



**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 4 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**OUTCOME OF THE 18-MONTH MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL
STRATEGY STREET LIGHTING DIMMING TRIAL**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the outcome of the 18-month street lighting dimming trial and to seek its views shaping the future street lighting service, prior to presenting a report to the Cabinet on 12 September 2025.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/24 – 2026/27, which was agreed by the County Council in February 2023, identified savings of £500,000 to be achieved by 2024/25 from the street lighting service. The savings requirements were amended in both the 2024/25 MTFS and 2025/26 MTFS bringing the total savings requirement to £540,000.
3. A reduction in street lighting will also aid a reduction in carbon emissions (CO₂e) supporting the Council's Strategic Plan 2022-26, specifically, the Clean and Green strategic outcome in the County Council's Strategic Plan. This is achieved by reducing energy use as part of the dimming trial to lower the lighting intensity to 30% (of the lighting unit's full power) from 20:00 hours across the lighting stock which will support the reduction of 315 tonnes in CO₂e as previously reported.
4. The Cabinet agreed on 19 December 2023 to implement a trial to dim street lighting, including on traffic routes, to 30% from 20:00 hours across the County. This followed a public consultation exercise in the summer of 2023.

Design Standards

5. The design of safe and appropriate street lighting is governed by relevant British Standards, specialist guidance notes and a Code of Practice (Well Managed Highway Infrastructure 2016). The key principle of this Code is that Highway Authorities will develop their own levels of service and the Code

therefore provides guidance for authorities to consider when developing their approach in accordance with local needs, priorities and affordability.

6. One of the over-arching principles of the Code of Practice is the establishment of those local levels of service through risk-based assessment. For street lighting, the Code encourages 'the delivery of the right quality and amount of light in the right place and at the right time'.
7. The option to dim to 30% intensity from 20:00 hours moves away from compliance with current British Standards and is deemed a 'Departure from Standards' and will, therefore, require the Cabinet's approval to implement as a permanent measure. Given that there is not a specific legal duty on the Council to provide lighting, it is presently considered that the risk of a judicial review challenge would be low and in the event of a challenge, it is likely to be unsuccessful.

Background

8. The duty to maintain the highway under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 does not imply a duty to provide street lighting. Rather, local authorities have a discretion about whether to provide streetlights (Section 97 of the Highways Act 1980).
9. However, once street lighting is provided, the local authority has a duty to maintain the system in a safe condition. This is because local authorities can be held liable if they introduce a danger to the highway and fail to neutralise it (see *McCabe v Cheshire West and Chester Council* 2014).
10. The standards for street lighting are laid down in British Standard: BS.5489 and European Standard BS EN 13201.
11. Street lighting touches not only on the issue of preventing road accidents. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 provides that it shall be the duty of each authority to exercise its responsibilities to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.
12. In February 2023, the MTFS 2023/24 to 2026/27 was approved by the County Council. It identified a requirement to save £500,000 on street lighting. This was reduced to £430,000 in the 2024/25 MTFS following safety concerns raised as part of the consultation exercise and further exceptions to the dimming proposals. During 2024/25, a further £110,000 savings target was agreed for the 2025/26 MTFS as a result of savings being higher than expected due to changes in energy rate, bringing the total revised savings requirement to £540,000.
13. Any reduction in street lighting energy will also provide a reduction in the Council's carbon emissions therefore also contributing to its environmental commitments.
14. The Council currently maintains approximately 70,190 street lighting assets.

15. The dimming trial took place from January 2024 until June 2025 and dimmed the vast majority of all County streetlights to 30% intensity from 20:00 hours until 07:00 hours, apart from those that met the criteria (listed below) of the risk assessment:
- a) Vertical traffic calming features;
 - b) Town centres;
 - c) Zebra crossings – in line with methodology for lighting zebra crossings, but at new reduced lighting levels, providing increased illumination on the crossing itself;
 - d) Areas with evidenced increased night time crime/anti-social behaviour where maintaining streetlights at existing levels was supported by the police;
 - e) Areas with increased night time road traffic accidents with increased killed or serious injuries at conflict areas;
 - f) Currently illuminated steps.
16. The following were also monitored as part of the risk assessment:
- a) Increased pedestrian interactions with street furniture.
 - b) Increased interactions between vehicles outside of conflict areas.
 - c) Increased interactions between vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians outside of conflict areas.
17. Any streetlights that met the criteria in the risk assessment remained at their previous lighting levels.

Trial Findings

18. Savings achieved during the trial period are shown in Figure 1 below. They consisted of:
- a) Total energy savings – 1,442,770 kWh,
 - b) Total financial savings – £539,759,
 - c) Total carbon savings – 319.3 tonne.

Figure 1 – Savings achieved

| Financial year | Description | Energy Saved (kWh) | Financial savings (£) | Carbon Savings (T) |
|----------------|--|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 2022/23 | Baseline - Dimming to British Standards | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 2023/24 | Implementation of 20:00 hours dimming to 30% power in Q4 | 370,688 | £131,224 | 82.5 |

| Financial year | Description | Energy Saved (kWh) | Financial savings (£) | Carbon Savings (T) |
|----------------|---|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 2024/25 | First full year with 30% power at 20:00 hours | 1,000,131 | £391,997 | 223 |
| 2025/26 | Q1 savings to end June 2025. End of trial period* | 71,951 | £16,538 | 13.9 |

*Savings achieved due to better weather compared to same period last financial year.

Engagement from the Members of the Public During the Trial Period

19. A total of seven customer enquiries were received during the trial specifically mentioning dimming of streetlights, with two citing fear of crime and five citing the streetlights were not bright enough.
20. The police was contacted for their views on the two enquiries citing fear of crime but no concerns were raised by the police.
21. No changes were made to any street lighting programmes as a result of the enquiries received.
22. No complaints were received during the trial period.
23. No requests to install reflective strips on street furniture were received during the trial period.

Insurance Claims

24. A total of eight insurance claims were received during the trial period that mentioned street lighting, of which six related to vehicles or cyclists hitting potholes but did mention street lighting in their claim. The remaining two claims were due to trips within the highway.
25. To date, £70 has been paid to one claim which was due to a pothole and not street lighting but has been included because when the claim was submitted, it mentioned street lighting.

Road Traffic Collisions (RTC)

26. Full year data for RTCs between 20:00 hours and 07:00 hours is shown below in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – RTC data

| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025* |
|-------------------|------|------|------|-------|
| No. of RTCs | 30 | 64 | 50 | 29 |
| Casualties | 37 | 91 | 65 | 41 |
| Slight | 30 | 73 | 37 | 31 |
| Serious | 5 | 17 | 26 | 10 |
| Fatal | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Powered two-wheel | 6 | 8 | 13 | 3 |
| Cycles | 2 | 2 | 11 | 0 |
| Pedestrians | 4 | 13 | 12 | 5 |
| Child | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| 60+ | 2 | 9 | 6 | 4 |

*Data for 2025 is for January to June only
Shading indicates trial period

27. Data for 2022 has been included for comparative purposes; 2023 is the baseline year but 2022 and 2023 RTC figures regard the pre-trial period and lighting provided was in line with British Standard requirements for roadway lighting.
28. It is worth noting that the number of RTCs increased when comparing figures from 2022 and 2023. Data for 2022 may be reduced due to the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic and a possible reduction in the number of journeys taking place with fewer people traveling.
29. The total number of RTCs reduced in 2024 compared to the baseline data of 2023 before the trial was implemented.
30. However, the severity of accidents that occurred increased in 2024 and particularly for those using two-wheeled means of transport (i.e. motor bikes and bicycles). These accidents occurred at roundabouts or major junctions (conflict areas), with no RTCs at the same sites.
31. There may be other contributing factors at play and the reasons may not be attributed solely to street lighting being dimmed. Things like driver error, driver impairment, cyclists not wearing bright reflective clothing or using lights, and speeding could all potentially play a part in contributing to the increase.
32. The Authority will continue to monitor and review RTC statistics. It is able to return street lighting to previous lighting levels using the street lighting Central

Management System (the system that is used by the Council to remotely monitor, dim and turn on and off individual streetlights), if a pattern appears and it is clear that street lighting is a contributing factor.

Crime

33. Requests for turning lights back to their original programme were managed in the same way as the existing part-night lighting requests.
34. Any request received from members of the public to turn up street lighting citing crime is referred to Leicestershire Police to confirm if crime has increased. If this is the case, brighter lighting would be reinstated for a period of three months to aid the police with their investigations. This would be reviewed after three months and either revert to the original programme or remain lit and then reviewed again after a period agreed with the police.
35. During the 18-month street lighting dimming trial, one request from the police was received to increase lighting levels - on Sidings Walk, Loughborough. This request affected two streetlights and changes were made in March 2025 using the Central Management System to reprogramme back to the original lighting levels. The lighting levels for these lights are due to be reviewed again with the police in September 2025.
36. Figure 3 below compares nighttime crime statistics from 20:00 hours until 07:00 hours from 2023 and 2024.

Figure 3 – Nighttime crime statistics

| 2023 | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|-----------|------------|---------------------|---------|---------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Offence Group | Blaby | Charnwood | Harborough | Hinckley & Bosworth | Melton | NWLeics | Oadby & Wigston | County Total | |
| Burglary | 224 | 344 | 104 | 174 | 58 | 182 | 143 | 1229 | |
| Criminal Damage & Arson | 195 | 557 | 144 | 259 | 150 | 323 | 143 | 1771 | |
| Interference with Motor Vehicle | 34 | 83 | 17 | 28 | 8 | 56 | 10 | 236 | |
| Other Theft | 104 | 189 | 69 | 104 | 50 | 118 | 33 | 667 | |
| Robbery | 7 | 22 | 5 | 13 | 4 | 14 | 6 | 71 | |
| Sexual | 110 | 200 | 77 | 92 | 59 | 109 | 64 | 711 | |
| Theft Cycle | 17 | 75 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 120 | |
| Theft from Dwelling | 5 | 25 | 2 | 13 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 62 | |
| Theft from M/C or Meter | 1 | | | | | 2 | | 3 | |
| Theft from Person | 7 | 20 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 15 | 1 | 56 | |
| Theft from Vehicle | 129 | 192 | 54 | 85 | 21 | 182 | 39 | 702 | |
| Theft of Motor Vehicle & TWOC | 53 | 111 | 44 | 99 | 17 | 78 | 21 | 423 | |
| Violence Against the Person | 788 | 1894 | 717 | 1045 | 507 | 1206 | 524 | 6681 | |
| Totals | 1674 | 3712 | 1236 | 1924 | 892 | 2297 | 997 | 12732 | |
| 2024 | | | | | | | | | |
| Offence Group | Blaby | Charnwood | Harborough | Hinckley & Bosworth | Melton | NWLeics | Oadby & Wigston | County Total | YOY % Change |
| Burglary | 229 | 402 | 197 | 243 | 85 | 161 | 115 | 1432 | 16.52% |
| Criminal Damage & Arson | 185 | 452 | 155 | 256 | 119 | 274 | 104 | 1545 | -12.76% |
| Interference with Motor Vehicle | 34 | 84 | 18 | 29 | 5 | 44 | 9 | 223 | -5.51% |
| Other Theft | 91 | 167 | 77 | 96 | 40 | 129 | 30 | 630 | -5.55% |
| Robbery | 11 | 44 | 4 | 12 | 6 | 12 | 6 | 95 | 33.80% |
| Sexual | 88 | 196 | 79 | 105 | 35 | 99 | 36 | 638 | -10.27% |
| Theft Cycle | 10 | 58 | 3 | 12 | 1 | 5 | 12 | 101 | -15.83% |
| Theft from Dwelling | 10 | 19 | 5 | 14 | 2 | 13 | 3 | 66 | 6.45% |
| Theft from M/C or Meter | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 2 | -33.33% |
| Theft from Person | 9 | 21 | 3 | 13 | 6 | 14 | 7 | 73 | 30.36% |
| Theft from Vehicle | 118 | 197 | 81 | 117 | 17 | 140 | 47 | 717 | 2.14% |
| Theft of Motor Vehicle & TWOC | 60 | 108 | 32 | 78 | 17 | 93 | 17 | 405 | -4.26% |
| Violence Against the Person | 779 | 1678 | 610 | 1009 | 438 | 1010 | 450 | 5974 | -10.58% |
| Totals | 1624 | 3427 | 1264 | 1985 | 771 | 1994 | 836 | 11901 | -6.53% |
| YOY % Change | -2.99% | -7.68% | 2.27% | 3.17% | -13.57% | -13.19% | -16.15% | -6.53% | |

37. Overall, the number of nighttime crimes committed has fallen by 6.53% in 2024.
38. However, some types of crimes have increased since the trial was implemented, including burglary, robbery, theft from dwelling, theft from person and theft from vehicle. The increase in these types of crimes may be due to reduced lighting levels, but there may also be a larger more complex societal issues at play such as inflation, increased cost of living, reduction in living standards.
39. Looking at those crimes, robbery and theft from person are the most likely to occur on the highway. Data has been collated from 20:00 hours to 00:00 hours in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 – Robbery and theft from person from 20:00 hours to 00:00 hours

| | Blaby | Charnwood | Harborough | Hinckley & Bosworth | Melton | NWLeics | Oadby & Wigston |
|----------------|-------|-----------|------------|---------------------|--------|---------|-----------------|
| 2023 | 6 | 20 | 3 | 11 | 6 | 15 | 4 |
| 2024 | 24 | 42 | 6 | 34 | 8 | 28 | 14 |
| Increase | 18 | 22 | 3 | 23 | 2 | 13 | 10 |
| % increase | 300% | 110% | 100% | 209% | 33% | 87% | 250% |
| Times increase | 4.0 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 3.1 | 1.3 | 1.9 | 3.5 |

40. During the trial, Leicestershire Police did not raise any concerns with the County Council or ask for any lighting levels to be increased other than Sidings Walk in Loughborough mentioned above.
41. For comparison, the data below in Figure 5 shows data for robbery and theft from person with Leicester City and Rutland between 20:00 hours and 00:00 hours.

Figure 5 – Crime comparison between Leicester City and Rutland

| The Shire | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----------|------------|----------------|
| 2023 | 65 | Increase | % increase | Times increase |
| 2024 | 156 | 91 | 240% | 2.4 |
| The City | | | | |
| 2023 | 154 | Increase | % increase | Times increase |
| 2024 | 394 | 240 | 256% | 2.6 |
| Rutland | | | | |
| 2023 | 3 | Increase | % increase | Times increase |
| 2024 | 8 | 5 | 267% | 2.7 |

42. Both Leicester City and Rutland have seen increases in robbery and theft from person from 20:00 hours greater than Leicestershire. Neither Leicester City nor Rutland dim their streetlights to the extent Leicestershire has during the dimming trial.
43. Looking at anti-social behaviour, the data in Figure 6 below shows levels within Leicestershire both within the dimming time period and outside these times.

Figure 6 – Anti-social behaviour

| Outside street light dimming non-affected times | | | | Within street light dimming affected times | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|----------------|--|------------|-------------|----------------|
| CDRPName | 2023 | 2024 | YOY Increase % | CDRPName | 2023 | 2024 | YOY Increase % |
| Blaby | 534 | 531 | -0.56% | Blaby | 144 | 235 | 63.19% |
| Charnwood | 941 | 1449 | 53.99% | Charnwood | 299 | 435 | 45.48% |
| Harborough | 306 | 319 | 4.25% | Harborough | 76 | 135 | 77.63% |
| Hinckley And Bosworth | 446 | 526 | 17.94% | Hinckley And Bosworth | 136 | 200 | 47.06% |
| Melton | 238 | 280 | 17.65% | Melton | 47 | 97 | 106.38% |
| North West Leicestershire | 611 | 792 | 29.62% | North West Leicestershire | 175 | 268 | 53.14% |
| Oadby and Wigston | 266 | 302 | 13.53% | Oadby and Wigston | 75 | 122 | 62.67% |
| County Total | 3342 | 4199 | 25.64% | County Total | 952 | 1492 | 56.72% |

44. Anti-social behaviour had increased by 25.64% outside of the trial times but increased by 56.72% between 20:00 hours and 00:00 hours.
45. For comparison, Figure 7 below includes figures for anti-social behaviour for Leicester City and Rutland.

Figure 7 – Anti-social behaviour comparison

| Street dimming non-affected times | | | | Street dimming affected times | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| CDRPName | 2023 | 2024 | YOY Increase % | CDRPName | 2023 | 2024 | YOY Increase % |
| Blaby | 534 | 531 | -0.56% | Blaby | 144 | 235 | 63.19% |
| Charnwood | 941 | 1449 | 53.99% | Charnwood | 299 | 435 | 45.48% |
| Harborough | 306 | 319 | 4.25% | Harborough | 76 | 135 | 77.63% |
| Hinckley And Bosworth | 446 | 526 | 17.94% | Hinckley And Bosworth | 136 | 200 | 47.06% |
| Leicester | 2790 | 3841 | 37.67% | Leicester | 1034 | 1760 | 70.21% |
| Melton | 238 | 280 | 17.65% | Melton | 47 | 97 | 106.38% |
| North West Leicestershire | 611 | 792 | 29.62% | North West Leicestershire | 175 | 268 | 53.14% |
| Oadby and Wigston | 266 | 302 | 13.53% | Oadby and Wigston | 75 | 122 | 62.67% |
| Rutland | 90 | 147 | 63.33% | Rutland | 30 | 60 | 100.00% |
| Totals | 6222 | 8187 | 31.58% | Totals | 2016 | 3312 | 64.29% |

46. Outside of dimming trial times, Leicester City's anti-social behaviour levels had increased by 37.67% and Rutland's had increased by 63.33%.
47. During the dimming trial times, Leicester City's anti-social behaviour levels increased by 70.21% and Rutland's by 100%.
48. Neither Leicester City nor Rutland dim their streetlights to the same levels as the County Council and during the period of the dimming trial saw greater increases in anti-social behaviour than the County.

Resource Implications

49. Ongoing monitoring and review of the County streetlights will be required and will be undertaken in collaboration with Leicestershire Police.

50. Ongoing monitoring and review of accident statistics, as well as identifying any patterns or trends, may result in lighting levels being increased temporarily in areas where concerns are raised at high RTC sites.
51. These tasks will require ongoing staff resource from the Street Lighting Team.
52. The total annual energy costs for street lighting in 2024/25 was £1,975,921. The street lighting dimming has resulted in financial savings of £540,000, in line with the revised MTFS target.
53. The Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Corporate Resources have been consulted on the content of this report.

Timetable for Decisions

54. The outcome of the street lighting dimming trial will be presented to the Cabinet on 12 September 2025 with a recommendation that streetlights are permanently dimmed to 30% from 20:00 hours to 07:00 hours across the County.

Conclusions

55. The dimming trial has delivered on its aim to reduce costs associated with the street lighting service, as shown in paragraph 18 of this report.
56. In 2024, the number of RTC was reduced although severity of collisions increased. At present, there is no conclusive evidence that street lighting levels were a factor in this.
57. Overall levels of crime had reduced during the dimming trial period but some types of crime have seen increases (including burglary, and thefts from dwellings, persons and vehicles). However, greater increases in these types of crimes were also recorded in Leicester City and Rutland which do not dim their streetlights to the extent done in the trial.
58. Levels of anti-social behaviour increased both during the dimming trial window (20:00 hours until 0:00 hours) and outside of these times. Again, greater increases in anti-social behaviour were also recorded within Leicester City and Rutland.
59. The Committee is asked to comment on the outcome of the trial and the proposal to lower street lighting intensity to 30% from 20:00 hours until 07:00 hours as a permanent measure in the County.

Background Papers

Energy Reduction For Street Lighting Project – Report to the Cabinet – 15 December 2009 - <https://bit.ly/3VSnRDk>

Future Provision of Street Lighting – Report to the Cabinet - 9 July 2015 - <https://bit.ly/42pAdoR>

Environment Strategy – Report to the Cabinet - 6 July 2018 - <https://bit.ly/3o4cQSU>

Strategic Plan (May 2022) - <https://bit.ly/3Wggd64>

Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2026/27 – Report to the Cabinet - 10 February 2023 - <https://bit.ly/3pCHzXA>

Absence of Street Lighting May Prevent Vehicle Crime, but Spatial and Temporal Displacement Remains a Concern (January 2022) - <https://bit.ly/3lgwx0W>

Street Lighting proposed service changes – Report to Cabinet 23 June 2023 - <https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MID=7077#AI75374>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

60. A copy of this report will be circulated to all Members.

Crime and Disorder Implications

61. The Council will continue to work with the police to monitor and review crime and anti-social behaviour levels and temporarily increase lighting levels if required to aid the police in their investigations.

Equality Implications

62. An Equality Impact Assessment (appended to this report) was undertaken on 30 October 2023 and again reviewed post-trial; it found that the proposal may impact several protected characteristics in terms of their ability to navigate the network, their perceived increases in crime and vulnerability and may change their current behaviour.

Human Rights Implications

63. There are no human rights implications arising from the content of this report.

Environmental Implications

64. The trial had shown that the energy costs, energy consumption and carbon production associated with street lighting reduced as shown in paragraph 18 of this report. Dimming streetlights also reduced light pollution within the County due to reduced lighting levels.

Appendix

Equality Impact Assessment

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