

Report No. Appendix: Agenda Item:	Council Date of Meeting: 11th October 2023
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OAKHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Report Authors: Paul Buxton	Title: Christmas 2024-2027
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Subject Christmas Contractors

Strategic Aims:

- 1. Ensure that Oakham remains a viable and pleasant environment in which to live, work and play.**
- 2. Promote the town as an attractive place to visit and stay**

The contract with Christmas decorators terminates next January after 6 years. Given the cost quoted at the last meeting of around £30,000 last year, we are not getting value for money. With the floral display at least, we get some payback in terms of residents/visitor's pleasure at looking at them (many people according to Joyce) and making positive reports of our town to others. But we get very little payback from the Christmas decorations, which have been improved year by year despite the recent problems.

The lights are on from about 4pm to 12pm. In addition, it was hoped that, by improving the decorations, our own traders would benefit but it seems that, apart from a late-night shopping, most of the profits are going to outsiders and we are paying for their advertising.

Proposal:

I think we need to have a radical re-think of our Christmas decorations, events and spending and see if we can get more payback for our taxpayers and traders. Perhaps a new working group should be set up early to consider these points and get tenders out sooner rather than at the last minute, if we are even considering an outside contractor again.

