

## FULL COUNCIL 9<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021

### CHRISTMAS LIGHTS – ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve changes to the Christmas Lighting scheme and the resulting expenditure

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 SparkX is the Town Council's current Christmas Lighting contractor. Christmas 2021 will be the second year of a three year contract.
- 2.2 As the festoon lighting and tree wraps remain in situ after installation last year, the year 2 contract price has reduced to £19,180. This is against a budget figure of £22,500.
- 2.3 The contract price allows for all or some of the LED spheres to be changed. There is no option with the contract to change the streetlamp motifs.
- 2.4 Orders for any additional lighting is to be placed by early July.

#### 3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 This proposal has been prepared in discussion with the Cllr Teslin Davies, Chair of People & Communities. Last year, there were a number of issues with the electrics which resulted in the lights on the trees on Lower Cross St failing and a couple of streetlamp motifs tripping the electrics. It has been suggested by SparkX that the lighting electrics would benefit from a health check, a MOT of the electrics. This would be carried out in the summer months. The cost of this would £535.00
- 3.2 The contractor has also suggested that 11 of the artificial Christmas trees that are installed on Lower Cross Street are replaced. A number of the trees were in a poor condition when handed over to SparkX last year and it would seem appropriate that they are replaced. This would cost £330.00 for an outright purchase.
- 3.3 As previously mentioned the colour of the LED spheres can be changed at no additional cost. The pure white and warm white spheres were well received but it would be desirable to introduce a new element to the scheme. It is therefore suggested that one-third of the spheres are changed to red.
- 3.4 All the above changes would increase the contract price to £20,045 leaving £2,455 in the budget. It was always the intention that a new feature could be introduced in years 2 & 3 and for a cost of £2500 a year free standing light installation could be hired. The freestanding light installation would be located in St Johns Square as this is the obvious place given that the town centre has to remain open to traffic. The installation costs associated with this are more significant than with the other lights as it involves a Hiab.
- 3.5 The freestanding light installation that is proposed will appeal to children and will be a fun new addition to the lighting scheme as children can climb onto the back of the squashed reindeer.



- 3.6 The Town Clerk has checked with Monmouthshire County Council and Kings Arms Hotel that there will be space in St Johns Square for the reindeer as currently this area is full of outside seating.
- 3.7 The proposals set out above will keep the lighting scheme fresh and interesting and free of electrical issues.
4. **RECOMMENDATIONS**
- 4.1 To approve the health check of the electrics, replacement of 11 trees, change 1/3 of the LED spheres to red and hire the squashed reindeer free standing light installation.