

## **Croydon & Lewisham Street Lighting Joint Committee**

Meeting of held on Thursday, 21 October 2021 at 6.30pm in F10, Town Hall, Katharine Street,  
Croydon CR0 1NX

### **MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillor Patrick Codd (Chair);  
Councillor Muhammad Ali (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Patsy Cummings

**Apologies:** Councillor Amanda De Ryk

### **PART A**

7/21 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.

8/21 **Disclosure of Interest**

There were no disclosures of a pecuniary interest not already registered.

9/21 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There was none.

10/21 **Joint Street Lighting PFI Update**

John Algar, PFI Manager LB Croydon (LBC), introduced the report which advised the Committee of the overall performance of the service provider during the period September 2020 - August 2021.

He advised that one of the recommendations was to approve the proposed unitary charges for 2021/22 of £2.679m for Croydon and £1.517m for Lewisham based on a 64% to 36% split.

Another recommendation was to approve the forecasted contract management and monitoring costs for 2021/22 of £156,007.04 for Croydon and £87,753.96 for Lewisham based on a 64% to 36% split.

John Algar noted that the service provider changed from Skanska to Milestone Limited Services which he advised had not had an effect on performance and service delivery as all staff were TUPE over.

He stated there was an action from the previous meeting to provide an update on the Light-Emitting Diode (L.E.D) lantern conversion business case and went on to explained that Croydon were not looking to introduce this based on savings being passed by Milestone, which is the same for Lewisham. He went on to explain that this was being explored further in a meeting which was due to be held the following day to consider if they go down the L.E.D route and what savings can be made, taking into consideration the 15 years payback.

Geoff Tice (LBLC) added that the Director in Lewisham was interested if the payback period was reduced as 15 years did not help with the savings needed.

In response to Councillor Ali noting that going from a Dim position to L.E.D there seemed to be a small benefit and asked if it was possible to have a joint position with Lewisham, John Algar, confirmed that Lewisham had already agreed a policy and were therefore one step ahead. This made it difficult to justify as the lighting was only in place for 4 years.

Councillor Ali queried the position of looking at it from a financial point of view as he noted that if carbon emissions were taken into consideration there were more savings to be achieved with L.E.D. John Algar responded that finance was a consideration, however carbon emissions and light pollution were one of the major contributing factors when making a decision. Geoff Tice (LBLC) added that there was not a huge saving to be made by moving to L.E.D and that carbon emission savings could be made from light dimming.

Councillor Ali expressed that it seemed that the change to L.E.D was not the best business decision but queried the level of communication with the public which explained the decision and highlighted that despite the high cost the carbon emission savings were minimal. Councillor Codd added that it may be a better option to reinvest the savings from not moving to L.E.D into tackling Climate Control.

In response to Councillors Ali and Codd, John Algar explained that the census appeared to be 50/50 in London. In addition, if the assets hadn't recently been replaced then the move to L.E.D may have been cheaper. He confirmed that once they had a better understanding on the pros and cons of L.E.D they would be in a better position to explore options. Geoff Tice added that when the original PFI contract was being written L.E.D did not make good business sense.

Councillor Patsy Cummings queried whether there was a timeframe by which the move to L.E.D would be achieved and queried whether there was a future risk of criticism for not making the right decision now.

John Algar responded to Councillor Cumming's concern and explained that the assets had been built to the British Standards and were as efficient as L.E.D. John Algar also highlighted that initially they did install some L.E.D but quickly realised that they were not cost effective. This meant there were some L.E.D lanterns in footpaths and housing sites but suggested that there would be a benefit to review the position on an annual basis as it would be in the provider's best benefit to replace them in the long term.

John Algar, PFI Contract Manager (LBC), summarised the main points of the Operational Performance Standards Overview:

### **PS1 - Core Investment Programme (CIP)**

The CIP was completed on 31 October 2016.

### **PS2 - Planned Maintenance, Inspection and Testing**

The report detailed areas in both boroughs and performance was on track. Although challenging, the provider had achieved the required level of 99% every month, which was a good performance level. As a client, the council still carried out their own checks alongside.

Councillor Cummings queried what would happen if there was a problem with the internet. In response, John Algar explained that if there was a power cut or the internet failed the lights would stay on. If there was a fault with the branch controller it was resolved within 2 days. Whilst there was also a default system for the Central Management System, they also undertook night scouting.

In response to Councillor Cummings request to know more about the visual inspections Geoff Tice confirmed that these were blind tested. Random roads were picked and they then waited for feedback but he could confirm that these were not advertised.

Councillor Cummings expressed her concern, highlighting that should something happened in a dimmed area there would be an outcry questioning why lighting had been dimmed without informing the community. Councillor Cummings therefore wanted to know what was being done in terms of communication. John Algar clarified that there was no legal requirement to provide street lighting throughout the night and that a number of authorities turned lights off at midnight.

Councillor Codd added that it appeared to be a political management matter and queried the level by how much they could dim the lights. In response,

Geoff Tice explained that a reduction of 50% in power resulted in a reduction of around a 30% dim reduction which was not noticeable. John Algar added that it could be noticed more in rural areas but with CMS it could be changed straight away if needed.

Councillor Cummings expressed that she had concerns but noted that some of her previous concerns had been alleviated from doing the walk around.

### **PS3 - Operational Responsiveness and Reactive Maintenance**

This performance standard detailed non-routine emergency call-outs from September 2020 - August 2021. During this timeframe there were two emergency call-outs which were attended late. Financial adjustments were made accordingly.

There were a total of four non-emergency jobs repaired outside of the four day rectification period for which financial adjustments were applied

### **PS4 - Contract Management and Customer Interface**

The report showed an overall good performance. In March 2021 and July 2021, they performed below the 95%, which was financially adjusted.

### **PS5 - Strategic Assistance and Reporting**

Members were advised that the Strategic Assistance Reporting was on track.

### **PS6 - Working Practices**

The report set out the different types of faults and highlighted that in June 2021 there was one urgent fault. Financial adjustments were applied and the staff involved in the incident were removed from the contract.

Members were advised that overall the health and safety was very good compared to other contractors.

### **PS7 - Reporting to the Authority**

The reports were received on time.

### **PS9 - Central Management System (CMS)**

Nearly 41,000 street lighting columns were connected to CMS. The remaining assets not connected were in subways and car parks and were scouted separately by night scouts.

In response to Councillor Codd asking if path lighting in parks was part of the contract, Geoff Tice explained that most were in the contract, but there are exceptions where parks had their own alternative arrangements. In addition, John Algar highlighted that many discussions were held which identified the assets not included.

Councillor Cummings asked why there was no PS8 to which John Algar advised that there had not been a PS8 since the contract was let.

### **Environmental Impact**

John Algar confirmed that carbon emissions were now included in the data at Para 9.1 of the report, as requested at the last meeting and showed that carbon tonnage was much higher in 2016.

In response to Councillor Codd asking why Croydon's reduced in 2020, John Algar explained that it was as a result of energy procurement. Councillor Ali added that the natural decarbonisation in the National Grid also had an impact.

Councillor Cummings asked for an update on the equalities impact. John Algar confirmed that he would provide her with a copy of the Equalities Impact Assessment.

### **AOB**

Councillor Codd highlighted that the report said there were no specific complaints about the dimming of the lights. However, he reported that councillors had received complaints that people think that the lights have been dimmed. In response, Geoff Tice confirmed that no specific complaints against the dimming of lights has been received. John Algar added that most complaints were due to there being too much light pollution.

Councillor Codd shared that he was the evening and night time economy champion in Lewisham and that academic papers found that if lights were too bright it made people feel unsafe. In response, John Algar reiterated that lighting could be varied and that gradual dimming was utilised at train stations where lights were progressively dimmed as people travelled away from the station. Overall the contract was performing well.

In response to Councillor Cummings asking if TUPED staff were being paid the London Living Wage, John Algar confirmed that they were as part of the social values of the contract.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- **NOTE** the provider change from Skanska to Milestone Limited Services
- **APPROVE** the proposed unitary charges for 2021/22 of £2.679m for Croydon and £1.517m for Lewisham (based on a 64% to 36% split)
- **APPROVE** the forecasted contract management and monitoring costs for 2021/22 of £156,007.04 for Croydon and £87,753.96 for Lewisham (based on a 64% to 36% split)

11/21 **Exclusion of the Press & Public**

This item was not required.

The meeting ended at 7.44 pm

**Signed:**

**Date:**

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