering for Cycling.

5 July meeting

It was agreed that a work planning session wouldn't be necessary in July and that the planned meeting for 5 July (10am) would suffice.

11 September (2pm) meeting

It was noted that the time of September meeting had changed, and the meeting would now take place on **11 September at 2pm.**

The meeting ended at 12.40 pm

Chairman