



**Oxfordshire County Council**  
**Equalities Impact Assessment**

Dark Skies – Street Lighting Proposals

November 2024

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## Section 1: Summary details

<b>Directorate and Service Area</b>	Highway Maintenance - Environment & Highways
<b>What is being assessed</b> (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Street Lighting Illumination in support of Dark Skies
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	New initiative under pre-existing policy concerning electrical assets and street lighting
<b>Summary of assessment</b> Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community?  (following completion of the assessment).	The initiative being assessed will see a majority of OCC operated highway street lights be converted to operate for a reduced number of hours.  Affected streetlights will be converted to switch off between the hours of 11pm and 6:30am each night.
<b>Completed By</b>	Matt Archer - Portfolio Manager; Central Programme Delivery
<b>Authorised By</b>	Sean Rooney
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	November 2024

## Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p><b>Context / Background</b></p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The County Council, in its capacity as the highway authority, operates approximately 60,000 streetlights across the county.</p> <p>The proposed initiative seeks to accommodate the positive aspects of street lighting whilst reducing its detrimental impact on the environment and its burden on council resources by better tailoring its duration and intensity.</p> <p>Light pollution would be significantly reduced during the affected hours which could reduce the negative impact of artificial light on some wildlife. Each light that is switched off overnight would be illuminated for at least 1,500 fewer hours each year.</p> <p>Another important environmental benefit of the proposal is a significant reduction in carbon emissions.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the scheme, once fully implemented, will reduce energy consumption by over 5,000 kWh per day, and realise an annual reduction in carbon emissions of over 400tCO<sub>2</sub>e.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposal when fully implemented is estimated to reduce annual revenue expenditure on energy by over £400k</p>
<p><b>Proposals</b></p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>Notwithstanding that there are several variants to the proposal, the default and majority position for street lighting under these proposals is that it will operate between dusk - 11pm, and 6:30am - dawn each day, switching off between 11pm and 6:30am, rather than remaining on all night as most lights typically found across the county do currently.</p> <p>Several exclusions / exemptions are included in the proposal whereby lighting would remain on all night. Examples include those lighting alleyways and paths divorced from the carriageway, in subways and where they are required to illuminate certain highway features such as road humps.</p> <p>The proposals are the most effective method of improving 'Dark Skies' within Oxfordshire that can be made from county council operated highway assets, with no other alternative being able to make a sufficiently significant contribution.</p>

<p><b>Evidence / Intelligence</b></p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>A significant number of authorities have already implemented similar initiatives, some for many years. As such, there is a large body of evidence that the County Council has considered prior to developing its own proposals.</p> <p>It is considered that there is sufficient precedent across the country, over a sustained period of many years, and with a strong supporting evidence base for positive outcomes which has already been carried out by peer authorities, industry bodies, and academic organisations.</p> <p>Several criteria have been proposed where lights will be exempt from a change to their hours of operation, and which serve to mitigate negative impacts the scheme might otherwise have had.</p> <p>As the initiative is implemented, affected Town/Parish Councils, as well as other key stakeholders including the Police will be invited to comment on the detail of the rollout in each community.</p>
<p><b>Alternatives considered / rejected</b></p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>There are limited options available to improve the night time environment with respect to Dark Skies and highway street lighting. Whilst further dimming of lights was considered as an alternative to switching lights off, this is not considered to achieve the objectives of reducing night time artificial light.</p> <p>The environment / climate emergency is one recognised by the County Council, and this initiative is a key contributor to a broader suite of initiatives to reduce the impact of the Council's operations on the same and to utilise the influence / impact of its assets in a positive way.</p>

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Armed Forces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Areas of deprivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

<b>Additional Wider Impacts</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Description of Impact</b>	<b>Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts</b>	<b>Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)</b>	<b>Timescale and monitoring arrangements</b>
<b>Staff</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Other Council Services</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Providers</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Social Value <sup>1</sup></b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

<sup>1</sup> If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area



## Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

<b>Review Date</b>	
<b>Person Responsible for Review</b>	
<b>Authorised By</b>	