

**Decision Session- Executive Member for  
Transport & Planning**

8 September 2016

**Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services**

**Walmgate Stray Lighting Petition**

**Summary**

1. This report concerns a petition which closed on 7 July 2016 requesting that City of York Council install lighting on the footpaths through Walmgate Stray.

**Recommendations**

2. The Executive Member for Transport and Planning is recommended to:
  - i. Note the petition
  - ii. Refer the safety concerns expressed in the petition to appropriate partnership forums

Reason: To consider an appropriate response to the concerns whilst ensuring that street lighting budgets are used effectively and works are not carried out that would deliver wider negative impacts.

**Background**

3. A petition received by the Council on 7 July 2016 (see Annex 1) raised the issues around the lack of lighting on the paths and the risks to users when travelling the route in times of darkness. The petition, which asks the Council to provide lighting for the footpaths, has 33 signatories.
4. Walmgate Stray is recognised as a well used footpath and is used to access York University. Concerns over the lack of lighting on Walmgate Stray have been raised previously; like other such areas of the city, the stray has historically not been lit.
5. Previous investigations showed that the cost of providing lighting would be prohibitive: given the current lack of power supply there

would be a need for trenching for approximately 1 km to provide the necessary services at an estimated cost in excess of £100k. The cost of the lighting columns themselves would be in addition to this figure.

6. Lighting on the strays was considered during the Cycling City Project 2008-10. The project group looked at ways considered at that time that there was no satisfactory, affordable solution which improved the safety for users of the path (both in terms of reducing the potential for collisions and increased personal security) without having a negative impact on conservation and wildlife.
7. The footpaths are not adopted highway and City of York Council has no obligation to provide lighting.

### **Consultation**

8. When last considered (some 4 years ago) there was no support from stakeholders, including the Police, and the matter was not progressed further. The Police consider that there are well lit roads and pathway alternatives on all sides of the stray and that this was the safer alternative to accessing the stray in times of darkness; it was considered that lighting would encourage people to use the path late at night and lighting a thin strip of path would not provide safety as the surrounding area would still be dark and is not overlooked.
9. The Council's Environment Technician Lighting has been consulted and reports that lighting can be damaging in nature conservation terms, particularly for such protected species as bats. There are recent records of 8 bat species foraging in the area of the paths, some of which are particularly sensitive to lighting.

### **Options**

10. The options open to the Executive Member are:
  - A. To recommend to Council through the budget process allocation of capital funding to under take a more detailed feasibility study to provide the lighting requested.
  - B. To refer the safety concerns expressed in the petition to other appropriate forums

### **Analysis**

11. For the reasons set out above it is not recommended that a lighting scheme is taken forward on Walmgate Stray.

It is proposed instead that the safety concerns expressed should be discussed in the first instance through the Student Community Partnership.

### Implications

12. **Financial:** There is no budget allocation for the requested scheme and it would require the existing programme to be reviewed and reduced to accommodate any works.
13. **Other implications:** There are no further implications in this report.

### Contact Details

<b>Author:</b>	<b>Chief Officer Responsible for the report:</b>		
Steve Wragg Flood Risk and Asset Manager City & Environmental Services Tel: (01904 553401)	Neil Ferris Director City and Environmental Services		
	<b>Report Approved</b>	✓	<b>Date</b> 22.08.16
<b>Wards Affected:</b> Fishergate			<b>All</b>
<b>For further information please contact the author of the report</b>			

### Background Papers:

Annex 1 - Lighting on Walmgate Stray ePetition