

## **Environmental Lighting Zones**

Report by the Director of Planning and Transportation

### **Summary**

This report summarises the proposed policy on Environmental Lighting Zones and the responses received from the parish councils on the policy. Members' views are invited on the Policy.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1. The Street Lighting service Best Value Review identified a need to define environmental lighting zones for Norfolk with the aim of limiting light pollution. The County Council Cabinet agreed in March 2001 that officers should liaise with the District Councils to define these zones for the whole of Norfolk and that the draft policy should be sent to the Norfolk parishes for consultation.

## **2. Current Policy**

- 2.1 This is to use 'orange' low pressure sodium lights in preference to 'white' high pressure sodium lights in all areas of the county except in Conservation Areas and recognised 'dark landscape areas' such as the North Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Broads Authority Area.
- 2.2 Currently 'orange' lights are more energy efficient than 'white' lights although the new mercury halide lights may provide a source of 'white' lights in the future with similar running costs to 'orange' low pressure sodium light.
- 2.3 In rural areas the County Council provides and/or maintains street lights where:
- There is a proven need to reduce road accidents
  - Where lighting is provided on new residential developments at the request of the local lighting authority (District/Town/Parish Council)
  - Where lighting was historically provided to a roadway standard by District/Parish Councils prior to 1967

## **3. Proposed Policy**

- 3.1 The Local Authorities in Norfolk will seek to minimise light pollution in respect of all exterior lighting installations with reference to the zones below, although the specific policy only applies to public highway lighting.
- 3.2 The proposed lighting zones, as illustrated on the map in Appendix One, are:



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- Rural dark landscapes
- Market Towns and existing well lit villages
- The urban areas and their suburbs

3.3 The policy statements for each zone will apply to;

- Replacement County Council/District Council/ Town and Parish Council lighting
- New County Council/District Council/ Town and Parish Council lighting on existing and new roads
- New County Council/District Council/ Town and Parish Council lighting on new developments

These zones set out the priority for using the less intrusive but less energy efficient 'white' lamps. When 'white' lamps become as efficient as 'orange' lamps the County Council will use a 'white' light source in all areas.

3.3 In rural dark landscapes 'white' light sources with a cut-off distribution will be used for all new lighting and all replacement lighting.

3.4 In market towns and existing well lit villages 'white' light sources with a cut-off distribution will be used for all new lighting and all replacement lighting schemes in:

- Conservation Areas
- Lighting schemes visible from Conservation Areas
- Lighting schemes on the edge of the town/village, which are visible from the rural dark landscape area.

3.5 In the urban areas and their suburbs an 'orange' light source will continue to be used for all new and all replacement lighting in all areas except:

- Conservation Area and schemes adjacent to Conservation Areas
- Replacement lighting schemes on the edge of town where the existing 'orange' lights are considered to have a detrimental impact on the rural dark landscape area.

In the above areas a white light source with a cut-off distribution will be used. Where the Parish/Town/District lighting authority wish to replace an 'orange' light source with white in these areas, this is permissible under the policy.

## 4.0 **Parish Consultation**

4.1 The 542 Norfolk Parishes were consulted on the policy and the statistical breakdown of responses district forms Appendix Two of this report. The full summary document is available for inspection in the Members Room.

4.2 Only 66 parishes (12%) responded which was disappointing. Of these 42 (64%) parishes fully supported the policy, 9 (14%) disagreed with the policy and four (Stalham, Chedgrave, Necton and Wimbotsham) asked for an amendment to the indicative map to place their built up areas within the zone of Market Town and Well Lit Villages. These changes could be accommodated on the indicative map accompanying the policy.

- 4.3 The parishes objecting to the policy mainly cited the reason of additional cost and/or additional energy consumption.
- 4.4 The results of the parish consultation have been sent formally to the District Council's for comments and these will be reported orally to the Review Panel.
- 4.5 The Norfolk Society have written welcoming the draft policy and would like it to be extended to all exterior lighting particularly all outdoor lighting provided on Norfolk County Council buildings.

## 5.0 **Costs**

- 5.1 Adopting the above policy would cost the County Council an additional £1500 - £2000 per year in increased energy charges. This would be a cumulative increase and is based on the current rate of section 38 adoptions and current rate of replacement lighting schemes. These costs can be met within the existing street lighting maintenance budget.
- 5.2 Additional costs to local lighting authorities would also be in the order of £10 per annum for each light requiring a white light source. This would have to be found from the parish precept. Some parishes have specifically expressed a willingness to do this whilst others have raised it as a concern. It should be noted that the policy only requires an 'orange' light source to be replaced when the installation has reached the end of its effective life.
- 5.3 As almost all the additional cost relates to the higher energy requirement of an equivalent 'white' light source, these costs are likely to reduce with the development of more efficient mercury halide 'white' light source.

## 6.0 **Options**

- 6.1 Following the parish consultation, the following options could be considered before the policy is finalised, that:
1. The draft policy should be followed with the amendments to the map set out in paragraph 4.2 (above).
  2. The draft policy to be followed by Norfolk County Council for its own lighting, but only imposed on the local lighting authorities (i.e. parish, town or district councils) when the running costs for the white mercury halide lights are equivalent to orange low pressure sodium lights
  3. The draft policy to be followed by Norfolk County Council for its own lighting but not imposed on local lighting authorities

The first option would provide the most environmental benefit and is supported by 64% of the parishes who responded to the consultation.

## **Action Required**

Member's views are invited on whether they support the draft policy as set out in option one above.

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## Environmental Lighting Zone Policy: Consultation Summary

## Appendix Two

District	Breckland	Broadland	Great Yarmouth	King's Lynn and West Norfolk	North Norfolk	South Norfolk	Total
<b>Responses</b>	6	13	1	12	21	13	66
<b>Agreed with Policy</b>	4	11	1	4	13	9	42
<b>Disagreed with Policy</b>	1	0	0	5	2	1	9
<b>Qualified agreement to policy</b>	1	1	0	1	3	0	6
<b>Requested amendment to map</b>				1	1	2	4
<b>No comment or clear view</b>		1		1	2	1	5
<b>% fully in agreement with policy</b>	66%	85%	100%	33%	62%	69%	64%
<b>% disagreeing with policy</b>	2%	0%	0%	42%	1%	0.8%	14%

Total response is 66 out of 542 parishes (12%)