

# NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Environment and Highways Cabinet Board

28 January 2016

### Report of the Head of Streetcare

M. Roberts

#### Matter for Decision

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

#### Savings in Public Lighting

#### Purpose of Report

- 1 To consider amending the previously agreed Forward Financial Plan proposal for street lighting energy savings in 2016/17.

#### Executive Summary

- 2 Following trials it is proposed to change the way street lighting energy is saved from switching off certain street lighting during the early hours (so called 'part-night burn') to additional dimming of lighting.

#### Background

- 3 The previously agreed Forward Financial Plan included savings of £50k to be made in 2016/17 from switching off 6,000 lights in residential areas in the quiet hours.
- 4 During the past twelve months a dimming experiment has been carried out. Three sites, one back lane and two footpaths, have been 'doubled dimmed' in that between 01:00 and dawn the lighting has been reduced to 26 watts (approx. 30% lower than normal). The purpose of the experiment was to establish firstly whether anyone would notice and secondly whether it would have a detrimental effect on the life of the electrical fittings and subsequent maintenance costs. The answer to both questions was no.

- 5 After the experiment it was agreed with the E & H Cabinet Board Members and the local members for lower Cimla, Neath to carry out a similar large scale trial in residential area in which lights were dimmed from May to October 2015. (and remain dimmed at present)
- 6 Given the success of the trial it is proposed to dim lights to save energy in place of the previously agreed proposal to partially switch off lighting.

#### Officer Comment

- 7 Of Britain's 5.7 million street lights 558,000 are now switched off for part of the night, with a further 797,000 now being dimmed. However, research suggests that accidents have risen where street lights were switched off (Daily Telegraph Dec 14).
- 8 Any change that makes people feel less safe when out and about in their community is arguably a backward step. Of the 15,786 people surveyed 93% said they feel 'very' or 'fairly' safe in well-lit areas, but only 22% said they do in unlit or poorly lit areas (Street Lighting Perception Survey, Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network, England and Wales and Suzy Lamplugh Trust 2013).

#### **Financial Impact**

- 9 Based on analysis of the energy consumption from the trial, rather than switching off 6000 residential street lights in the quiet hours, to achieve the £50k saving it would be necessary to:
  - 10 a) dim the lighting in all residential roads with the new fluorescent white lighting from 01:00 hours to dawn (currently 8000 street lights with further renewal ongoing); and,
  - 11 b) apply the same percentage reduction of wattage as the Cimla trial on main traffic routes with higher powered lighting where these are controllable. In this case it is proposed to dim the lighting at 01:00 hours and power back up at 06:00 hours due to the nature and usage of the roads.
- 12 The savings from these two measures are expected to be £30k and £20k respectively, meeting the previously agreed FFP saving.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 13 A Screening Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. After completing the assessment it has been determined that this proposal does not require an Equalities Impact Assessment.

## **Workforce Impact**

- 14 None

## **Legal Impact**

- 15 None

## **Risk Management**

- 16 On balance it is considered preferable to dim lighting rather than have 'part night' lighting.

## **Consultation**

- 17 A street lighting residents survey was conducted at Cimla Crescent, Hawthorn, Popular, Chestnut, Sycamore, Alder, Holly and Myrtle Road, Cimla, Neath on 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015 (**Appendix 1 refers**), and in summary 88% of the residents had not noticed that the lights has been dimmed, and in addition 95% responded that the dimming did not adversely affect them. Residents in the trial area where also asked "In your opinion as dimming saves money would similar dimming be acceptable on other traffic routes and 89% of respondents said Yes.

## **Recommendation(s)**

- 18 It is recommended that the previously agreed saving strategy with respect to street lighting (ENV550) for 2016/17 is amended from being achieved by 'part-night' switching off of lighting to being achieved by dimming as detailed in the report.

## **Reason for Proposed Decision(s)**

- 19 To assist in meeting savings requirements under the Council's Forward Financial Plan.

## **Implementation of Decision**

- 20 The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

## **Appendices**

- 21 Appendix 1 – Street Lighting Residents Survey.

## **List of Background Papers**

- 23 None.

## **Officer Contact**

- 24 Mr Mike Key, Lighting and Building Services Manager Tel: 01639 686442 or e-mail: m.key@npt.gov.uk
- 25 Mr Mike Roberts, Head of Streetcare. Tel: 01639 686966 or e-mail:m.roberts@npt.gov.uk



## Appendix 1

### Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

#### Environment Directorate

#### Lighting and Building Services

### Street Lighting Residents Survey

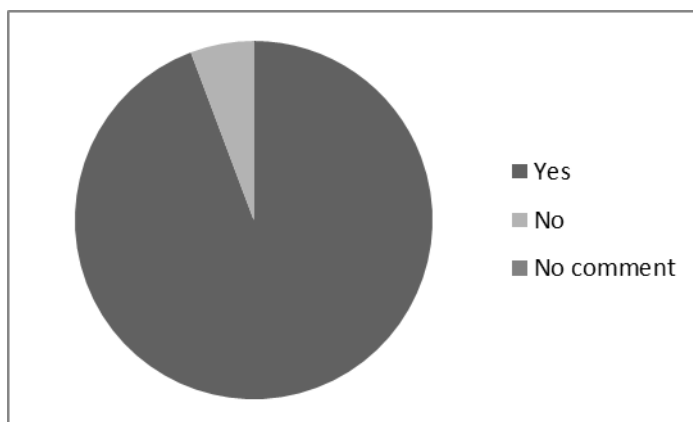
#### Cimla, Neath

Houses in area – 368

Houses surveyed – 227 (61.68%)

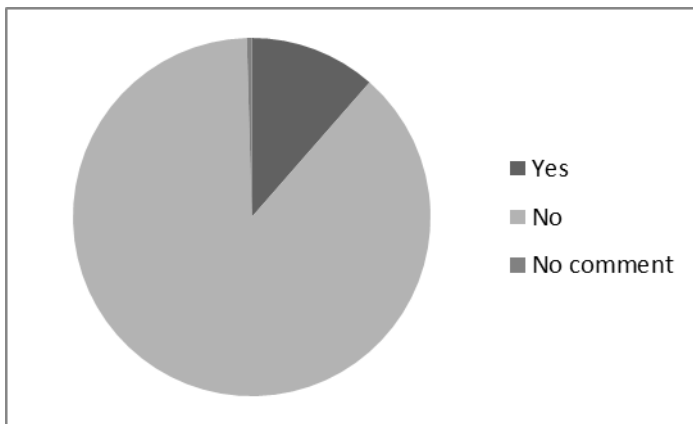
#### 1. Are you happy with the street lighting in your area?

Yes	No	No comment
214	13	0
94.27%	5.73%	0.00%



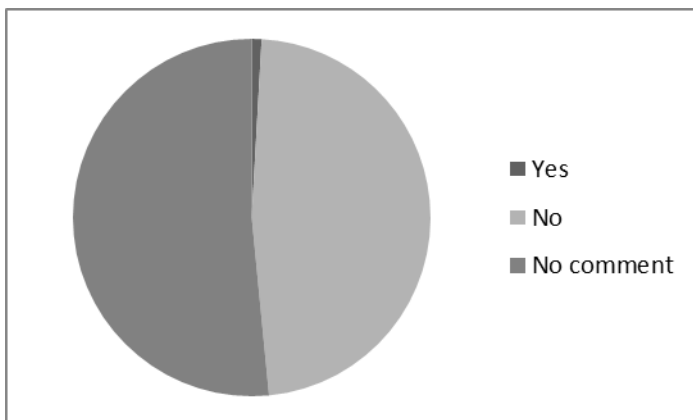
## 2. Had you noticed that the lights had been dimmed?

Yes	No	No comment
26	200	1
11.45%	88.11%	0.44%



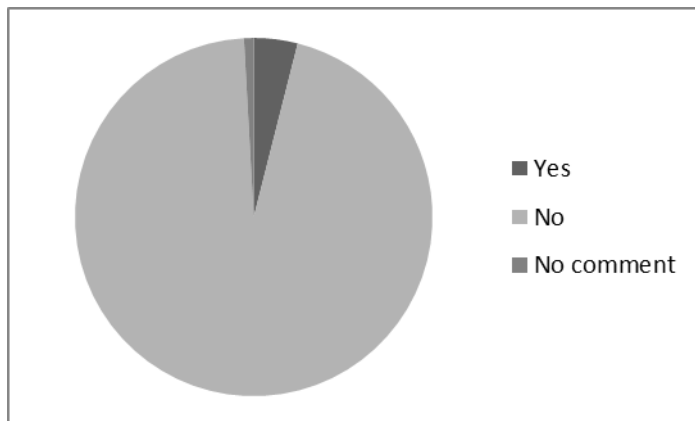
## 3. Can you remember when the dimming started?

Yes	No	No comment
2	108	117
0.88%	47.58%	51.54%



#### 4. Did the dimmed lighting adversely affect you?

Yes	No	No comment
9	216	2
3.96%	95.15%	0.88%



#### If yes – how?

Gives me a better sleep.

Partially blind.

Security might be an issue.

Too bright.

#### 5. In your opinion, as dimming saves money, would similar dimming be acceptable on other major traffic routes?

Yes	No	No comment
204	21	2
89.87%	9.25%	0.88%

