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| **Report No.**  **Appendix:**  **Agenda Item No. 2022-30** | **Council**  **Date of Meeting:** | |
| **OAKHAM TOWN COUNCIL** | | |
| **Report Author: Zoe Nealson** | | **Title: Events within Oakham** |
| **Subject: To discuss the annual tradition of turning on the Christmas lights** | | |
| **Strategic Aim.**  **2. Ensure that Oakham remains a viable and pleasant environment in which to live, work and play.**  **5. Promote the town as an attractive place to visit and stay.**  **6. Work with and in partnership with Rutland County Council and other partner groups.** | | |

The turning on of the Christmas lights is an annual tradition enjoyed up and down the country by many people and whilst in Oakham this has only ever been the Christmas tree because the lights hung in the streets are already on, it is still something that people living in Oakham enjoy seeing and want to be a part of. Whilst I was communications officer I received a lot of feedback from residents who wanted a light switch on even if it was just a small event with people gathered around the tree.

There has been talk on social media again this year with lots of people enquiring when the official turning on will be. Cllr Wadsworth has released a statement on Facebook saying that due to OTC being made up of volunteers their focus is on the Christmas extravaganza in Cutts Close on the 4th December and that it would be too difficult to run a switch on event concurrently with this. This is a valid point and completely understandable but has left many residents disappointed.

Oakham Late Night Shopping is taking place on Monday 12th December 2022. This is an event that is enjoyed by so many residents, it brings a lot of positivity to the town and has an extremely high attendance. Carolyn Acton Reed, who organises late night shopping, has offered to facilitate a ceremonial light switch on as part of her event. She would happily arrange for a choir to sing songs around the tree at 6.45pm before Rob Persani, local radio DJ, would say a few words and turn the tree on. All that would be required is for OTC to pass the details to Carolyn of how the switch can be turned on and off**.**

**Proposals**

1. **That Carolyn Acton Reed be given permission to host the Christmas tree lights turn on as part of late night shopping. This would mean she is given the information on how to turn the switch off and on and is allowed to advertise the light switch on as part of her event.**