

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Christmas Lights Working Party Meeting held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall on Monday 21st June 2021 at 7.45pm.

Present:	Acting Chairman	C Lemmon	
	Councillors	SR Court CK Elkin G Tustin	AR Donnelly M Purser R White
	Members	Rachel Burry	David Doe

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Robert Skoulding.

Minutes:

No previous minutes were circulated or discussed.

Review of 2020 “Switch-on”:

Due to coronavirus restrictions, the 2020 “switch-on” had been a low-key affair with no road closures, funfair or entertainment.

Progress & Tasks Already Undertaken in respect of 2021 Event:

1. “Switch-on” date confirmed as Friday 26th November 2021.
2. The road closure has been confirmed by Cambridgeshire County Council and Ringways have been notified of their involvement therein
3. [REDACTED] notified by email 14th June 2021).
(funfair [REDACTED]), [REDACTED] (MC duties [REDACTED])
and [REDACTED] (entertainment [REDACTED]) have all indicated their availability and willingness to attend.
4. [REDACTED] (steps [REDACTED]), [REDACTED] (loan of lorry trailer [REDACTED]) and [REDACTED] (Father Xmas / sleigh) all have the date booked in their respective diaries.
5. Fenland District Council is aware that the Market Place needs to be closed and the public toilets kept open until 10pm ([REDACTED] notified by email on 9th February 2021).
6. Christmas tree ordered from Elveden Farms on 22nd March 2021 ([REDACTED] [REDACTED]). Delivery arranged for Friday 19th November 2021 at 10am at a cost of £3,030 + VAT. To be removed on Monday 10th January 2022 ([REDACTED] aware of all necessary dates).

7. Although Sainsbury's and Tesco's have both been approached about collection days, no decisions have yet been taken by either organisation.
([REDACTED])
([REDACTED]) – [REDACTED]
8. [REDACTED] have again agreed to supervise electrical works since this is the only practical way that the Committee can legally gain access to CCC street lighting columns
([REDACTED])
[REDACTED]
Contract agreed and signed on 29th March 2021.
9. March Town Council has committed £25,000 in its 2021/2022 budget for Christmas-related expenditure.
10. It has been agreed that a maximum of £7,500 be paid out to helpers for 2021. All payments made will be subject to recipients signing a receipt acknowledging that they are responsible for their own tax and national insurance if applicable.
11. All cross-street wires and wall bolts were tested during 2020. Tests are due bi-annually so will need testing again in 2022.
12. [REDACTED] have agreed to perform the "switch-on" ceremony. This was confirmed on 1st March 2021.

Tasks Still to be Undertaken:

1. Discussions have been held with Clinton Elkin to ascertain how improvements can be made to the Christmas tree and "Nativity Scene" displays.
2. Robert Skoulding will be having discussions with [REDACTED] regarding the SAG requirements.
3. [REDACTED] will be requested to book St John Ambulance.
4. It was agreed that the following groups can have stalls etc at the event if they so wish:
 - a) Waterman's Club (on bridge).
 - b) Scouts (in vicinity of Iceland).
 - c) Churches Together (Nativity Scene in "old man's shelter).
5. It was agreed that it was necessary to appoint a Head Steward, and it was agreed that serious efforts must be made to recruit as many stewards as possible for 2021 onwards. However, it should be remembered that due diligence must be exercised prior to utilising new stewards or introducing new members to the Committee. It was agreed that [REDACTED] would take on the joint roles of Head Steward. [REDACTED] confirmed his willingness to jointly take on this role on the morning of 22nd June 2021 and Robert Skoulding agreed to provide whatever advice was needed.
Clinton Elkin agreed to advertise the need for more stewards on Facebook.
6. Once again, a Christmas Shop Window Competition would be organised. The Clerk would produce letter to distribute around the shops in late October 2021.

7. Robert Skoulding had again agreed to sponsor the “Best Decorated House” competition.
8. It would be necessary to arrange refreshments for “switch-on” night. Mark Purser agreed to provide the refreshments and it was hoped that Ruth Johnson would organise the serving thereof as she had done on a previous occasion.
9. Discussions ensued as to whether a grotto would be a sensible idea for the current year. It was agreed that the grotto should not be re-instated until 2022.
10. Several “set-pieces” are in need of repair. It is possible that some can be done by [REDACTED] but others may need to be sent back to the suppliers. CL rang [REDACTED] after the meeting and it was established that [REDACTED] could, in fact, repair all of them this year.
11. A lady called [REDACTED] who has suggestions about the Christmas tree has asked to join the Committee. It was agreed that she should be invited to attend the next meeting.
12. CL reported that he was in the process of applying for the Street Lighting License. This is a Cambs County Council annual license that is required before seasonal decorations are allowed to be attached to street lights.

Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 16th August 2021 at 7.45pm in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Councillor K French 5th July 2021.
Mayor of March.