



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3rd March 2026

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Upgrade of District Council Streetlights to LED

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

This report provides a progress update on the project to upgrade District Council operated streetlights to energy efficient LED units, following the award of a £1m contract.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Notes the updates and associated energy, cost and carbon reductions regarding the upgrade programme of LED streetlights.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Sustainable South Kesteven
Which wards are impacted?	All wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 An investment of £1m was made in September 2023 to upgrade the Council's street lighting. At its peak and based on aging infrastructure the overall electricity spend was £301k in 2023/24. Following the investment to upgrade Council owned streetlights to LED, this has led to reduced electricity consumption and associated spend by 66.8%. The payback on investment, based on latest spend, is 4.2 years.
- 1.2 The project to upgrade streetlights to LED has reduced utility spend as well as reducing reactive maintenance costs to repairing ageing infrastructure.

Completed by: *David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance, Deputy S151 Officer*

Legal and Governance

- 1.3 Councils do not have a duty to provide streetlighting, however once provided, the local authority does have a duty to maintain the system in a safe condition.

Completed by: *James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

Climate Change

- 1.4 The additional £1m budget was agreed in order for all Council owned streetlights to be upgraded to energy efficient LEDs and respond to the record high cost for electricity. The programme of upgrades is now almost fully completed, with an electricity reduction of 66.8%, and an annual saving of £122k. These savings

have resulted in 136 tonnes of carbon emissions annually being avoided, directly contributing towards the Council's carbon reduction target.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 Streetlights managed by SKDC are the single largest category of electricity consumption the Council is responsible for. At the peak of energy costs, the overall electricity spend for 2023/24 for streetlighting was £301k, a marked increase to previous years.
- 2.2 An upgrade programme was put into place to begin to upgrade all Council owned streetlights as a rolling programme over a 10 year period, commencing in 2021. The dramatic increase in energy costs and strong contribution towards the Council's carbon reduction target led to the development of an accelerated programme of upgrades.
- 2.3 Following deliberation by [Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22nd June 2023](#), [Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th July 2023](#), and discussion by [Cabinet on 11th September 2023](#), [Council on 28th September 2023](#) agreed to approve an allocation of £1m to accelerate the replacement of Council operated streetlights with LED lamps.
- 2.4 EON Energy Solutions were appointed as the successful contractor for a £1m programme to upgrade the remaining SKDC streetlights to energy efficient LED. The specification for the upgraded lamps included:
 - Replacement dimmable LED luminaires, with dimming profile set from midnight to 6AM
 - Photocell controllers to activate lamp automatically at dusk and switch off at dawn
 - NEMA socket to facilitate future connection to a networked system if required
- 2.5 The contract with EON Energy Solutions mobilised in May 2024, with a target for all Council streetlights to be upgraded within 18 months. The upgrades are also covered by a 10 year warranty which should significantly reduce the ongoing maintenance costs.
- 2.6 Each upgraded streetlight is supplied with a full condition report advising the condition of the column, bracket, lantern, door & paint condition, along with an electrical test report. If required, the light is renumbered/identified.

2.7 Below is an update on the breakdown of streetlights in the Council’s portfolio, as of the end of December 2025. Currently 97% of streetlights are LED, compared to a national average for Councils of 77%.

2.8 As the project has progressed, streetlights have been identified with an unmetered power supply within housing areas which the Council is responsible for so these have been added to the register, resulting in an increase in total lamps within the inventory. Any of the lights that have been identified as a metered supply will remain under the responsibility of the Housing Team.

Year	LED	Low pressure sodium	High pressure sodium	Fluorescent	TOTAL	% LED of total
2022	310	2695	112	479	3596	8.62%
2023	713	2292	112	479	3596	19.83%
2024	2532	776	105	185	3598	70.37%
2025	3700	10	63	26	3799	97.39%

2.9 The majority of the lighting that remains to be upgraded are the ornate type of lanterns that require additional consideration and planning due to the nature of the lights. As some sit within conservation areas, advise needed to be sought and current styles of ornate lanterns are being replaced with “like for like” lanterns that are aesthetically acceptable. The manufacturing lead times are considerably longer than standard off the shelf types (around 12 – 14 weeks) which has delayed the installation. However, they are now in progress and the majority are due for completion by the end of March. Some of the lighting that has been identified as needing new columns, located in parks or on grassed areas around housing, have been delayed due to the current wet weather conditions. These have been deferred until the weather improves.

2.10 There are also approximately 10 lights that are highlighted as needing assistance from residents in cutting back hedges or trees to enable us to gain access. All residents have been written to and these are being progressed.

Energy savings

2.11 Significant reductions in electricity consumption can be seen following the implementation of upgrades to LED. The data below is presented for the calendar year, reflecting the latest available data at time of writing this report. It is important to note the vast fluctuation in electricity tariff cost throughout the period, ranging from £0.37 pence per kilowatt hour at the height of costs, to a current cost of around £0.24 pence per kilowatt hour.

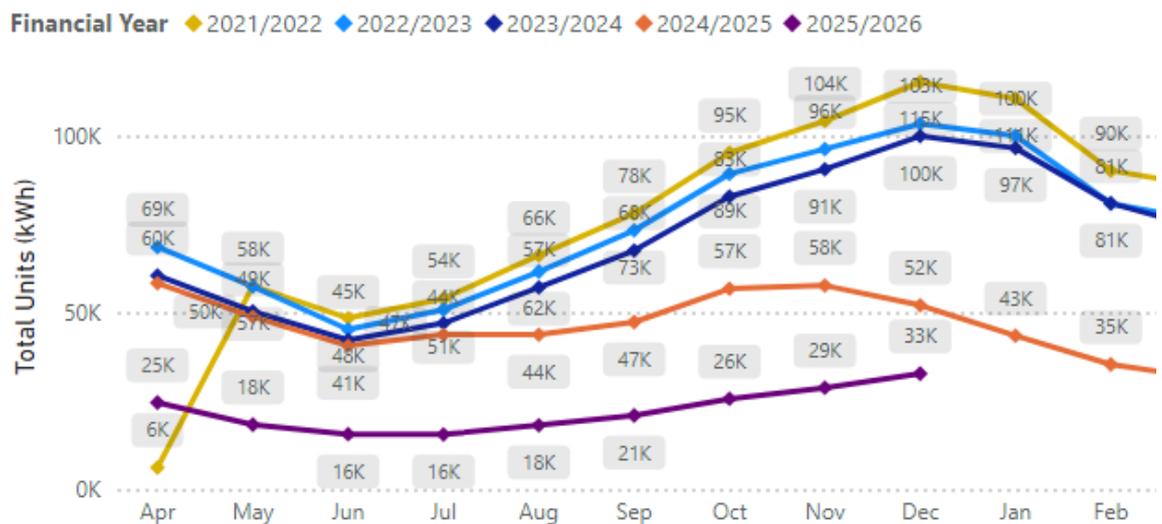
Year	kWh - total streetlights	Carbon emissions total (tonnes)	Annual utility cost for streetlights - £
2022	932,398	197	£197,836
2023	853,636	192	£301,023
2024	697,740	157	£249,430
2025	309,578	61	£74,998

2.12 Comparing the latest data for the 2025 year to 2022, we can report:

- **66.8% reduction** in electricity consumption
- **£122k reduction** in electricity cost, taking into account varying tariff prices
- **136 tonnes of carbon avoided**, equivalent to 1.8% of the Council's total baseline

2.13 This reduction in annual consumption can be seen in the graph below:

Electricity Consumption



Carbon reduction

2.14 The implementation of upgrades to the end of 2025 has had a significant impact on carbon emissions. Within the Council's carbon baseline year of 2018/19, electricity consumption from streetlights were responsible for 334 tonnes of carbon, or 4% of the total emissions from the Council. In comparison, in 2025 this has reduced to 61 tonnes of carbon, equivalent to a reduction of 82%, and now responsible for just 0.8% of total emissions.

2.15 Simple payback has also been calculated using actual consumption from 2025 and tariff rates from 2023 versus 2025. As LED upgrades were still underway throughout 2025, the overall annual consumption for the 2025/26 annual year and 2026 calendar year are set to reduce further. Payback is sensitive to changes in the tariff cost for electricity – the latest projections from the Council’s energy provider suggest, an increase of 5-10% is to be expected.

	Cost (£)
Spend (to January 2026) on streetlight upgrades	£972,380
Annual cost saving*	£232,837
Payback (years)	4.2

*Less a deduction for a statutory safety check every 2 years

2.16 The upgrades to remaining lanterns will be completed in early 2026. In order to make any further significant reductions to the electricity consumption of the streetlights the Council is responsible for, a policy to turn off streetlights from an agreed point overnight until early morning would need to be considered. It is estimated this would result in a reduction of a further 10% of electricity consumption.

3. Key Considerations

3.1 The additional £1m budget, approved in September 2023, was agreed in order for all Council owned streetlights to be upgraded to energy efficient LEDs and respond to the record high cost for electricity. The programme of upgrades is now almost fully completed, and an electricity reduction of 66.8%, resulting in a cost saving £122k can be reported. These savings have resulted in 136 tonnes of carbon emissions annually being avoided, directly contributing towards the Council’s carbon reduction target.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 The report is provided for information rather than decision. Members are asked to take note of the update on the progress of the project to date.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 The report is provided for information to note of the update on the progress of the project to date.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee 22nd June 2023 - [Streetlights report.pdf \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](#)
- 6.2 Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 11th July 2023 - [Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th July 2023](#)
- 6.3 Cabinet 11th September 2023 - [Cabinet on 11th September 2023](#)
- 6.4 Council 28th September 2023 - [Council on 28th September 2023](#)