

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**County Council  
5<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** County Councillor Barry Thomas, Leader and County Councillor John Powell, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Environmental Health

**SUBJECT:** Question from County Councillor Wynne Jones

In October 2012 the Portfolio Holder took a report to Cabinet regarding Street Lighting, which proposed 3 options. Following debate, Option 3 was agreed. That Option was to have a rolling programme across Powys, in which a number of existing 'ON' Street lights would be converted to LED, which in turn would create some extra usage capacity, to enable many of the 'OFF' street lights to be turned back on. It was mentioned in the report that this was a 'balancing act' and that the outcome would be that overall, there would not be any increase in energy usage/cost to the Council.

In reality, certainly in my area and other areas in the North of Powys, this has not in fact happened and that all that has happened is that we have converted the 'OFF' lights to LED and returned them to use, whilst the old 'ON' lights have not been changed. I have received confirmation from the Senior Engineer that this is the case for all Communities in the North for which he is responsible.

I would like to know by who and when the decision was taken to change the policy that was set out clearly in the Cabinet Report of 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012, and to undertake a different process which in turn would lead to a significant increase in energy usage and energy costs.

The decisions contained within the Cabinet report on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012, also led to expectations in our Communities, and I would further like to ask why Local Members were not informed of a change in the policy, which in turn would have enabled them to inform their Communities and subsequently manage those local expectations.

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Councillor Jones' understanding of the outcomes set for the Street Lighting Modernisation Project is correct. However some misunderstanding may have arisen due to the way in which the project has been delivered but, I can assure Members that the overall outcome will produce a balanced energy solution.

As indicated in the Cabinet report the process was always going to be something of a balancing act based on available finances and managing energy consumption. Actual energy consumption for older lamps is higher than their rated wattage e.g. 55w SOX and 70w SON lamps have consumptions of 84w whilst a 50w SON uses 62w. The new LED units however are rated at their consumption i.e. a 21w lamp consumes 21w.

At the start of the project unit prices for lights were high due to the new technology involved. It was anticipated that costs would reduce over the time and current unit prices are around 65% of prices at the start of the project.

To ensure an equitable split each Member was allocated a number of LED lights based on the number in their wards prior to the lighting reduction programme. In recognition of the possible need to balance energy consumption as the project neared completion a number of units were not allocated.

Progress on the project has been slower than planned due to reductions in staffing and contributions to other key projects (checking of overhead power cables on the waste project). Work has yet to be completed in the North Central and South West LE Areas.

If work in these areas is completed on a balanced basis then current energy figures suggest there will have been a 3.5% increase in energy consumption before the “balancing” lamps are taking into account. If all of these are used to replace existing lamps then the projection is that there will be a reduction in annual energy consumption of 6.3% compared against 2010.

Energy consumption varies seasonally and each year due to weather conditions. The ongoing changes have made it difficult to select a base year for comparison. The graphs below show the energy consumption figures since 2010.



