Appendix 5:  
Lewes Town Scheme

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<td>12 November 2012</td>
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<td>Date of Issue:</td>
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<td>October 2013</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1 The approach taken to assessing equality impacts is designed to dovetail with the way in which the street lighting programme is being progressed. The overarching programme was agreed by the Lead Member for Economy, Transport and Environment in February 2012 but the specific details of implementation are determined as the programme is rolled out on an area by area basis alongside local consultation.

1.2 To assess the impacts on equality, we took the following approach:

i) A full Equality Impact Assessment was produced in May 2011 (updated and republished May 2012) to assess the impacts across East Sussex to inform the decision about the overarching programme.

ii) We review the East Sussex Equality Impact Assessment every time a scheme is rolled out to a new area. This takes into account the local implementation plan and the findings of local consultation. We consider whether the findings conflict with the conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment and if they do, identify local actions to mitigate the issue. The outcomes of the reviews form the Appendices to the Equality Impact Assessment.

2. Area Profile

2.1 Summary of local demographics (please note that this refers to Lewes Town not Lewes District):

- Lewes is a civil parish, historic tourist destination and the county town of East Sussex, with approximately 16,650 residents. It is an important transport hub for trains to London and the East Coastway as well as buses on the 28/29 route (between Brighton, Uckfield, Tunbridge Wells and Ringmer) and local town buses. At night, Lewes is well served by trains that run until about midnight (or later if coming from London) while a night bus from Brighton passes through the town at about 0200 hours.

- Lewes has a younger age profile than East Sussex with fewer retirees and more residents under the age of 45.

30.0% of households in Lewes contain one or more residents with a long term limiting illness which is more in common with the regional average (29.4%) than the East Sussex (34.4%).

A greater proportion of residents in Lewes (6.9%) are of BME origin than in East Sussex (5.7%).

The ratio of males to females in Lewes is very similar to East Sussex in general (48.3% to 51.7% compared with a 48.0% to 52.0%).

Lewes has similar proportions of residents of non-Christian religious beliefs to the rest of East Sussex, but is unusual in that 25.9% residents in the 2001 Census stated no religion and this is substantially higher than the 16.5% recorded for East Sussex and the South East.

No data is available on sexual orientation while characteristics such as marital status, pregnancy, maternity, literacy/numeracy, carers and part time workers are not relevant to this assessment.

2.2 Night time crime rates for the 12 month period August 2011 to July 2012 for wards affected by the proposed changes are shown below. Lewes has a surprisingly high rate possibly as a consequence of having a vibrant night time economy and convenient late night transport links from Brighton. However the current number of reports is the lowest it’s been for the last five years and by national standards, crime rates (at all times of the day) in the Lewes area are generally lower than the national average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Crimes per 1,000 residents</th>
<th>Night time crimes per 1,000 residents</th>
<th>% of crimes committed at night</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lewes Bridge</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lewes Castle</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lewes Priory</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Sussex</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Night time refers to crimes that are likely to have been committed between 1200 and 0600.

3. Scheme Outline

3.1 The proposed changes (prior to consultation) are available online and will be updated if changes are made following the consultation. These can be found at:

http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/consultation/2012/streetlighting/lewes.htm

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2 The information within this table has been taken from the local Sussex Police data. This data has not been verified or audited by statisticians at Police HQ, therefore it represents a reflection of crime rather than the authorised and fully verified 'Performance Data'.

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4. **Consultation Findings**

4.1 The local consultation took place in September 2012 and consisted of a variety of approaches. An engagement event was held at Lewes Town Hall in Newhaven on 1 September. Approximately 25 people attended including Sussex Police. A press release was released to local media. The proposal was reported in the Sussex Express and The Argus. An email was also sent to Councillors, a meeting with Lewes Town Council and Lewes Chamber of Commerce to alert them to the proposed changes and to advertise the engagement event. The engagement event was advertised in the town council newsletter, Neighbourhood Watch newsletter and on the online Viva Lewes magazine. We placed printed materials in Lewes Library and at the town council offices with a box, so that people without internet access can give their views.

4.2 90 respondents provided written feedback to the consultation. The statistics below show that we received a range of opinions about the proposals.

- Positive comments about changes to street lighting 27 (30%)
- Negative comments and concerns about changes to street lighting 9 (10%)
- Positive comments about specific areas or issues 10 (11%)
- Negative comments or concerns about specific areas or issues 39 (43%)
- Neither positive nor negative comments 5 (6%)

4.3 The purpose of this Appendix is to highlight comments directly relevant to the equalities issues raised in the main Equality Impact Assessment and determine whether the proposals on a street by street basis should be amended (as outlined in Section 5).

4.4 The consultation shows that community safety is the most important issue for local residents. This is relevant to equalities because the personal safety of some groups could be affected differently by the proposals. Groups that could potentially be impacted more include the young, elderly, women, people with disabilities, LGBT and people from minority ethnic and religious groups. A key point raised in the Equality Impact Assessment is that the link between street lighting and fear of crime is generally well evidenced, but the evidence showing a link to incidence of crime is less clear and may depend on the specific circumstances. The consultation found a range of opinions about the links between community safety and street lighting:

**Comments concerned about community safety**

Street lighting was introduced to make streets safer centuries ago and now you intend to reverse the common sense. All Police advice is to light properties not leave them in darkness. For Police to suggest that criminals don’t like darkness is ludicrous.

Lighting near the castle should not be reduced. A new Police exclusion zone is in force - reduced lighting would make it more difficult to police safely. Castle Ditch Lane should not have lighting reduced. A nearby bar popular with young people in Lewes closes at 2am. A reduction in lighting will make clearance and dispersal of customers difficult. On Fridays and Saturdays full lighting on the High St should be retained until 2.30am.

“The area where I live is by any standard a high crime and anti-social activity area and removing a basic deterrent to crime i.e. lighting will be a green light to criminals.

Improved lighting has been shown in the past to offer a cost effective means of reducing crime (home office research study 251) Personally I think by reducing street lighting in Lewes it could lead to increased crime. As I understand it's easier for criminal offences to happen in dark areas where the perpetrator cannot be easily identified or seen on CCTV.

The Pells area - Please continue or increase light pedestrian routes to Landport and Malling from town centre - equivalent to a highway. This is a place where also young people gather, drink and commit vandalism. We were supposed to have CCTV cameras (one ex-neighbour installed his own) – pointless without lighting.
There are several benches [in the Castle Gate Precinct] enjoyed by tourists but after dark then underage drinking, leary behaviour, graffiti, urination, bottle smashing (we clean it up before daylight bring out the happy families!) and general ASB. Our house was targeted awhile back with a brick through our downstairs window. Under cover of more light reduction we feel ASB will increase. We understand how a reduction would reduce costs on better lit thoroughfares but Castle Precincts? Gate is used late at night as a short cut to various residential areas lies between several pubs.

I live in The Course Lewes. I am very much against the proposal to switch off street lighting from 00.30 in this and adjacent streets. Firstly the street lighting in this area is minimal already. I am concerned about the implications for people's personal safety and I think it will increase the likelihood of accidents. I am also concerned about the potential for increased crime especially attempts under cover of darkness to break into the garages owned by Lewes District Council and rented by local residents between The Course and Grange Road.

We live in Bradford Road and wish to object to the proposal to turn our street lights off from 00.30. Our road is regularly used by pedestrians late night early morning returning home to the Abergavenny Estate or the Wallands from pubs with extended opening in Western Road or from the Brighton night buses stopping in Western Road. We sleep with our windows open and frequently hear people going past up to 3 am especially at week-ends. We feel that the absence of street lighting will lead to safety problems and also to an increase in vandalism as people (often having had a bit too much to drink from the voices we hear) bump into cars and take it our on the car concerned. We feel that it would be more appropriate for Bradford Road to be treated as the Avenue with reduced lighting during the night-time period.

Comments about community safety in favour of less lighting

Excellent and sensible proposals which should save money without affecting safety.

Youths gather under the lights around Pells Park and Pond. the Police are aware of the anti-social behaviour they indulge in. fewer lights might dissuade them from gathering there and disturbing residents. Any chance of fewer lights?

I have lived in Pelham Terrace for 38 years. During this time the street lighting level has greatly increased, supposedly 'to combat vandalism'. It has achieved exactly the opposite. We are plagued by serious car vandalism and it has increased as the lighting has increased. It is particularly bad just under the 3 grouped lights at the end of the street, where light levels are brightest. Give us back our starry sky and lower the lights!

I am a resident in Toronto Terrace and find the noise in Pelham Terrace is bad early in the morning especially at weekends. Damage to cars is a big issue and we wonder if there were no lights in Pelham Terrace early am, would it reduce not only noise but vandalism to cars etc etc. I often hear lots of noise especially after midnight it does disturb ones sleep.

We support this, but understand that the lights around the Pells Pond will stay on. This is a shame as it encourages anti-social behaviour in this area, the noise of which often keeps us awake at night, (as residents of adjacent St John's Hill!).

4.5 The consultation also highlighted children, elderly and women as being groups most at risk.

Children

Houndean Rise. Lewes. I am concerned about plans to reduce street lighting here. There have been a number of night time burglaries in Houndean Rise and reduced street lighting is likely to exacerbate this. I'm also concerned about my children and myself walking home after dark if it completely unlit. Please reconsider your plans.

Elderly

On a personal note I often work away from home which means my partner is left in the house by herself. She would feel less secure without any street lighting in the road as may a number of other (female, elderly and frail) people in the street.
Women

I'm not happy about the street lighting proposals at all. As a woman I will feel more vulnerable. As a mother of a teenage girl I am very concerned. I think it's very short sighted and does not consider the true implications of this. Is the council waiting for someone to fall and trip because they can't see where they are walking due to lack of light. or worst still for someone to get mugged or raped! I urge you to re-think.

The proposal is not acceptable in terms of pedestrian safety. Adequate street lighting provides a more safe environment for pedestrians especially females.

Very concerned regarding safety, both to persons and properties e.g lone workers particularly females also damage to gardens, properties and vehicles.

4.7 A number of comments were about the impact on people walking home late at night. This is primarily about ease of access, route finding and avoiding trip hazards although community safety is also a consideration. The Equality Impact Assessment highlighted these issues of being of particular concern to groups such as young people and people with vision and mobility disabilities. As noted in the first comments, the extent to which this is an issue is affected by the relative lack of people out at after midnight.

Accessibility / Walking

I am all in favour of reducing light pollution. I live on Nevill (Crossway) and the current lighting levels are unnecessary to the huge majority. For the few people who walk after 12.30 pm and before dawn it seems ridiculous to have such high levels of lighting.

I'm rather concerned about the lights suddenly going out or dim around midnight when many people will still be making their way home from a night out. If the time was set back by an hour to 1am and then revellers would be safer especially on Bonfire night and the Police would have fewer call-outs with regard to muggings.

I am all in favour of reducing light pollution. I live on Nevill (Crossway) and the current lighting levels are unnecessary to the huge majority. For the few people who walk after 12.30 pm and before dawn it seems ridiculous to have such high levels of lighting.

People living in a town expect to be able to get off the train and walk home without a problem. There are regularly people arriving at the station at 23.50 even 1.20 - I am one. The walk home is already a problem at the foot of Winterborn Hollow - uneven pavement (tree roots) and no lighting. To switch off lights when pavements are so uneven - in fact doing it at all- is totally unacceptable. I presume this policy was written by people who are tucked up in bed between 11pm amd 6pm - what about the rest of us? I have lived in a village and accept the need for a torch, but I never expected that in the County Town. I expect effective lighting and properly maintained pavements. Come on ESCC you want us to use public transport and to walk - don't undermine it with this ridiculous proposal.

I had a bad experience in Welwyn Garden City - a place where all lights in residential roads go off after midnight. because we were dealing with a sick relative I had to drive after midnight in pitch dark down residential streets. Talking to nurses afterwards they expressed deep dissatisfaction about the impact the new system was having on them - travelling after midnight to patients. I would not like Lewes to have any residential streets plunged into complete darkness for the sake of sick people and the families and services trying to help them. I do think reduced lighting is a good idea.

I suggest that the footpath between Old Mallling Way Church Lane and Malling Playing Fields is change to yellow as it is currently identified as pink. This path is the main young persons route from the town to home when living on the (New) Malling.

With many events and venues open after midnight 12.30 is too early to turn off street lights. 2am would be more sensible.

Second to dim lights on the main roads by 50% - this would cause me problems owing to my old age and poor sight. I have just returned from a town which has adopted this and found it dangerous and distressing. It stopped me using some areas of the town and I felt insecure waiting for buses in the dim light. If this is adopted in Lewes it will deter me from going out after dark.
5. Conclusions

5.1 We have discussed resident’s concerns about crime and the fear of crime with the Police and the Prison authorities and further to their recommendations have made no amendments to our proposals. Our original proposal includes sufficient mitigations such as not changing the lighting on main roads and using where appropriate, the use of 50% part night or dimming instead of part night lighting. We feel that this is sufficient to meet concerns about the impact on frequently used walking routes and this approach is used at specific locations mentioned by respondents such as the Pells and Castle Gate. Some residential roads are kept part night lit because the impact is minimised by the road being well connected to well lit main routes.

5.2 Going forward, we will continue to engage with the local police to ensure that any specific areas of concern arising from the changes are given due consideration. We will undertake a three month review of the installed scheme and will consider all the comments that we receive from residents, the Police and other stakeholders before deciding whether to change anything in the scheme.