

Dear Mr Lazenby

Since we introduced the County Council Part Night Street Lighting programme I have heard from a number of residents who do not like the new arrangements. I do understand that some residents have concerns about this policy decision, but I can assure you that it was only taken after a thorough assessment of the impact it would have and has been designed to affect as few people as possible. The decision we took was against the backdrop of the difficult financial situation that Surrey County Council is facing and the continual reductions in funding from Government.

On behalf of the residents of Surrey, my Cabinet and I have continued to represent the case for fairer funding for Surrey County Council. We have made our views known to Surrey 11 MPs over a period of time and at each step we have provided clarity of the inequality of funding.

Recently I issued to all County Councillors a copy of the tables of the unfair funding that Surrey County Council has endured over the last few years and also the impacts that we will endure over the next 2 years. A copy of the tables are attached so that everyone is clear why the County Council has had no option but to seek reductions across the whole spectrum of services provided to Surrey Residents.

You may not all be aware that out of every £1 of Council funding received around 70 pence is spent on providing Adult and Children Social Care services to our most vulnerable residents. That leaves just 30 pence in every pound to provide all our other essential council services across Surrey.

The unrelenting demands on the Council's resources, the continuing loss of funding and the legal requirement to balance our budget means that during the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 we will have to identify and make savings totalling £104 million pounds. I do not think we can deliver such significant and difficult sum in 12 months without reductions in services.

I believe that Surrey residents will wish to understand how those savings are compiled. These are all set out in the [County Council Medium Term Financial Plan 2017 – 2020](#), on pages 8 through to 13 of the plan. This is a public document. There are 98 specific areas where the Cabinet made the final decision to reduce costs by £104m this year. That means 98 different aspects from our Budget. Street lighting was just one of those 98 decisions.

So let me deal with the details of the street lighting issue.

There are approximately 88,000 street lighting posts in Surrey.

- 24,000 street lights were classed as essential from the outset because they are on traffic routes or in town centres:
- 4,000 remain on during darkness for road or community safety reasons:
- a further 4,500 were then added following site surveys and internal peer reviews and advice from Police etc.
- There are 8,500 in Spelthorne where Spelthorne Borough Council have made separate arrangements.
- We are considering review requests that affect 1,600 lights that are currently switched off.

There are therefore 47,000 lighting posts that are currently included in the part night lighting programme. These of course remain lit during the hours when the majority of Surrey residents are out after nightfall.

The Cabinet have always accepted that when we receive advice on specific roads/streets etc. from Surrey Police that unlit roads are causing a public safety concern SCC will look at each request and where appropriate will extend the period that lights remain on.

The County Council will continue to work with Surrey Police and listen carefully to their advice. But as a responsible public authority we must continue to run the services within the budget constraints.

Council officers have ensured that the questions we have received have been answered comprehensively and I will ask them to share this letter with any future correspondents as it sets out the situation, reasons behind the decision which was taken and the steps SCC has taken to look at the impact across the county and provide a solution targeted on those areas with a priority need.

Should you not be satisfied with this response you can of course instigate our complaints procedure, the link to which can be found [here](#).

In the meantime I will forward the figures from the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner as soon as they are available, as previously advised.

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Leader of the Council

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