

Meeting: Full Town Council

Date: 16th July

Author: Town Clerk

Item for Consideration:

Christmas Lights Infrastructure

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To seek permission from the town council to enter into agreements for the provision of Christmas lights for 2024 and beyond, and for the installation and removal of the lights for 2024 and beyond.

1.2 This is in addition to an event that will be arranged to celebrate the switch on. Once a day can be confirmed by South Gloucestershire Council for the installation of the lights, then the officers can work with South Gloucestershire Council and the Kingswood High Street Partnership, to arrange a suitable event. Discussions are already underway, and meetings have been arranged with a number of partners.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 South Gloucestershire Council owns the infrastructure in Kingswood on which the Christmas lights would be installed. These are usually lamp posts that have been fitted with the correct brackets and power supplies to enable the erection of lights and the charging of power to a third party. There are 20 such lamp posts in the centre of Kingswood and a further bracket for the installation of an artificial Christmas tree.

2.2 South Gloucestershire Council informed Kingswood Town Council that it would not be able to continue to provide the Christmas lights for the community free of charge beyond 2023, once the town council was set up, and therefore Kingswood Town Council made an allowance in its budget for 2024/25 of £15,000 for the Christmas light infrastructure.

2.3 Christmas lights are usually installed in November for a switch on event in late November or early December. Some councils will own their lights. South Gloucestershire Council were hiring the lights on an annual basis from a specific company whose lights fit the brackets in Kingswood. The town clerk has secured a cost from South Gloucestershire Council to erect the lights along with a recommendation of the lights company to rent the lights from.

3.0 Costs of Installation

3.1 Installation of lights by South Gloucestershire Council for 20 motifs, to include installation and removal, test and inspection, administration and energy costs: £165.00 per unit

Total £3,300 Plus VAT

There is an additional similar cost for the installation of the metal tree.

4.0 Costs of Motifs/Lights

4.1 KTC will need to use the company that SGC has been using (The Festive Lighting Company). The town clerk has been in contact and has a copy of their catalogue. The terms are that the council can either purchase the motifs (not recommended as not wanting to have the same design for too long, and not having the resource to repair, re-bulb the lights) or hire them

for either one year or for a three-year period. If hired, they will be PAT tested and put through an 11-point inspection, ready for the next season. If hired on an annual basis the cost is 70% of the purchase price. If hired over a three-year period, the cost is 45% of the annual purchase price. Therefore, it is cost effective to enter a three-year hire agreement. Prices depend on the height of the motif and intricacy of pattern and range from about £180 each to £400 each to hire per annum. Therefore, the hire cost for 3 years would reduce this to between £81 each £180 each. There is an additional cost for the metal tree.

5.0 Choice of motif

5.1 It is recommended that there are a range of motifs but from a similar colour palette. The town clerk has been in touch with the manager of Kings Chase Shopping Centre to establish what their colour scheme is to tie it into it. It is gold and silver and below are some of the motifs that could be used. In addition, the residents could be asked to choose their top five favourite motifs from a selection offered by the council, using a poll on Facebook. This includes the community in making choices, gives the council valuable feedback and provides an opportunity to communicate our plans to a wider audience. Alternatively, councillors might wish brighter colours, also shown below:





6.0 Budget

6.1 There is a budget of £15,000 for the lights. Having made an allowance for the £3,300 for the installation costs, there is £11,700 for the lights and their delivery.

6.2 Therefore, the town clerk recommends that a budget of £6,000 is put aside for the hire of the motifs, tree and delivery. There will be an additional charge for the tree, and a delivery charge which is currently unknown.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 To consider the options for the Christmas light installation in this report.

7.2 To agree to South Gloucestershire Council undertaking all the necessary installation, and removal of the lights at a cost of £3,300

7.3 To agree to using The Festive Lighting Company for the hire of the motifs.

7.4 To agree to enter into a three-year hire agreement.

7.5 To delegate authority to the Town clerk, the Community Engagement, Events and Project Officer and the Communications and Project Working Party to choose the motifs, and to work with the relevant partners to coordinate the Christmas lights turn on event, reporting back to a future council meeting.