

AGENDA ITEM 6

PTE 16/4/14

Mr David Brazier
Cabinet Member for Transportation
and Environment
Kent County Council
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent, ME14 1XQ

9 April 2014

Dear Mr Brazier

SAFE & SENSIBLE STREET LIGHTING

The Town Council would like to express its disappointment with the consultation methods for the above scheme as it does not appear to have reached a very wide audience. We feel it would have been far more appropriate to have written to the affected households, we are also very concerned about the effect this will have on Swanscombe and Greenhithe as it is an area of high crime in comparison to other areas in Kent and this scheme does not seem to have taken into account any of the areas where we would consider the population to be vulnerable i.e. elderly. Whilst appreciative of the need to reduce costs the Town Council appreciate that not all the street lights may be able to remain lit as before and are more than happy to work with Kent County Council to identify suitable areas within the Town that could be suitable for this scheme.

We would strongly urge that a review is undertaken of Swanscombe and Greenhithe and that this takes into account the points raised by the Town Council.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Graham Blew
Town Clerk

Cc: Peter Harman, KCC Member for Swanscombe and Greenhithe

WAS ON TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE 16/7/13

Kent County Council has launched a public consultation on the hours it is proposing to switch-off lights during the early morning as part of a drive to deliver better value for money for council taxpayers. It proposes to convert around 70,000 of its 120,000 street lights to 'part-night' lighting. This could involve switching these lights off between midnight and 5:30a.m. The county council will not switch off any street lights in town centres, areas with CCTV, antisocial behaviour areas, at busy road junctions, roundabouts or sites with road safety issues. Residents, businesses, motorists and other groups are being asked for their views on the hours of proposed part-night lighting, and the criteria for selecting lights to be part of this programme. This approach will help the council meet the challenge of rising energy costs, carbon emissions and light pollution. Kent County Council Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, David Brazier, said: "We are taking a safe and sensible approach to rationalising our street lights. We want to ensure we make the best use of Kent's tax payers money. We propose switching off lights when they don't need to be lit. This is the most effective way of saving energy, very much like a householder turning off lights at night when going to bed. "Rising electricity costs are a reality and will continue to go up year on year. Next year we face a bill of £6.4million for illuminating street lights and the associated carbon tax. A considerable amount is spent on lighting streets in the early hours and we believe we can save around 20% – that's more than £1million – by turning lights off when they don't need to be lit. These proposals would save 5,000 tonnes of carbon emissions. "We want to hear from people so they can help inform the way forward with our approach to street lighting."

To take part in the consultation or find out more information, please visit: www.kent.gov.uk/streetlights.

The county council has already discussed its proposals with Kent Police; the Kent Association of Local Councils; and all 12 Joint Transportation Boards, where local councillors discuss transport issues. Meanwhile, later this summer, Kent County Council will turn off around 3,000 surplus lights on a trial basis. These are lights that are no-longer necessary and would not have been installed under current regulations. If safety or crime levels are adversely affected during the trial, the lights in question will be switched back on.

The consultation will run until Friday 23 August. People can call 0300 333 5539 and also submit their views by post at: Safe and Sensible Street Lighting, Kent County Council, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XX.