

London Borough of Enfield

Crime Scrutiny Panel, 1st March 2023

Subject: Streetlighting – the potential impact on crime

Cabinet Member: Cllr Jewell

Executive Director: Sarah Cary

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this briefing note is to provide a background of Enfield's street lighting, previous and existing strategies and our on-going day to day arrangements to address any concerns that may emanate from complaints or enquiries.

Relevance to the Council Plan

2. The Council Plan 2020-22 sets an ambition to create a lifetime of opportunities with specific focus on safe, healthy, and confident communities

Background

3. In 2006, Enfield Council entered into a Streetlighting PFI for a 25-year period, which requires the service provider, Enfield Lighting Services (ELS), to manage and maintain Enfield's street lights on behalf of the Council until 2031. ELS sub-contract the day to day activities to a specialist contractor – Bouygues Energies and Services. Highway Services has a small client team that manages the PFI contract.

During the first 5 years of the contract a significant investment was made by ELS resulting in the replacement of the majority of street lights. In all cases roads were designed to meet the required standards for street lighting of that time. This resulted in an 18% increase in the total number of street lights with residential and secondary roads benefitting the most in terms of an increase to the number of street lights within their roads.

Street lighting developments

Climate change along with the global energy crisis has led to rapid technological developments in street lighting. This meant that by 2015 LED street lights were becoming the best environmental and economic option for street lighting providers. LED street lights offered significant benefits in the control of light and reducing light pollution, use of energy and reduction of carbon, they also provided a whiter source of light which greatly improved the ability to detect objects and colours from a greater distance away aiding visibility for drivers and road users. The

environmental changes required combined with advances in technologies led to the production of updated British Standards for street lighting and how roads were classified. The New British Standard supported the need to standardise items to provide uniformity across the borough. This enabled the use of slightly more powerful lanterns that have been dimmed to suit the lighting design for the road. As a result, energy, carbon and light pollution is reduced.

Enfield's Street Lighting LED Upgrade Programme

In 2019 after successfully bidding for Salix funding by the way of a 5-year interest free loan, Enfield Council commenced with a program of work to replace all our older street lights with modern energy efficient LED items. As part of the programme all existing street light columns were retained with only the Lantern being changed.

Each road was redesigned using LED lanterns and in accordance to the latest British Standards for street lighting;
As an example, a large number of street lights used the older 100w SON lights (Orange lamps), the new design standards meant that they could be replaced with a 40w LED light. The designs provide a set output for each light that remains unchanged with no modifications such as Trimming or Dimming throughout each night since their installation.

The scope of the LED upgrade programme was to provide a far more environmentally sensitive network of street lighting that fulfilled the current British Standards for lighting levels appropriate for street type category whilst significantly reducing the use and cost of energy and the associated production of carbon.

One of the benefits in using LED street lights is the greater control and direction of light, they focus almost all the light downwards whereas the older street lights emitted light sideways, backwards and upwards which are the main causes of light pollution and skyglow. Unfortunately, to some road users the road may appear darker as things such as the fronts of houses and gardens areas and the sky above are no longer lit, leading to complaints of the road being darker than before. Every report of poor or inadequate lighting is investigated by the specialist engineers from the street lighting contractors taking photometric readings to ensure the road is lit to the selected standard. In almost all cases the lighting is found to be as prescribed in the British Standards. In a few cases, it has been found that tree branches and shrubs have affected the lighting of the road. In these cases, arrangements are made to have the offending vegetation cut back.

Crime & Scrutiny Meeting 21st September 2021

Following the receipt of a small number of complaints coming from a specific area within Enfield this became an agenda item for the Crime & Scrutiny Panel meeting held 21st September 2021. From this meeting council officers were instructed to increase the output of all street lights located on residential roads, secondary roads and footpaths with Bowes

and Upper Edmonton Ward. This increase to maximum output was carried out in October 2021 and has remained the same since this date. The street lighting client team receive less than 1 complaint regarding poor lighting each month with the majority relating to areas where lighting has failed. We do understand that assessing risk, fear and feeling safe for residents and end users can be subjective with significant variances often dependant on lifestyles and outlooks. There are also other factors and environmental concerns that effect how individuals feel about the provision, standard and quality of lighting provided which need to be considered and balanced. Those with concerns regarding community safety generate requests for more or improved lighting, whereas concerns for Climate Change, energy consumption and light pollution leads to requests for less or reduced lighting. To best meet the wide-ranging needs of a diverse customer base, lighting is delivered as determined via the current relevant British Standards for the classification of road, footpath or open space.

Main Considerations for the Panel

4. Current Position

It is also understood that some residents compare Enfield's street lighting to that of our neighbouring London Borough, Haringey. Unfortunately, we have been unable to obtain street lighting records from neighbouring boroughs, but our observations have determined that Enfield's street lighting strategies and stock are somewhat advanced to many others. The proactive approach taken by Enfield in ensuring the controlled management of street lighting, its energy use and cost along with its environmental efficiency has put Enfield ahead of the curve and better prepared to manage the continued energy price increases being faced across the globe.

Council officers continue to promptly assess all reported cases where street lighting is deemed a contributory factor to a heightened feeling of fear. Advice and guidance will continue to be sort from other departments such as Community Safety to ensure any areas of attention is quickly addressed. The lighting will be assessed by way of photometric readings to ensure that lighting levels are as required by the British Standards. However, given our understanding of the subjective perceptions of lighting we understand that for some it will be too bright and for others it will not be bright enough but from a technical perspective the lighting levels are in line with the best practice and guidance of the industry British Standards.

Enfield Crime Data January 2021 – December 2022 Summary

- The following data was sourced from the Metropolitan Police Service dashboard. It highlights total notifiable offences from January 2021 to December 2022.

- This analysis is being used to answer questions relating to what influence does street lighting have on crime levels in Enfield and has included offences most susceptible to impact from changed lighting and excluded others (for example fraud/ forgery have been removed).
- It is not possible to use the data to reflect the extent to which lighting impacts on perceptions or concerns about crime.
- The figures do not show an obvious link between peaks in crime and seasonal natural lighting changes.
- Crime data available to partnerships is not currently segmented into the time of day to determine if offences occur during the hours of darkness
- Enfield saw a 4.1% increase in overall crime in 2022, compared with 2021.
- In London this increase was 9.1% for the same period and using the same crime categories.
- In most crime categories there is very little difference in the top five Wards in the years compared
- In 2021 offences were most likely to occur in November and June. Crime was at it's lowest in January and February.
- In 2022 March and June saw the highest volume of crime across the borough. December 2022 saw the lowest volume of offences.
- Residential Burglary offences were highest in the Winter months with January, February and December recording the highest totals, this is often linked with the Christmas festivities based on past data analysis and established crime information.
- Personal Robberies saw more offences in May 2022 than any other month throughout the year.

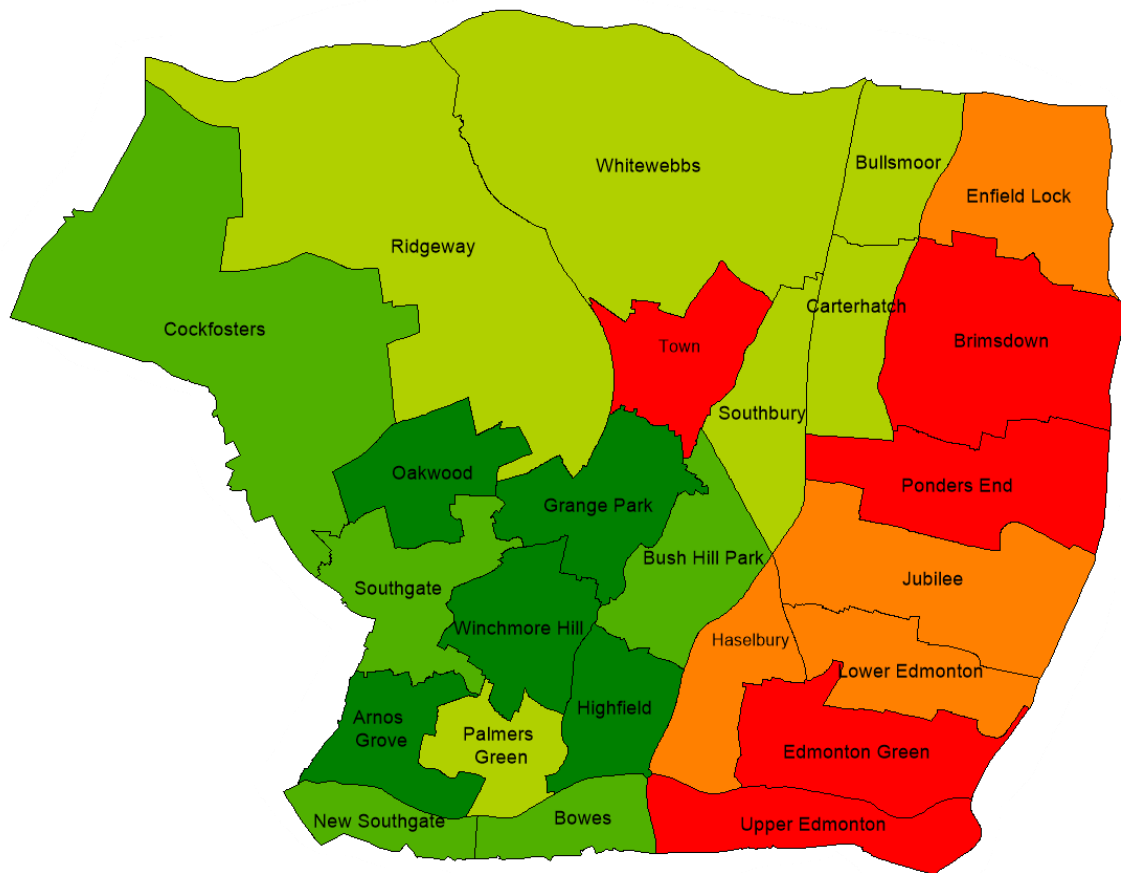
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Date of report 20/2/2023

Appendices

Appendix A Total Notifiable Offences (excluding fraud and forgery)
 Appendix B Trend data of levels of crime

Appendix A
Total Notifiable Offences (excluding fraud and forgery)



- The map above shows offences in Enfield throughout 2022.

Appendix B

Trend data below shows seasonal levels of crime over the calendar year 2022

