



## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMMITTEE HELD AT THE TOWN HALL ON MONDAY 14<sup>th</sup> JULY AT 7PM

### PRESENT:

Cheryl Bould	Town Councillor	Mitchell Philpott	Town Councillor
Richard Tyler	Local Resident	Chris Ellis	Local Resident
Gill Finch	Local Resident	Jackie Young	Local Resident
Francis Dodd	Local Resident	Mary Johnston	Local Resident
Paul Davis	Local Resident	Tom Wilkinson	Local Resident
Carol Kisis	Local Resident	Nigel Scarlett	Local Resident

Also in attendance: Ron Finch (Local Resident), Faye LeBon (Town Clerk) and Gavin Watson (Maintenance Manager).

The Clerk welcomed the group and explained the need for the meeting and the requirements of a standing committee of the Town Council. There are certain rules for a Town Council standing committee, including for the meeting to be convened and run in accordance with local government legislation, for Terms of Reference to govern the committee, and for health and safety legislation to be adhered to, to ensure volunteers are covered by the Town Council's insurance.

Concerns were raised by local residents over:

- The previous lack of involvement by the Town Council.
- The updated terms of reference of the committee
- Proposed procedures going forwards.

These matters will be addressed as part of the meeting.

### 1. Election of Chairman

It was **agreed** that Cheryl Bould would Chair this meeting .

It was **agreed** that all local residents in attendance, with the exception of Ron Finch, would be appointed to the committee.

### 2. To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received Trevor Bennett and Michael Goodwin.

### 3. To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Request for Dispensation

None raised.

**4. To Adjourn the Meeting to Allow Members of the Public and Councillors with Prejudicial Interests to Speak**

No Matters Raised

**5. To Receive Terms of Reference**

It was agreed to defer this item until after item 7 had been discussed.

**6. Finance**

**a) To Receive Budget for Christmas Light 2025/2026**

The Clerk reported that the budget the Town Council currently holds is:

£1,820.26 for decorations in earmarked reserves

£2,000.00 in the revenue budget for infrastructure

**b) To Agree Light Purchases**

Chris reported that people appreciated the forest scene, therefore this could be extended to cover the whole of the frontage of the co-op. The purchase of this scene at £1,436, plus some extra string lights in red and warm white was **agreed**. It was confirmed that all lights were LED.

**7. To Draft Event Management Plan, to cover:**

- **Event Manager**
- **Date of Installation and Taking Down**
- **Risk Assessments Required**
- **Manpower Required**
- **Equipment Required**

It was **agreed** that two committee members will speak with Mr Smith to see if he would be prepared to be Vice Chair of the committee.

It was noted that not all the installation and take down is done on one day, there is preliminary work done beforehand.

PAT testing was discussed and although it was noted that Blachere had advised that this was not compulsory, the Clerk advised that the Town Council would PAT test the lights as part of the safety checks which would be detailed in the risk assessments.

Working at height was discussed. It was reported that the Town Council has had a generous donation of use of a cherry picker and a qualified operative. It was agreed that a cherry picker would be useful for:

- Lights on the Black Boys
- Lights on the Ironmongers (Red Lion Street side)
- Lights on the café on Penfold Street.

It was reported that the Town Council is looking to put a road closure in place for the day of the main installation. It is possible that the fire service may be able to assist if the risk of traffic striking ladders is removed. It was **agreed** that a road closure which mimicked that of the switch on day would be preferable.

It was **agreed** not to put lights up on Norwich Road as this is on a slope and too dangerous, although the frame on which the reindeer stands is acceptable.

When working on the section between Randalls and Church Terrace, the road is not shut but can be done with due diligence and manual traffic management.

Cooks electricians do the area at Budgens. The Clerk will speak to them about their requirements and obtain the safety documents.

Ladder requirements of 8-10 ladders (in addition to the three the Town Council owns) were discussed, along with stepladders for the interior of the Town Hall.

The requirement for volunteers to sign in and to agree that, to their knowledge, they have no medical conditions which would prevent them from assisting with the light set up, was discussed. The Town Council's insurance covers volunteers but only when acting under the jurisdiction of the Town Council and deemed competent.

The moving of the Christmas Tree from Suffield was discussed as was the installation in the market place. Further consideration is to be given to sourcing the equipment for this.

The requirement for a small working party on the day of the switch on was discussed, in case of works required at short notice.

The requirement for volunteers to work in groups was discussed. One person to go up the ladder, one to foot the ladder and one to observe the surroundings for hazards.

*Action Points:*

The Clerk will produce a first draft of the Risk Assessments and the Event Management Plan and circulate in good time for the next meeting. The Clerk will also draft the wording for the signing in forms.

**To Receive Terms of Reference (as deferred from item 5)**

It was **agreed** to request the Town Council amend the Terms of Reference as follows:

Objective, sentence 1 – remove the words 'centre of'

Membership, point 1 – add 'elected by the Town Council'

Membership, point 4 – add 'one of which must be a Town Councillor'

Membership – add point 6 – 'A Vice Chair may be elected from a non-councillor committee member'

**8. To Note Items for Information and Inclusion in a Future Agenda**

Ian would like to see a letter of apology from the Town Council.

Chris and Tom will make enquiries about the proposed fundraising event on 15<sup>th</sup> August.

Items for the next agenda:

Draft Risk Assessments

Draft Event Management Plan

Confirm Terms of Reference

**9. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September at 7pm in the Town Hall

Cheryl thanked everyone for working with the Town Council in this matter.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9pm

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