

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2003 AT 10.00 A.M.

Agenda Item No:

2

REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE OF EDF ENERGY (PREVIOUSLY 24 SEVEN)

Report of the Director of Environment

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1. Purpose of the Report

To update the Scrutiny Committee on the performance of EDF Energy in dealing with street lighting electricity supply faults and new connections.

2. Summary

The report provides an update on actions taken by EDF Energy to improve their service for the repair of street lighting electricity supply faults and new connections and reviews current performance.

3. Conclusions

3.1 The report concludes that progress is being made leading to an improvement in the level of service provided by EDF Energy. This improvement has been achieved through the implementation of better working arrangements and communications between Hertfordshire Highways and EDF Energy.

3.2 The Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider if further scrutiny of these arrangements is appropriate and, if so, the form it should take.

4. Background

- 4.1 The report to the Scrutiny Committee dated 17th June 2003 explained the general background to this area of the highways service.
- 4.2 Significant effort has continued by both Hertfordshire Highways and EDF Energy to further improve the situation reported at that time.
- 4.3 In particular, improved communications and increased resources have been instrumental in the further improvements achieved.

5. Fault Repair

- 5.1 By working with Hertfordshire Highways the backlog of street lighting faults as of early September 2003 has been reduced to 56 across the county. The table below shows performance achieved since June 2003, including cycle time to repair and percentage completed within EDF Energy's charter time scales, currently 14 days.

	Number of Faults			Average Cycle Time (days)	% meeting Charter (5 days)
	Received	Closed	Backlog		
June	100	103	114	21	61
July	96	96	114	28	44
August	65	95	84	18	39

- 5.2 This improvement has been achieved by taking the following actions;
- Appointment of a dedicated EDF Energy fault engineer for street lighting based in Stevenage,
 - Provision of additional electrical jointing resources.
 - Weekly review meetings between the operational staff of Hertfordshire Highways and EDF Energy.
 - Formal monthly review meetings between the senior management of Hertfordshire Highways and EDF Energy to monitor progress.
- 5.3 Performance against EDF Energy charter and cycle time reported in the table above is forecast to improve significantly now that the backlog has been reduced.
- 5.4 EDF Energy have committed to working with Hertfordshire Highways to complete high priority faults within 5 working days in line with the County Councils own charter for the repair of publicity reported street lighting faults.
- 5.5 A process is in place for a top ten of priority faults to be passed to EDF Energy each week and their commitment to give priority to their repair.

6. New Connections

- 6.1 Since the launch of EDF Energy there has been some fundamental changes in the way requests for new connections are dealt with.
- 6.2 Previously, under 24 Seven, all the operatives were outsourced to external contractors. These resources have now been reintegrated into the company with the aim to gain greater control of service delivery.
- 6.3 Through regular meetings between Hertfordshire Highways and EDF Energy, an improved understanding of each others working practices have been achieved.
- 6.4 Recently an information pack has been compiled by EDF Energy containing processes, escalation routes and contract details for all staff in the new connection business.
- 6.5 Recent changes in working arrangements have lead to a substantial reduction in outstanding work to 99 jobs as at 10th September 2003.

Month	Orders (outstanding from previous month)	No Added	Total No of Orders	No Completed	Quantity Outstanding
February	73	58	131	26	105
March	105	14	119	4	115
April	115	59	174	4	170
May	170	130	200	11	189
June	189	347	536	128	408
July	408	141	549	193	356
August	356	7	363	264	99

- 6.6 Weekly reports are issued to Hertfordshire Highways and progress is monitored.
- 6.7 Connections required as part of a scheme are separated from the standard one-off connections and a dedicated team within EDF Energy deals with these exclusively.
- 6.8 Previously, key issues for both Hertfordshire Highways and EDF Energy were the lack of plans and adequate information on orders, coupled with poor communication on receipt and completion of works. Now, however, both parties have achieved an effective working relationship based on an understanding of requirements.

7. Sponsorship Initiative

- 7.1 In response to Member request for compensation with respect to past poor performance, EDF Energy's predecessor, 24Seven, offered to consider a sponsorship initiative involving a Community Project put forward by the County Council.
- 7.2 Negotiations have been proceeding to identify a response which would offer a satisfactory way forward agreeable to both parties. EDF Energy's Corporate responsibility programme has yet to be determined. However, they have made clear that they would wish to make a one off payment and do not see the provision of additional streetlights as an acceptable way forward.
- 7.3 Progress to date is that agreement could be reached whereby EDF Energy would make a single payment into the Hertfordshire Community Development Foundation's Key Fund. This would enable CDF to match fund the contribution and maximise the benefit to Hertfordshire. EDF Energy have yet to formally agree the proposal and confirm the size of donation.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no financial implications for the County Council with regard to energy supply faults as these are actioned by EDF at their cost.
- 8.2 The cost of connections for new supplies are covered as part of the scheme costs associated with a particular project.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 Progress is being made in achieving improvement in the level of service provided by EDF Energy. This is being achieved through the implementation of better working arrangements and communications between the parties.
- 9.2 There are two distinct areas of service comprising attendance to dead service (faults) and provision of new service connection. A greater degree of progress has been achieved with faults. Through restructuring and bringing back in-house of the connection side of the business it is hoped that an increase in the rate of progress for connection will be achieved.
- 8.3 The Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider if further scrutiny of these arrangements is appropriate and, if so, the form it should take.