

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2003 AT 10.00 A.M.**

Agenda Item No.

3

STREET LIGHTING TOPIC GROUP - final report

Report of the Director of Environment

Author: Nick Gough, Principal Strategy Development Manager
Tel. No. 01707 356561

Topic Group Members: Mary Bayes [Chairman], Sherma Batson,
Nigel Copping, Doug Drake, Sue Jones

Executive Member: Derrick Ashley

1. Purpose of the Report

To advise Committee of the work of the Street Lighting Topic Group and to present the Group's final report.

2. Summary

The final report summarises the way the Topic Group addressed its remit, the views that it took into consideration, its key findings and recommendations that should be considered.

3. Conclusion

The Committee is invited to consider the report of the Topic Group.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Environment Scrutiny Committee decided to set up a Topic Group on Street Lighting at its meeting on 25 June 2002. The Committee had considered a report on Light Pollution and Conservation Areas. The Committee asked that:
- the Director of Environment use the opportunity presented by new contracting arrangements to ensure that our own installations always sought to minimise pollution;
 - Members be included in the development of the emerging Good Practice Guide through a small Topic Group, and
 - a report on the wider issue of street lighting would come to the Committee for scrutiny at a future date.
- 4.2 Five members, Sherma Batson, Nigel Copping, Doug Drake and Sue Jones under the chairmanship of Mary Bayes formed the Topic Group.
- 4.3 The Topic Group has produced a report of its activities and a copy is attached at Appendix 1; an information leaflet is attached as Appendix 2.
- 4.4 The District Councils who responded to the Topic Group's requests for information demonstrated a good awareness of the problems of light pollution and presented some constructive measures to help reduce the problem.

5. Key Findings and Recommendations

The Topic Group concluded that there were conflicting priorities in preventing light pollution and maintaining a safe environment. Where the County Council is responsible for lighting, there are measures in place to minimise light pollution. It is recognised that the type and siting of streetlights could also add to visual pollution in the daytime.

Topic Group has made the following recommendations:

1. Hertfordshire Highways should include lighting explicitly in its emerging design guidance
2. The County Council investigate ways in which it could hasten the changeover from thermal switching cells, to photoelectric switching, other than at replacement due to cell failure
3. The County Council ask all District Councils, as Local Planning Authorities, to exert maximum possible influence in controlling light pollution throughout the planning process, particularly in conservation areas and Sites of Scientific Interest
4. That the information leaflet produced by the Topic Group should be made widely available including through libraries, the County Council's Internet site and in the HertsDirect newspaper

5. The County Council contacts lighting manufacturers and suppliers and urges them to ensure that:
 - they supply appropriate guidance on minimising light pollution to all those installing exterior lighting
 - that all the products they manufacture are designed to minimise light pollution
 - that they manufacture an appropriate range of products

6. Rural Implications

There are different implications for rural and urban areas. These were discussed at length by the Topic Group which recognised the tension between the need for safety and the effects on flora and fauna as well as the ability to see starlit skies.

7. Financial Implications

The cost of producing the report and draft leaflet is contained within current revenue budgets.

The costs of producing the final information leaflet and of raising the profile of the effects of lighting on the environment via HertsDirect will be met through Environment Department revenue budgets.

8. Conclusions

The Committee is invited to consider the report of the Topic Group

Background papers used by the author when compiling this report:

Minutes of Environment Scrutiny Committee
Minutes of the Street Lighting Topic Group meetings
Final report of the Topic Group