
Subject:	DDC HEALTH AND SAFETY STREET LIGHTING WORKS
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 3 April 2017
Report of:	Roger Walton, Director of Environment and Corporate Assets
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Trevor Bartlett, Portfolio Holder for Property Management and Public Protection
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To advise Cabinet of urgent works required to the footway lighting stock and seek approval to carry out necessary works.

Recommendation: Cabinet is asked to approve the following actions:

1. Authorise urgent health and safety works in relation to DDC owned street lights, including the provision of replacement lighting units where appropriate, which will be procured in accordance with standing orders.

1. Summary

- 1.1 Dover District Council is currently responsible for over 2,000 mostly footway lighting units, across the District. Most of these lights are now 30 plus years old and are consequently requiring increasingly frequent and/or maintenance and replacement works with many of the units reaching the end of their design life.
- 1.2 As part of the routine maintenance activities, the Council undertakes regular structural surveys of the footway lighting stock. The most recent survey, conducted in summer 2015, identified a requirement for various works which were categorised depending upon their respective urgency. Those categorised as emergency works were carried out immediately. The report also identified 175 lighting units with imminent risk of becoming a danger. The Council has extended the life of these units by 18 months but the risks are too great to allow the situation to continue and work is now required to deal with these 'failures'.
- 1.3 This report seeks agreement to undertake the necessary works.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Due to the increasing age of the lighting stock, the Council undertakes regular structural and electrical surveys of all the existing lighting units. The most recent survey identified a requirement for various works which were categorised depending upon their respective urgency. Those categorised as emergency works, involving some 30 lighting units, were carried out immediately.
- 2.2 The report also highlighted a further 175 columns (see Appendix A for details) that were at risk of structural failure and therefore need to be removed or cut down (truncated), an approach which allows the power source to be retained, so that any future replacements don't incur additional UKPN connection fees.
- 2.3 A further 310 units were highlighted in the report as requiring further testing, which will more than likely result in some additional failures with the need to remove more lights.

- 2.4 In planning for this work, officers have been mindful of the need that before progressing with the repair or replacement of individual units, there is a need to give some thought as to whether repair or direct replacement is necessary, recognising the need to control expenditure and given current budget pressures, consider whether the particular lights still serve a purpose.
- 2.5 It is therefore proposed to apply the following criteria to each of the lights removed to establish priorities in determining whether the unit is immediately replaced. The criteria is largely based around highway safety. Once the additional survey work and any consequent removals have been carried out, the remaining budget will be spent on replacement lighting units. This approach has been taken in recognition that direct replacement of all 175 failed columns, would incur an estimated cost of £236k.
- 2.6 The criteria for replacing any failed street lights are listed below in priority order.
- (a) Have there been a high proportion of road traffic accidents during dark hours in the vicinity of where the light is being removed?
 - (b) Is the light being removed providing adequate light to a highway traffic junction?
 - (c) Is the light outside the entrance of the following; Schools, Hospitals, Emergency Services, Retirement Homes, Youth and Community Centres?
 - (d) Is there any registered anti-social behaviour problems associated in the area of the light to be removed?
 - (e) Site specific extenuating circumstances.

The criteria for individual units will be used to identify the highest priority lighting unit replacements and these will be replaced in order until the £90k budget is expended.

- 2.7 The removal works will be carried out under the maintenance agreement with KCC street lighting along with the replacements. Works will commence in the spring and complete in the summer of 2017. At the same time the further structural and electrical testing will be carried out on the 310 units flagged for potential repairs or removal.
- 2.8 There is £90k allocated in the current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for the purposes of replacement and repair works to its lighting stock. The anticipated cost of the removals and the survey are circa £16k leaving £74k to fund replacement units. The expected cost for each replacement unit is approximately £1,350; therefore this would enable approximately 50 units to be replaced, with the use of the criteria outlined above ensuring that the Council is seen to be acting fairly, should Cabinet agree to these proposals.
- 2.9 In parallel with these short-term works, officers are undertaking a detailed review of the Council's role in the provision of footway lighting to ascertain the most economical approach to their future maintenance recognising the pressure that the aging stock and the need for urgent replacements will put on the Council's budget. Potentially hundreds of units will need to be replaced or removed over the next 5-10 years. A further report will be presented to Cabinet later this year with proposals.

3. Identification of Options

Option 1 – To remove all the lighting units with structural failures but refrain from any replacements until the comprehensive review has been completed.

Option 2 – To remove and replace all 175 structurally failed lights.

Option 3 – To remove all the structural failures and replace the lights that have been identified as priority units, using the assessment criteria in this report.

4. Evaluation of Options

- 4.1 Option 1 – Could increase health and safety risks with the sites associated with the applied criteria, such as lights on highway junctions. By not replacing any lighting, it may advocate that the Council no longer considers its street lighting as a priority, and consequently place further pressures to replace lighting when the comprehensive lighting review is conducted. Taking this into consideration, this is not the recommended option.
- 4.2 Option 2 – Looking at the prohibitive costs of this option it would set a precedent ahead of the comprehensive review. By replacing a light just because the previous one has failed may not be a wise use of public money. There may be a more cost effective solution or the light may no longer be needed. With this in mind and in light of the wider lighting review, this is not the recommended option.
- 4.3 Option 3 – Look to remove all the unsafe structures and replace under the criteria replacement process. This addresses the lighting units which have failed and replaces the lighting units deemed necessary for highway safety, pending the review due to be carried out later in the year. **Taking this into consideration this is the preferred option.**

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 There is a £90k allocation in the current MTFP to fund street lighting replacement and maintenance works. This will be used initially to finance the removal of units which pose a health and safety risk. The remaining budget will be used to fund further testing and urgent replacements in accordance with the criteria.
- 5.2 The majority of the works will be carried out by the contractor Amey under the street lighting agreement with Kent County Council. Further testing will be carried out by 'Electrical Testing' who submitted the successful tender.
- Under the maintenance agreement with KCC street lighting, the estimated cost to remove all 175 lighting units is £12,250. Electrical Testing have confirmed that it will cost circa £4k for further testing of 310 units.
 - Therefore, there will be an estimated £73,750 available to support further removals and the necessary replacements identified in Appendix A.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Comment from the Section 151 Officer: Accountancy has been consulted and has no further comment. (KW)

6.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.

6.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equalities implications, however in discharging their responsibilities member are required to comply with the public sector duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15>.

7. Appendices

Appendix A – Urgent removals and replacements

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