



# **BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**

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## **CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING**

**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2006**

**PRESENT:** Cllr. R. Gillibrand (Chairman) Cllrs: Mrs. S. Olliver and F. Oppler

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Glenna Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)  
Sue Holmes Events Officer  
Paul Beckerson (Project and IT Officer)  
Jim Brooks and Alan Holmes (Electrical Contractors)  
Suzy Lovett (Representative from Blachere Illumination UK)

*The Meeting opened at 7.10pm*

### **35. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Mrs. J. Warr. Apologies had also been received from Mr. A. Hay and Mr. J. Stamp, Chairman of the Bognor Regis District Chamber of Commerce.

### **36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda.

Notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration. The nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

The Sub-Committee noted that there was one Declaration of Interest made at this point in the Meeting.

*Mrs. S. Holmes declared a Personal Interest in Agenda item 8 - Report from Electrical Contractor on Christmas Illuminations 2005 and proposals for 2006*

### **37. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2005**

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to agree and approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2005 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and the presiding Chairman signed them.

**38. TO ENDORSE THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE IN THE NOTES OF THE MEETING THAT WAS NOT QUORATE HELD ON 16<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2005**

The Sub-Committee noted that there had not been a quorum present for the meeting scheduled to be held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2005. It was **RESOLVED** to endorse the Notes containing the recommendations made to the Environment and Leisure Committee by the Councillors present. A copy of the Notes would be appended to these Minutes as **Appendix 1**.

**39. ADJOURNMENT FOR PRESENTATION BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF BLACHERE ILLUMINATION UK**

The Chairman welcomed Ms. Suzy Lovett and the meeting was adjourned at 7.15pm.

Ms. Lovett gave a detailed breakdown of the various options available to the Sub-Committee which included the full package for Blachere to supply and fit new Christmas displays or to supply only working closely with the Council's current electrical contractor. A rental option was available over a three-year period, which would allow the Sub-Committee to consider the installation of displays up to the value of three times the annual budget they may wish to spend. At the end of the three years the displays could be returned to Blachere and the process repeated with new displays. Alternatively, the Council for 20% of their value could purchase the displays thus enabling the lights to be used in some of the other areas of the town with brand new displays being put in the town centre under a new three-year rental agreement. It was noted that under the rental option if the Sub-Committee wished to continue to use their own electrical contractor the displays would be delivered prior to installation and collected at the end of the Christmas period for storage. Prior to delivery the following year the displays would be fully checked and any repairs carried out. Any product failure would be the responsibility of Blachere to put right and arrangements would be made by them with the electrical contractor to carry out any necessary repairs that may be required during the festive period. However, the responsibility to insure the Christmas lights during the time that they are displayed is that of the Town Council's.

Following some discussion, it was suggested that the three-year rental option should be investigated further with an annual budget of up to £10,000 being considered for the new displays. Ms. Lovett advised that she would be happy to prepare some proposals and submit these in time for the Sub-Committee to consider at their next meeting. Once these had been considered, Ms. Lovett would be pleased to meet with Councillors again to discuss any changes.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Lovett on behalf of the Sub-Committee for attending and the meeting was re-convened at 7.51pm.

**40. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES AND NOTES WHICH ARE NOT SEPARATE AGENDA ITEMS**

**16<sup>th</sup> November - New Lighting in Little High Street**

*Mr. Beckerson declared a Personal Interest in this matter as he undertakes contract work at the Unicorn Public House.*

In answer to a query, The Projects Officer reported that the installation of these new lights was now complete and invoices for reimbursement from the businesses that had agreed to contribute towards the scheme had been sent out.

**41. TO CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF MR. MARK HIDE AS A CO-OPTED NON-VOTING MEMBER OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

It was noted that Mr. Hide had been involved in the past with the organisation that had previously run the Christmas Illuminations. He was very keen to be involved and had assisted the electrical contractors with the lights this Christmas. Following some discussion, the Sub-Committee **AGREED** that in view of the uncertainty at this time as to the way forward in 2006 a decision on co-option of Mr. Hide to the Sub-Committee should be deferred until the next meeting.

**42. TO RATIFY COST FOR NEW STRINGS OF LIGHTS TO REPLACE OLD STRINGS IN LONDON ROAD**

It was noted that during the installation of the Christmas lights in November, complaints had been received about the poor condition of the old strings of lights located in London Road. It had therefore been suggested that these be replaced with 5 new sets at a cost of around £400.00 plus VAT. The electrical contractor had agreed to install the new strings free of charge. Following liaison by the Chairman with other members of the Sub-Committee, it had been agreed to proceed with these replacements. It was therefore **RESOLVED** to ratify this action.

In answer to a query, the electrical contractor confirmed that should the Sub-Committee wish to replace these strings with alternative displays in the future, these lights could be used on the Christmas trees. A Councillor commented that the Sub-Committee might also consider providing Christmas lights in the Aldwick Road shopping area as a future project and suggested that these strings may be suitable if an alternative location for them was being sought. The electrical contractor advised that the buildings in this area are actually lower than those in the town and wall mounted displays may be a better option.

**43. REPORT FROM ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR ON CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS 2005 AND PROPOSALS FOR 2006**

*Mrs. Holmes declared a Personal Interest in this item as a relative is employed by Leaderboard Sports UK.*

Mr. Brooks circulated a detailed written report on the work undertaken by Leaderboard Sports (UK) Ltd. for the 2005 Christmas illuminations. Maps showing the location of each display, photographs of the testing carried out and details of the estimated electricity consumption had also been supplied. Mr. Brooks commented on various items within the report. Some of the wall plates had been replaced although it had not been possible for all of these to be galvanised. These would need some attention. Wires had also been changed and where height permitted the overall display area had been increased to four feet. The list of recommendations detailed in the report would be considered at a future meeting. Mr. Brooks agreed to compile a list of all the items remaining in stock and submit this to the Sub-Committee in due course.

Mr. Brooks commented on the new aluminum displays that had been produced by Mr. Hay and suggested that the Sub-Committee may wish to consider this as a way

forward. An example of one of the displays was available for the Sub-Committee to view. Mr. Brooks confirmed that Leaderboard would be happy to again sponsor and carry out the support work required to maintain the displays for next Christmas if invited and understood that this would be dependant on how the Council wished to go forward.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Brooks and Mr. Holmes on behalf of the Sub-Committee for all their hard work on the Christmas Illuminations this year. He also thanked them both for their attendance at the meeting and for the detailed report given on the work they had undertaken.

**44. FEEDBACK FROM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPRESENTATIVE ON JOINT LATE NIGHT OPENING AND SWITCH-ON**

In the absence of Mr. Stamp, the Events Officer advised that the Chamber of Commerce had been very happy with this joint venture and the feedback had been good from the retailers. The difficulties in getting the public to support the late night shopping in the past were stressed however by running this in conjunction with the switching on of the lights this year, this had created more of an event, which had resulted in more people coming into the town. The Chamber had agreed that they would like to work together towards a joint venture again next Christmas.

The Events Officer commented that having a celebrity to switch on the lights worked well, but she stressed that if a celebrity could not be secured through personal connections and a payment has to be made, this could be quite costly. Suggestions of celebrities that are connected with this area were put forward and members agreed to start making initial enquiries.

A Councillor spoke of the need to spread the entertainment further afield next Christmas as the shops at the top end of London Road had not had the benefit of additional customers as the main event was held at the other end of town. The Events Officer confirmed that the organisation of the entertainment was started too late last year and stressed that planning for the event in 2006 needed to be started now.

It was suggested that the appointment of a representative from the Chamber of Commerce as a co-opted non-voting member of the Sub-Committee should be considered to ensure good liaison. It was AGREED that this should be included on the Agenda for the next meeting.

**45. LETTER FROM BOGNOR REGIS DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REQUESTING CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS EXPENSES INCURRED IN RESPECT OF THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON - COPIED TO SUB-COMMITTEE**

The letter from the Chamber of Commerce seeking a contribution from the Town Council towards the attendance of Santa Clause at the Christmas Lights Switch-on was noted. Members expressed their concern at this request and referred to the Notes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October. It had been clearly stated in the Notes that the Sub-Committee had no budget available to be able to contribute towards the Chamber's proposals. A letter had also been sent to the Chamber to that effect. The Events Officer advised that a further request for a contribution towards the cost of the posters that were displayed in the shops would also be submitted and spoke of the difficulties that the Chamber has getting financial backing from the retailers.

Members debated this issue in some detail and spoke for and against making a contribution. The need for better liaison between the Chamber and the Town Council was stressed so there could be no confusion in the future as to whom is responsible for what. Responsibilities needed to be clearly defined and it was suggested that the promotional side of the 2006 event should be the total responsibility of the Chamber and the Town Council would supply the entertainment and the lights. Following further discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Chamber should be advised of the Sub-Committee's concern at receiving their request particularly as they had been advised that there was no funding available however, as a goodwill gesture a contribution of £80.00 being half the cost of the invoice would be made. It was further **RESOLVED** that the Chamber should be advised that no further requests for contributions towards expenditure incurred for the 2005 event would be considered and they should also be notified of the Sub-Committee's view in connection with responsibility for the promotional side of the event for 2006.

Cllr. Mrs. Olliver abstained from voting and asked that this be recorded in the Minutes.

**46. CONSIDERATION OF WAY FORWARD FOR 2006**

It was noted that the 24<sup>th</sup> November was the date being recommended for switching on the lights in 2006. Members discussed this and felt that they would prefer to make it a week earlier and suggested that Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2006 be considered.

**47. TO CONFIRM RE-APPOINTMENT OF ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR**

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted (contracts) it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw. (SO.29.1)

Following a lengthy debate it was **RESOLVED** to write to the Town Council's electrical contractor advising that in view of the uncertainty at this time regarding the way forward for 2006 it would be necessary to give him notice to terminate his current contract.

It was further **RESOLVED** to seek quotations from Blachere and Leaderboard Sports (UK) Ltd. to supply and fit Christmas displays for 2006. Separate quotations for the electrical contract work and for supplying new displays up to the value of £8,000 should be requested.

(**NOTE:** in accordance with Best Value practice further appropriate quotations will be obtained).

The Sub-Committee noted that several aspects of the Christmas lights are currently carried out free of charge as part of Leaderboard's sponsorship. This includes maintenance of the pea lights in the trees in the High Street. Following some discussion, it was **AGREED** that a new specification should be prepared including the items currently done under sponsorship but excluding the lights in the High Street trees. These would be dealt with as a separate issue.

The need to ensure the level of testing of the wires and wall plates is to the same standard as that carried out previously by the current contractor was stressed.

**48. CORRESPONDENCE INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF LETTER OF COMPLAINT REGARDING CHANGE OF DATE**

The letter of complaint to the Visitor Information Centre in connection with the change of date for the 2005 switch-on was noted. Members expressed their apologies for any inconvenience caused but stressed that it clearly stated in the 2005 Visitor Guide listing of events that all information is subject to change and a telephone number had been listed to enable the public to obtain the latest information.

**49. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Arrangements would be made for a meeting on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2006 at 7.00pm subject to the availability of the Council Chamber.

*The meeting closed at 9.35pm.*