

**Committee:** ENVIRONMENT

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** March 17, 2009

**6**

**Title:** CAR PARK LIGHTING POLICY - Fairycroft

**Author:** Diane Burrige, Director of Operations (01799 510580) Item for decision

**Summary**

1. A review of the 24 hour lighting policy is required, and a consultation has been undertaken with four key stake holders. A 12 month trail is proposed to turn off, at midnight until 5 a.m., all lights except those on the ground floor which will remain on all night.

**Recommendations**

2. That Members consider the outcome of the consultation exercise, and
3. Approve a trial period of 12 months after which an evaluation is undertaken and reported to Members to enable a way forward to be agreed.
4. That Officers are authorized to commence a trial in accordance with option 3 -That the lights on the ground floor only remain on all night and the remainder are turned off at midnight until 5 a.m.
5. Officers are further delegated authority to curtail the trial without notice should there be deemed a threat to community safety due to this trial and report back to Members at the meeting following this concern.

**Impact**

6.

Communication/Consultation	A public consultation exercise has been undertaken with the Police Authority, Saffron Walden Town Council, Waitrose and Community Safety.
Community Safety	Any reduction in lighting will cause concern but there seems to be no increase in crime arising from the street lighting hours being curtailed. The view may be taken that if any area is not lit it does not encourage nuisance youths to gather.
Equalities	There are no Blue Badge holders' spaces on the upper floor or outer area.
Finance	The infrastructure to adjust the timing and provide signs will be around £500 which

	can be funded from existing budgets. There would be a saving in energy costs.
Human Rights	None
Legal implications	None
Sustainability	Any reduction would have a positive effect on our carbon footprint.
Ward-specific impacts	All Saffron Walden wards
Workforce/Workplace	None

### Situation

7. The District Council has been approached regarding the level of lighting that may or may not be needed in the multi-story car park and the adjoining open area of Faircroft car park.
8. A consultation exercise has been undertaken with the Police Authority, Saffron Walden Town Council, Waitrose and the Community Safety Officer as key stakeholders.
9. Historically the 24 hour lighting policy was established as a community safety measure after a serious incident occurred in one of our car parks some years ago. Press coverage has recently evidenced that the switching off of street lighting has not had the adverse effect on crime that was anticipated.
10. The 24 hour car park lighting is visible from elevated parts of the town and has been objected to by near neighbours.
11. This multi-storey car park closes (barriers come down) 15 minutes after the Waitrose Store closes, that being Mon Tues Sat 19.15, Wed Thurs 20.15, Fri 21.15 and Sun 16.15. The outside car park remains open.

12. The consultation offered the following four options:

- 1 That the lights in all areas of the car park are on all night (as present)
- 2 That the lights are turned off at midnight until 5 a.m. (same arrangement as ECC for street lighting).
- 3 That the lights on the ground floor only remain on all night and the remainder are turned off at midnight until 5 a.m.
- 4 That the lights on the ground floor only remain on all night and the remainder turn off at 10.30 p.m. until 5 a.m.

14. Consultees were also asked if they felt that the level should be generally reduced and invited to make further comment. A copy of the survey and accompanying letter are attached to this report.

### Summary of responses

15.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Reduce level of lighting generally.
1 stakeholder	2 stakeholders	1 (with a 4am switch on)	No support for this option.	Yes 1, No 1

### General comments were added by two consultees:

16. The view on this matter is that there are clearly two conflicting perspectives:

- a) turn the lights off and crime/nuisance will increase because it is dark, or
- b) leave the lights on and criminals/nuisance youths will gather because they can see what they are going

Consequently, it is suggested that all lights are switched off for an agreed trial period at the conclusion of which, an evaluation is made and the way forward agreed.

17. "I would like to see the lighting reduced as in option 3. We have people starting work at 05:00 am to open the branch so would like to see the lights come back on at 04:00 or 04:30 so the area is lit and safe for our partners to come to work."

## Risk Analysis

18.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That there is a detrimental impact upon community safety	2 Two conflicting perspectives, nuisance will increase because it is dark, nuisance will gather because they can see what they are doing.	2 Fear of crime or criminal act.	The trial can be curtailed at any point.
That there may be variable concern at different time of the year.	2 Seasonal festivities may encourage users to stay after midnight.	2 Persons parking may return late to dark car park.	The trial period permits a full year to include all seasons.
That users may return to the car park after midnight expecting the lights to be on.	2 There may be occasional late users of the car park	2 Fear of crime	Signage to be displayed in the car park in advance of the trial commencing.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary,

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.