

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	3 August 2023 7.00pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Rachel McCarthy, Town Centre and Events Officer and Jackie MacArthur, Communities and Marketing Manager and DCO		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	Agenda Item 18 Christmas Lights Replacements – for decision		
Background	<p>In February 2023 the Community and Environment Committee considered a paper for the replacement of the last of the 2013 Christmas Lights in the town centre. These lights have now started to fail and we have been advised are not repairable. The Committee resolved:</p> <p><i>CE/52/2223 resolved to ask officers to produce a detailed plan for Council to consider.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A replacement for the Merry Christmas Congleton sign at the bottom of Moody Street</i> • <i>Replacement for the two cross street banners used on Swan Bank</i> • <i>Replacements for the two lamp post banners on Mill Street</i> • <i>Replacements for the six lamp post banners on West Street</i> • <i>Replacement for the cross street banner in Lawton Street</i> • <i>Consider some festive lighting for the Market Area</i> <p>The previous administration did not want to make the decision to bind the new Council just ahead of the elections, so it was agreed that a paper would come to an appropriate Council meeting for discussion and decision.</p> <p>Since the Community and Environment Committee, officers have spent considerable time looking at lights from various professional companies and comparing their spec, suitability for location, fit with current lights, due diligence on the suppliers etc to come up with suggestions and recommendations.</p> <p>Note we have not included a new cross-street light for Lawton Street. There was not a cross street light in this location in 2022 (due to the light failing) and as long as the lamp post lights are dramatic we believe this expense could be spared.</p> <p>Officers believe the lights purchased for Lawton Street last year would be better suited to West Street and Mill Street due to size, so are recommending the 8 lights in Lawton move to West Street and Mill Street and the new lights are placed in Lawton Street.</p>		

Discussions are taking place with the Congleton Market Quarter about lighting for the market area.

Background for new Councillors

Congleton Town Council provides the Christmas lights for Congleton. This currently consists of lights on Lawton Street, High Street, Market Street, Pedestrian area, Victoria Street, Little Street, Mill Street, Swan Bank and West Street.

The Christmas lights are installed to create a sense of pride in the town, encourage people into the town for the festive season, create a positive atmosphere and to help create festive cheer. The Town Council has taken responsibility for the Christmas lights since 2012 and in 2013 carried out a major replacement of the town's lights when it purchased new lights at a cost of £19,893 plus one-off hardware costs of £7,200 to convert lamp posts and fit anchor points. (The payback on purchasing to renting was around 2.9 years). The lights we are looking to replace are the last of the 2013 purchases.

Since 2020 the Town Council has replaced a number of the 2013 Christmas lights including:

- 2020 the Town Council replaced the lights on the pedestrian area – including Victoria Street and Little Street, Market Street and the tree lights at a cost of £8682
- 2021 the Town Council replaced the lights on the High Street at a cost of £1950
- 2022 the Town Council replaced the lights in Lawton Street at a cost of £3100

Now the remaining lights from 2013, which have served us for 10 Christmases are in need of replacement and are classed as 'beyond economically viable repair'. Usually lighting companies guarantee the lights for 1 or 2 years and will not repair them. Independent electrical companies may repair, but the costs of the parts and labour exceeds the cost of replacement.

The lights that need to be replaced to maintain the same level of decoration are:

- A) The Merry Christmas Congleton sign at the bottom of Moody Street
- B) The two cross street banners used on Swan Bank
- C) The two lamp post banners on Mill Street
- D) The six lamp post banners on West Street
- E) The Cross Street banner that has been displayed in Lawton Street (this failed before installing and was not used for Christmas 2022)

In addition there has been a request to consider more festive lighting for the Market Area.

Timing

If lights are to be replaced ahead of the 2023 season the order needs to be placed in August as there is minimum of 6-8 week delivery period.

Capital Expenditure

Purchasing new lights would be a capital expenditure. We are advised that lights can be expected to last 5-6 years, we have managed to keep the previous lights working

	<p>for 10 years. The RFO has confirmed that we do have capital contingency funding available for this project.</p> <p><u>Rent v Purchase</u></p> <p>As the Town Council has previously always opted to own rather than rent the lights, we have assumed the same principle will apply. Most large companies give an option to purchase lights outright or hire cross-street banners and lamp post lights. The cost of renting for three years is slightly higher than purchasing outright.</p> <p>The benefit of hire is that after three years you can completely change your lighting scheme as the town would have no ties – or ownership – of lights.</p> <p>The benefit to purchasing outright is a saving to the public purse if the lights are robust and looked after. Our current lights lasted between 7 and 10 seasons. If Councillors are interested in the hire options prices can be given in advance of the meeting.</p>
Details and options	<p>Potential lighting schemes - see 18.Options and Prices</p> <p>Looking to replace</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moody Street – officer preference either a Merry Christmas Congleton from Company B or the Rhapsody or Quadrille Chain from Company C 2. Swan Bank x 2 cross street lights – officer preference – Grand Blizzard from company c (needs to be 5m) 3. Lamp post banners – x 8 – will add these to Lawton Street where it needs to be brighter and believe the ones purchased last year will look good on Mill Street and West Street. Sterling Pole – Company A looks good but is expensive. Company C Blizzard looks bright – but is half the width.
Financial Implications	<p>The total cost of the project, if Councillors wish to go with the officer recommendations the cost would be £11,568.96 if having a Merry Christmas Congleton banner on Moody Street or £9,458 if having the Quadrille banner on Moody Street.</p> <p>This will come from the Capital Contingency budget.</p> <p>Costs associated with installation, removal, storage, anchor testing, minor repairs in advance of installation and on-site repairs come from the Lights Budget.</p>
Environmental Implications	<p>All lights are now LED and the electricity usage is low. The lights are on timers where there are usually street lights so there is no significant light pollution.</p>
Equality and Diversity Impact	<p>Decorating the town has a positive impact for traders and the town, which has a good reputation for Christmas lights and atmosphere. Other activities are being organised to bring more people into town for free activities where they can enjoy the lights.</p>
PROPOSALS	<p>For the Committee to agree on a course of action.</p> <p>The Officers’ recommendation is below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moody Street – Merry Christmas (A) (£11,567) or Quadrille (B) (£9458) • Swan Bank – Grand Blizzard • Lamp post banners – Blizzard

Christmas Lights – options and prices - Appendix A

Company A :

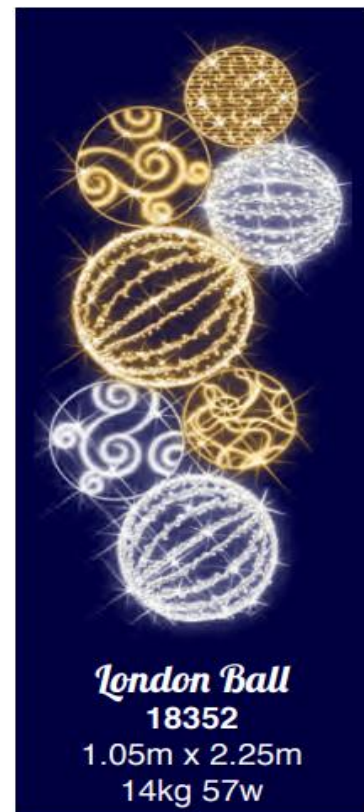


Symphony Scroll £1,151 each

8 new lamp post lights needed



Aura = £569 each



London Ball £890 each



£1278 each (Swan Bank) – Crystal Snowflake (2 needed)

Need

8 x lamp post lights eg/ London Ball – £7,120

2 x cross street banner – Crystal Snowflake - £2,556

1 x something special for Moody Street -

Company B

For Moody Street



550 x 150cm, warm and cool static white @ £3706.96



560 x 150cm, warm and cool static white @ £3668.90



Winter Wing Cross Street,
warm and cool white static
£1,023.08 each



104cm x 237cm - £797.06



80cm x 240cm £1534.58



133cm x 256 £936.04

COMPANY C

Option 1

Three options for Moody Street



Moody Street – Rhapsody Double – 6ft - £1491 per banner
Swan Bank – Grand Blizzard – 5ft - £1535 each
Lamp post Banner - £599 each

Option 2



Quadrille Chain – Moody Street - £1595 – 1.6m x 6m 28.5kg – slow flash

Grand Blizzard - Swan Bank - £1535 - 5m
Lamp post – Bolero - £628 – 2.30m x 0.70m



Option 3



Bolchoi - Moody Street - £1567 - 1.2m x 6m - 23.3kg - slow flash

Grand Blizzard - Swan Bank – 5m - £1535

Lamp post banner – Mazurka - £472 each



Options Table

	Moody Street	Swan Bank Cross Street	Lawton Street (6)	TOTAL
A	1 x 3706.96 Merry Christmas Congleton	2 x 1023.08 Star design 2046.16	8 x 723.22 Comet 5785.76	£9738.88
A	1 x 3668.90 Merry Christmas		8 x 1534.58 Sterling Pole 12,276.64	
A			8 x 963.04 Star string 7704.32	
		2 x 1278 Crystal snowflake Total 25556	8 x 1151 Symphony Scroll 9208	
B			8 x 596 Aura Total 4768	
B			8 x 890 London Ball Total 7120	
B				
C1	Rhapsody 1 x 1491	Grand Blizard 2 x 1535 Total 3070	Blizard lamppost 8 x 599 Total 4792	£ 9353
C2	Quadrille Chain 1 x 1595		Bolero lamppost 8 x 628 Total 5024	£ 9689
C3	Bolchi 1 x 1567		Mazurka 8 x 472 Total 3776	£ 8413

Officers preferred Choice

Moody Street – either Merry Christmas Congleton or Quadrille Chain

Swan Bank - Grand Blizard x £3070 for 2 (believe need to be the same)

Lamp post - Sterling Pole looks spectacular, but high price. Blizard lamp post more reasonable!
(think should be the same in the same area)