

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
OF  
WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL**

**On Wednesday 16 October 2019**

**at Wicken Sports Club, Wicken at 7.00 pm**

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**Action**

**70/19 Attendance and apologies**

To receive and accept any apologies.

Cllr Philip Ivens – Chairman  
Cllr Celina Francklin  
Cllr Richard Forman  
Cllr Alan Cartwright  
Cllr Andrew Edmondson  
Cllr Marcus Rixon  
Cllr Ian Howett  
Valda Clapham - Clerk  
Dean Johnson and Terry Felstead from DW Windsor  
Philip Ayles, Chairman of Castlethorpe Parish Council  
Neil Gordon-Lee, author of the streetlighting paper  
Some 20 members of the public

**71/19 Members' interests**

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Wicken PC Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

None to declare.

**72/19 Streetlighting in Wicken**

To consider proposals for updating streetlighting and to approve next steps.

The discussion broadly followed the format of the paper prepared by Neil Gordon-Lee, which had been made available to Cllrs and members of the public in advance of the meeting.

**Introduction**

There are 22 street lights in Wicken of which 15 are on telegraph poles (2 of which will be replaced with lampposts) and 7 on existing lampposts, some of which also need replacement. Some lights are no longer working and there is no consistent style.

The cost of supplying electricity to the lights is the biggest annual cost to the Parish Council, currently running at about £500 per quarter.

The Solar Farm fund provides an opportunity to replace all the lights with a more modern and cost-efficient type over a relatively short period of time.

Accordingly, there have been several discussions at Parish Council and village consultations all of which are summarised in Neil's paper.

**Guiding principles**

Relevant guidance included:

- Recommendations from the Campaign to Protect Rural England – Cllrs

- confirmed this guidance provided an appropriate framework for their decision.
- Guidance from the Planning department of South Northants Council – Cllrs noted the views expressed and felt they were broadly reflected in the CPRE recommendations. Replacing streetlights did not require planning permission.
- Value for Money principles set out by the National Audit Office – as always Cllrs were aware of their responsibilities in this respect.

Philip Ayles observed that Castlethorpe had been told by the Highways Authority that replacement lights could no longer be fixed to telegraph poles. Cllrs had not been told of such a limitation to date but Cllr Cartwright offered to clarify the position.

**Cllr  
Cartwright**

### **Technical considerations**

Two types of streetlight were under consideration – the DW Windsor ‘Street’ heritage light and the Tekk S line contemporary light, the latter being smaller than existing lights. Both could be fitted with the same LED light board.

In determining the specification (which would be factory set and was expensive to alter subsequently) relevant factors were the colour temperature on the Kelvin scale, the number of individual LEDs, and the time setting. Higher colour temperatures meant bluer and potentially more harmful light. When first used LEDs for streetlights had been set at over 5000k but the accepted norm now was 3000k or less. A greater density of LEDs was more expensive but allowed the same light intensity to be achieved at lower power, thus reducing glare. Lights could be set to dim or switch off between certain hours if required.

Both light types could be set at different heights according to the post and any light spill minimised by the use of shields. The angle of the Tekk light could also be adjusted.

A measure called the G scale allowed a direct comparison of the light spill, in particular the light spill upwards which could be an intrusion into dwellings. On this measure the modern light performed highly at a G2 rating, whereas the heritage light did not meet the measurement criteria because of upward spill.

DW Windsor offered the services of their design team to ensure heritage lights were set up to best effect, but confirmed that in an un-modified state the heritage light does permit light to spill above the lantern.

The wiring to supply the lights was a mix of underground and overhead. Western Power Distribution has confirmed there are no plans to change this in the foreseeable future.

The wiring was maintained and probably owned by EON which was the proposed contractor for the renewal project.

### **Aesthetic considerations**

The two consultations undertaken in the village had suggested the current number of streetlights was about right, a desire to minimise light pollution and on a straight comparison some preference for the look of the heritage light fitting over the contemporary.

It was, however, pointed out that the heritage light was more appropriate to an urban setting as there would generally have been no streetlighting in villages until the middle of the last century.

To inform their decision Cllrs had reviewed the streetlighting in nearby similar villages:

- Abthorpe – lighting replaced with contemporary 4000k LEDs, general view that this was too bright.
- Castlethorpe - a number of heritage lights had been replaced recently. Some of these were close to dwellings and the photographs in Neil’s report showed some light spill. Philip Ayles indicated that only one had a shield fitted, although with the lights maintained by Milton Keynes the local Parish Council would not necessarily be aware of any concerns.

Additionally, a picture taken from the DW Windsor website gave an indication of the potential light spill from the heritage light. [This picture was subsequently found not to be of an LED light and has since been removed from the website.]

Both types of light could be supplied in black and it was generally thought that black posts would be least intrusive. It was possible for the same style of lamppost to be used for both the heritage and contemporary options

There was general support for lights to be switched off between midnight and 6am, for a softer lighting effect and for minimising light pollution.

There was some discussion of the aesthetic implications of mixing styles, ie having contemporary lights adjacent to heritage lights, heritage lights adjacent to modern dwellings and contemporary lights adjacent to older dwellings.

The views of Wicken Village Community were strongly supportive of all contemporary lights – more cost effective, less light pollution with directional control, more discreet, the inappropriateness of siting heritage lights against modern dwellings and a preference for consistency throughout the village. [A note explaining their view in more detail has been circulated to Cllrs subsequent to the meeting.]

For some people having functioning lights was more important than the aesthetics, and it was suggested that little attention is paid to the look of the lights once installed.

### **Finance**

The change to modern LED lights was expected to reduce both power and maintenance costs significantly. The running costs of heritage lights would be marginally more expensive than the contemporary equivalent, but the difference was likely to be negligible. Switching lights off during the hours of darkness and running at lower power would also reduce costs and prolong LED life. Savings of some 75% of current costs were anticipated.

Currently EON supplied both maintenance and power. It was thought that maintenance would need to remain with EON but that an alternative and cheaper supplier of power could be sought – clerk to investigate.

**Clerk**

The clerk indicated that there was some £23000 currently in the Solar Farm Fund but given the other demands on the fund it was for Cllrs to determine how much could prudently be utilised on the streetlighting. It was unlikely the project could be funded in one go. Cllr Cartwright indicated that EON had offered some flexibility on billing to permit the project to be implemented as a whole, but paid for in tranches.

### **The options**

It was accepted that it was not appropriate to attach heritage lights to telegraph poles and there was no desire to increase street clutter with additional lampposts. Therefore, existing lights would generally be replaced in their current position.

The Parish Council had been advised to resite two lights for safety reasons (one at Rectory Corner currently on a telegraph pole which would be replaced by a lamppost, and one on Quarry Green Close) and intended to follow that advice.

Additionally, the light currently on a telegraph pole in poor condition at the entrance to the Sports Club would also be replaced with a lamppost.

This resulted in a need for 13 replacements on telegraph poles and 9 on new lampposts.

The possibility of using all heritage lighting had already been dismissed as too expensive and either inappropriate or creating additional street clutter.

The two options under consideration were therefore:

- All contemporary (Tekk S Line), or
- 13 contemporary on telegraph poles and 9 heritage on lampposts.

In either case the preferred colour temperature was 2700k, which was available with both options. The possibility of going down to 2200k was considered but ultimately dismissed as providing little additional benefit and preventing consistency. Both 32 and 16 LED arrays had been costed, with approximate costs as below:

#### Option 1

<b>All contemporary</b>	<b>£</b>
16 LED fitting	<b>16,598</b>
32 LED fitting	<b>19,304</b>

#### Option 2

<b>16 LED fitting</b>	<b>£</b>
Contemporary	5,633
Heritage	20,364
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,997</b>

<b>32 LED fitting</b>	
Contemporary	7,232
Heritage	20,364
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,596</b>

VAT would need to be added to the above figures. This could be reclaimed but there would inevitably be a cashflow impact.

#### Decision

Cllrs recognised that there was no reason to delay on the replacement of those streetlights which would continue to be fixed to telegraph poles as the use of Tekk S line was not disputed. Taking account of the technicalities already discussed Cllrs' preference was for these to be set at 2700k with a 32 LED array.

Cllrs were also supportive of trialling a heritage light before making their final decision in respect of the streetlights to be sited on lampposts. After some debate it was agreed that the trial should replace the Church Close light opposite the telephone box, this being near to dwellings so that the impact of any light spill could be seen, and to give DW Windsor an opportunity to demonstrate how such spill can be minimised or, preferably, eliminated.

Accordingly, Cllr Howett proposed and Cllr Rixon seconded a motion:

- to replace those 13 lights to be sited on telegraph poles with Tekk S line lamps set at 2700k with 32 array LEDs, and
- to set up a trial DW Windsor heritage light, also set at 2700k with 32 array LEDs, at the entrance to Church Close.

All Cllrs were in favour of the motion which was duly carried.

**Resolved**

It was noted that EON had a spare 'Street' lamp and that DW Windsor would be asked to fit it with the most appropriate light board setting for, hopefully, minimal cost. The trial light would be placed on a new post suitable for either type of lamp.

Cllr Cartwright offered to liaise with EON over implementation, including any necessary cutting back of trees in Leckhampstead Road.

**Cllr  
Cartwright**

The Chairman acknowledged the helpful contributions from DW Windsor representatives and Philip Ayles, and thanked Neil Gordon-Lee for his excellent paper and for leading the discussion, such thanks being warmly endorsed by all those present.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.00pm.

**Chairman's Signature**

**Date**

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