

Report to PETITIONERS PANEL

Garforth Street Streetlighting petition

Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Shah, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services

Officer Contact: Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive People and Place

Report Author: Zaiem Khan, District Co-ordinator
Ext. 5162

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Summary

A petition was received requesting that consideration be given for the installation of streetlighting in the area to the rear of 154-200 Garforth Street, Busk.

This petition and response is referred to the panel for consideration as the petitioners are unhappy with the response that the Council would not install streetlights in the above location.

The Council's position is that installing streetlighting in this area would go against Council's current practice to not light secondary routes or alleyways.

A change in practice would require considerable capital investment and would also increase the Council's energy costs. It would also set a precedence where other areas within the Borough of a similar nature would require lighting which would have a negative impact on the Council's current street lighting budget provision.

Recommendations

It is recommended that no action is taken in respect of the petitioner's request and the Panel support this decision.

Garforth Street Streetlighting Petition

1 Background

- 1.1 A petition (APPENDIX E) was received from residents of Garforth Street and Brierley Walk requesting streetlights in what is classified as an alleyway. The residents feel that the area is too dark and suffers from anti-social behavior and crime, and residents feel intimidated by groups of young people who hang around in the area.
- 1.2 The homes on Garforth Street are traditional terraced properties with an alleyway to the rear. The historical development of housing to the rear of Garforth Street and off Belmont Way is of a type where the homes are designed with pedestrian access only to the front of homes and vehicle access/garages to the rear. This design means that the alleyway at the rear of Garforth Street, in this location, is the main vehicle access for the residents of 14-36 Brierley Walk. (APPENDICES A, B, and C)
- 1.3 When the homes on Brierley Walk were built in the 1964 no streetlights were installed in this location as part of the development of 14-36 Brierley Walk.
- 1.4 The recreational area known locally as Berriesfield is located behind Garforth Street and adjacent to Breirley Walk. The playing field is a focal point for young people who meet up and hang around in the area, and many young people use the alleyway as a route to the park. Residents feel the number of young people, size of the groups, and the behavior of some of them causes fear, intimidation, and leads to crime. They feel that the lack of lighting in the area increases fear and makes the area more susceptible to crime.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 Ward Councillors have met with residents on site a few times over the past 5 years to discuss the issues and to try and find a solution. Streetlighting provided a design for lighting the area (APPENDIX D at the Councillors request and the scheme was estimated at £27,500, this is an estimate for what are felt to be the one-off capital cost to install 8 streetlighting columns. There would be additional costs for accruals – i.e. the ongoing maintenance implications of adding these additional lights to the PFI contract. As there is no pavement in the area it would also be advisable to install some type of protection/kerb for each column to prevent damage by cars. If some form of protection is not installed it would increase the likelihood of the street lights being damaged and would either increase the accrual value or risk the street lights not being accrued into the PFI Contract.
- 2.2 As the Councils current practice is to not light secondary routes the scheme was not progressed.

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- 2.3 Other possible solutions have been considered:
Solar powered column lights – these have been looked into and the cost is similar to main cabled lights, and the issue of ongoing maintenance and lack of pavements is still a factor.
Alleygating has been considered however as residents tend to drive in and out of the alleyway throughout the day and evening, it was felt that the gates would not be used for their intended purpose and would probably remain open, due to the inconvenience it would cause residents to get in and out of their cars to un/lock the gates.
- 2.4 The District team have been supporting the Councillors to engage with the Police. A few meetings with the local police team and community have been held over the past few years and there was an unsuccessful attempt to set up a Homewatch group for the area.
- 2.5 There is work underway to increase youth engagement around Berriesfield with a view of diverting young people away from ASB and crime.
- 2.6 The petition was received by the Council 2nd December 2018 from residents of Garforth Street and Brierley Walk requesting streetlights in this location and a response was sent to the petitioners explaining why their request for streetlighting would not be met. (APPENDIX F)

3 Ward Councillors Comments

- 3.1 Ward Councillors have looked at this issue a number of times over the past 5-6 years on behalf of residents. We have been eager to find a solution and requested an estimate for installing streetlights, so we could consider it for funding. However, having discussed this with officers we have followed their advice that lighting this area goes against Council current practice and presents a number of challenges. We also looked at alternatives such as solar powered lights – the costs of which is comparative to mains connected streetlights – and alleygating – which in discussion with residents we do not feel would work in this area as all the residents move their cars through this alleyway.

4 Options

- 4.1 Option 1: Uphold the response to the petition that streetlighting would not be installed in this area.
Option 2: Agree to petitioners request for streetlighting in this location, with costs to be met from a budget of the Council, yet to be identified.

5 Preferred Option

- 5.1 Option 1

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The preferred option not to install street lighting does not have any financial implications. However, if the decision is taken to implement any of the suggested changes, a further report would be required detailing the cost of this action. The cost of any such action would have to be met from existing budgets.

7 **Legal Services Comments**

- 7.1 Under section 97 of the Highways Act 1980 the Council may provide lighting for the purposes of any highway for which they are the highway authority. This is a discretionary power so the Council is not obliged to provide such lighting. (A Evans)

8. **Recommendations**

- 8.1 It is recommended that no action is taken in respect of the petitioners request and the Petitioners Panel support this decision.

9 **Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix A – Map layout
Appendix B – Aerial picture
Appendix C – Streetview of alleyway
Appendix D - Streetlight drawing
Appendix E - Petition
Appendix F - Petition response