

**BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 18TH AUGUST 2020**

LJ/2020

6th August 2020

REPORT TO TOWN COUNCILLORS

AGENDA ITEM 9 – CHRISTMAS LIGHTING UP NIGHT

AIM

1. *To consider the format of the Christmas Lighting Up event in light of Covid-19.*

BACKGROUND

2. This year's Christmas Lighting Up Night is scheduled to take place on Friday 20th November from 4pm – 8pm in Bridgnorth High Street. This event is extremely popular and brings many people into the town as the lights are switched on, amongst family entertainment, market stalls and attractions.

DISCUSSION/ COMMENT

3. Covid-19 has had a large impact on the organisation of events taking place as they encourage gatherings which have not been permitted during lockdown.
4. The current government guidelines suggest that large gatherings, held in a Covid-secure manner, may be permitted from 1st October with distancing measures still in place subject to a reliable scientific understanding of the impact of reopening schools on the epidemic.
5. The Christmas Lighting Up Night in Bridgnorth traditionally sees well over a thousand visitors brought to the High Street.
6. The stage area at Northgate becomes highly populated around the time that the lights are switched on (approx. 6pm).
7. The Christmas Lighting contract has already been agreed and a licence applied for to erect the lighting throughout the town in early November.
8. Planning for the usual style event (inviting traders and entertainment) will normally have begun by now.

9. It is considered that an early acknowledgement that there will be no usual show associated with this year's light switch-on is useful in managing expectations. While the news might be disappointing for some many; making plans now that then have to be cancelled at less than a few weeks or days' notice is likely to be worse.

RECOMMENDATION(s)

10. It is recommended that the Town Council RESOLVES that:

It would be prudent at this time to not plan for any particular event to accompany the Christmas lights switch-on.

HOWEVER,

It asks that the Christmas and Events Working Party continue to monitor the situation (regarding social distancing) and where possible look to deliver some form of low attendance event to signify the switching on of the Christmas Lights.



Lee Jakeman
Town Clerk