

**Christmas Lights Contract from 2023-2028 inclusive**

The existing Christmas lights contract concluded in 2021 and was purposefully extended by a further year. There is a need to now consider a new contract for 2023 onwards.

The existing lights do not belong to the Town Council and any agreements have ceased. It is customary in any lights contract for the contractor to retain ownership of the lights. The option of purchasing lights and then paying a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to install them has been purposefully disregarded given the lights are five years old and the bulk of the cost is in the installation/removal of the lights; it is not considered cost effective for SWTC to own the lights, store them and then pay another party to install them.

The Operations Manager was instructed by this committee to seek companies who wished to express an interest in quoting for a Christmas light contract for the period 2023 to 2028 inclusive. The expression of interest notice was advertised on the Government's Contract Finder website for a set period and in accordance with the Council's financial regulations and governing legislation. This process was completed and as a result of advertising on Contract Finder, 7 companies expressed an interest in quoting and requested further details. Of these 7 companies, 6 met the Town Council requirements and were sent further details and asked to submit a completed quote. 3 companies wrote to say they were not submitting a quote and contact was attempted with a 4<sup>th</sup> but with no reply, leaving only 2 companies who then submitted a completed quote. All details of this correspondence can be provided upon request to verify the statements as made.

The January 2023 A&S meeting requested that a working group be convened and scrutinise returned quotes and if required meet any companies as necessary. Cllr Porch was further requested to carry out a financial check of those companies quoting.

As there were only 2 returned quotes, the Operation Manager sent details to the working group by email asking if they wished to meet or reply by email. All Cllrs have reviewed the quotes as provided and responded in supporting the quote from the existing contractor. The Responsible Finance Officer has checked the information and confirms due diligence has been observed throughout the quote process by the Operations Manager.

Quote A has sufficient detail and has a good financial standing.

Quote B has some missing items which would likely result in extras on the final price, the financial standing for quote B is not as strong as quote A.

As quote B is unknown, this would push the final cost out of budget and involve several hours' extra staff time in managing and sorting out problems and issues.

**Recommendation:**

Considerable time has been spent working on this exercise, reviewing the quotes. Having evaluated the quotes and the contractors' details I feel sufficiently informed to make the following recommendation to Committee:

- a) The Council enter a new contract 2023-2028 inclusive as per Quote A

Terry Frostick,  
Operations Manager

15<sup>th</sup> February 2023