

Councillor Reports

Cllr Callaghan

Update - Tennis Club/Bowling Club Leases

Following full council approval to move forward with agreeing to 99-year leases for Oakham Tennis Club and Oakham Bowling club, progress is as follows:

1. A brief covering the re-writing of the leases, approved by our clerk, has been sent out to three legal firms. Quotes are now to be considered.
2. A brief and quotation request for a valuation of the land involved has been prepared and will be sent out to three RICS valuers for quote. As a reminder, this is to satisfy our legal obligations under section 123 of the Local Government Act

Update – relocation of OTC offices to Princess Avenue

Further to full council approval in principle to move to Princess Avenue based on using a Council owned premises and save on rent, subject to satisfactory surveys and building viability, this is the current position:

- A further visit is planned to put together a detailed list of the works required, to make the premises fit for use by Oakham Town Council and the community. The list will form the basis of a tender, to be sent out to a minimum of three contractors.
- Further to the quotation received from Councillor Ainsley in respect to the drains, a survey was carried out in 2024. It is believed that the findings of the report are still relevant, with the cost for repairs to be added to the overall refurbishment estimate.
- Rutland County Council have confirmed that OTC can utilise CIL money for the refurbishment, as we are planning on making the space available for community events.

Cllr Perry

Report of Oakham Town Centre Floral Displays Task and Finish Group

A Call for Expressions of Interest document has been drafted and is with the office for approval and posting on the relevant public procurement websites.

Cllr Perry has obtained copies of the previous contract with Wild Flower Limited and is using this as a basis to draft a full tender document for interested parties.

The pricing document will comprise

- a base document reflecting the existing types, numbers, locations and durations
- an option for a single winter/spring replanting on a per location basis
- an option to provide a watering service to Oakham in Bloom on a per week basis

Council will be asked to consider expanding the floral displays to include winter/spring planting and continuation of the provision of the watering service to Oakham in Bloom.

The standalone optional pricing for these services will allow Council to decide what, if any, additional provision is required. The actual quantities and types of display to include in the base price is being finalised and is likely to vary slightly between bid and placement of the order.

Council will be asked to agree to a “not to exceed” budget for the 27/28 budget period and to allow the task and finish group to finalise the details of the services within that budget envelope,

The draft tender document and the build-up to the requested budget will be presented to Council for approval at the Full Meeting in November.

Assuming that the Call for Expressions of Interest is published in time, a list of bidders will also be presented to Council for approval at that meeting.

Cllr Brookes

Update on Christmas Lights Display Contract & Events Working Group Meeting Report

1. Summary

This report outlines the outcome of the recent Events Working Group meeting held with representatives from the Christmas Light contracting company, attended by two of their new staff members and recorded by Liz, our temp admin. Despite settling the outstanding April invoice, negotiations with the contractor remain unresolved. The contractor would like an additional £8,000 in spending, but has explicitly stated they are unable to provide an itemised breakdown for this extra cost. It is therefore recommended that the Council reject any additional expenditure and enforce adherence to the existing contract terms.

2. Background & Meeting Overview

A formal meeting was convened between the Events Working Group, two new staff members from Christmas Light company to discuss logistics, proposed improvements, and contractual obligations for the upcoming 2026 Christmas display.

Key Points from the Meeting:

Meeting Dynamics: The meeting was lengthy, challenging, and unproductive.

Retracted Proposals: While the two representatives from the contractor initially offered suggestions aimed at improving this year’s display, the majority of these proposals were retracted almost immediately by them during the discussion.

Corporate Scale vs. Performance: Notably, the contractor operates as part of a major global enterprise comprising 27 subsidiary companies, making their lack of operational clarity and administrative transparency particularly concerning.

3. Post-Meeting Correspondence & Financial Matters

Following the meeting, further attempts were made to resolve outstanding operational and financial issues via correspondence.

1. Outstanding April Invoice Paid: The Council fulfilled its financial obligations by settling the

disputed April invoice in full to establish a clean slate for negotiations.

2. Additional Funding Request (£8,000): The contractor requested an additional sum of £8,000 for the 2026 display.

3. Lack of Itemisation: Despite direct requests, the company confirmed that it cannot provide an itemised list detailing what the extra £8,000 would cover.

4. Current Contract Performance: The contractor has conceded that the current display under the existing contract terms "could be better," yet has failed to provide a viable or transparent mechanism to implement improvements.

4. Key Considerations & Risks

- Financial Risk: Authorising an additional £8,000 without an itemised breakdown or clear scope of work violates sound public financial management and procurement guidelines.

- Contractual Standing: The Council is under no legal obligation to grant additional funds beyond the agreed contract value.

- Resolution Deficit: Written correspondence following the meeting has failed to resolve key operational friction points.

5. Formal Recommendations

The Events Working Group presents the following recommendations to the Full Council for resolution:

1. Refuse Extra Spend: Do not authorise the payment of the requested extra £8,000 due to the contractor's failure to provide an itemised cost breakdown.

2. Enforce Existing Contract: Instruct officers to hold the contractor strictly to the deliverables, timelines, and specifications agreed upon in the current active contract.

3. Formal Notice to Contractor: Issue formal written notification to the contractor advising them that the Council expects full compliance with existing contractual obligations for the 2026 display without further delay or additional fees.