

MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Christmas Lights Working Party Meeting held in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall on Monday 21st January 2019 at 7.45pm.

Present:	Chairman	RF Skoulding	
	Councillors	SR Court CC Owen MW Purser	MEC Field A Pugh
	Members	David Doe Sue Beer	Rachel Burry Eddie Osgathorp
	Town Clerk	C Lemmon	

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Michelle Bishop and Clinton Elkin.

Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2018 were reviewed and approved.

Review of 2018 “Switch-on”:

1. Everyone who helped on the evening were thanked for their efforts.
2. Several items appear to have gone astray and need to be traced without further delay. These items include the stewards’ yellow jackets.
3. Andrew Pugh recounted minor incidents that had occurred on the evening, but no feedback has yet been received from the SAG Committee.
4. Mark Purser agreed to review the collection methods that we utilise to ascertain whether it would be possible and viable to accept “contactless” card donations.
5. It was noted that the Stewards’ “WhatsApp” group worked well.
6. Questions were raised as to whether the Xmas tree needed to have more lights on it, although no conclusions were reached.
7. An improved Santa’s Grotto needs to be acquired for 2019 because problems had been encountered with the Scout Marquee.
8. It was agreed that Lisa Hedges should be invited to attend one of the future meetings.

Matters Arising & Tasks to be Undertaken:

1. Date agreed for 2019 “switch-on” to be Friday 29th November 2019.
2. CL reported that all interested parties would be reminded of the above date in the next week or two:

These persons are as follows:

- a) CCC / Ringways re road closure and erection & removal of Xmas tree.
Road closure actually applied for on 16th January 2019.
 - b) Lisa Hedges re fair rides (07860 962077).
 - c) John Whitehead re MC duties (07789 555590).
 - d) Duncan Partington re music (01945 880097).
 - e) Ridgeons re loan of steps (662000).
 - f) Oliver Cromwell Hotel re use of hotel for Father Christmas' departure
(Robert Skoulding 07733 008448).
 - g) John Thomas re loan of lorry (01945 450555).
 - h) Lions Club (re provision of sleigh, including transport thereof).
 - i) Gavin Philpott re Scout Marquee to act as Santa's Grotto if no better
option is available. **There is a possibility that Jan French could have
details concerning a preferable alternative.**
 - j) FDC re ensuring that the Market Place car park will be closed all day
and that the Broad Street toilets will be open until 10pm.
3. It was noted that collection days for 2019 have been arranged as follows:
- A. Bag-packing at Sainsbury's.
Booked for 12th October 2019 – agreed with Dianne on 5th
December 2018.
(JS contact details 653702 – Dianne or Emma).
The money from the October 2018 bag-pack has still not been
received despite concerted efforts by CL.
 - B. Tin collection at Tesco's.
Provisionally booked for 16th & 17th November 2019 – must be
confirmed with Kelly in August or September 2019.
(Contact details: Kelly Riddell 07933 670242)
4. It was agreed that a maximum of £7,500 be paid out to helpers for 2019.
5. CL previously reported that for 2011 and onwards, Whiting and Partners have
advised that all persons receiving payments should sign a receipt
acknowledging that they are responsible for their own tax and national
insurance if applicable.
6. Reminders for coming year: obtaining PRS License, ordering Christmas tree,
refurbishing / replacing certain electrical fittings, obtaining barriers, arranging
for someone to switch on the lights, organising Shop Window Competition etc.
7. It was agreed that the Christmas tree should be ordered at the earliest possible
date.
8. It was reported that, in general, all meetings would continue to be held on the
3rd Monday of the month. Initially this would be bi-monthly, rising to monthly
later in the year.
9. It was also reported that March Town Council had committed £20,000 in its
2019/2020 budget for Christmas-related expenditure.
10. It was agreed that the Waterman's Club should be allowed to have a stall at the
2019 event if they so wished.
11. It was agreed that Michelle Bishop (FDC Licensing Manager) should be
invited to attend all future meetings if she so required.

12. It was agreed that the SAG / FDC requirements and paperwork should be dealt with by Andrew Pugh and forwarded to Michelle Bishop as soon as possible. New documentation is in place for 2019, although Michelle Bishop has offered help in the production thereof.
13. Andrew Pugh was appointed as Head Steward. It was agreed that serious efforts must be made to recruit as many stewards as possible for 2019 onwards since the importance of their presence increases year on year. However, it should be remembered that due diligence must be exercised prior to utilising new stewards or introducing new members to the committee.
14. It was noted that Robert Skoulding had again agreed to sponsor the “Best Decorated House” competition for 2019.
15. It was agreed that, once again, a Christmas Shop Window Competition would be organised. The Clerk would produce letters to distribute around the shops in late October 2019.
16. Approximately 41 “Santa gifts” remain in stock from 2018 which will go a long way towards the 2019 requirements
17. Sue Beer had received a request for a ‘LIONS’ decoration, possibly on the side of the White Hart building facing the river. It was agreed that she would explore the possibilities.
18. Sue Beer was requested to purchase a new nativity scene.
19. It was hoped that Mark Purser would again arrange the refreshments for “switch-on” night.
20. It was noted that electricity prices for 2019 would be 23.46% higher than for 2018.
21. John Devine has already accepted our invitation to turn on this year’s lights.
22. Churches Together (Barbara Taylor) were informed on 22nd October 2018 that they can repeat their Nativity Scene in the “old man’s shelter” every year.
23. Problems have been encountered with the hoist, which accounts for the delay in taking the decorations down and removing the tree.

Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 18th March 2019 at 7.45pm in The Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Councillor J French 4th February 2019.
 Mayor of March.