



Tuesday, 10 February 2026

Report of Councillor Paul Stokes,
Deputy Leader of the Council and
Cabinet Member for Leisure and
Culture

Award of Contract - Christmas Lights in Grantham

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To approve the award of contract to the preferred supplier for the provision of Christmas lights in Grantham for five years.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to approve the contract award for the Christmas lights in Grantham to Gala Lights Ltd at a cost of £56,720 per annum for a period of three years with the option to extend for a further two years.

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting Communities Enabling Economic Opportunities
Which wards are impacted?	Grantham Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The Council's previous contract to provide Christmas lights in Grantham town centre has expired. In line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules a procurement exercise has been undertaken to identify a preferred supplier for Christmas 2026 and beyond.
- 1.2 The award of a contract to the preferred supplier will ensure that there is a formal contract in place for a period of three years with the potential to extend for a further two years. The contract provides an option to increase or extend the lighting provision should this be required.
- 1.3 As a Special Expense Area (SEA) Grantham taxpayers directly pay for services delivered to the parish by South Kesteven District Council. The costs identified in this report will be charged to the SEA.

Completed by: David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance

Procurement

- 1.4 A compliant procurement process has been followed to identify a preferred supplier for the provision of Christmas lights in Grantham. The process has been supported by Welland Procurement and conducted in accordance with best practice and the Procurement Act 2023 to ensure that the principles of transparency, equity and fairness have been adhered to.
- 1.5 Should the recommendation within this report be supported a formal contract will be awarded as the necessary standstill period has expired.

Completed by: Helen Baldwin (Procurement Lead)

Legal and Governance

- 1.6 A compliant procurement exercise has been undertaken, and the recommended action is in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Health and Safety

- 1.7 Under the proposed contract arrangements, the preferred supplier is required to ensure that the installation of lights is carried out safely and in accordance with health and safety regulations and guidance. All safe systems of work and Risk assessments relating to the works will be provided by the contractor and reviewed to ensure suitability of risk mitigation prior to works commencing.
- 1.8 As part of the arrangements the Council is responsible for arranging an independent contractor to inspect the lighting columns in Grantham town centre on an annual basis to ensure that the lights can be safely installed.

Completed by: Philip Swinton, Head of Health, Safety, Compliance and Emergency Planning

Climate Change

- 1.9 The preferred supplier aims to operate as a carbon neutral company since 2025. 100% of the lights used are manufactured in-house and include energy efficient LEDs. As well as producing a financial saving in terms of energy use, the use of LED lights also reduces the amount of electricity used, contributing to the Council's carbon efficiency target.
- 1.10 Gala Lights use low-carbon aluminium which is made from 60% recycled materials. At the end of their life the lights are crushed and recycled.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan (2024 – 2027) identifies Connecting Communities and Enabling Economic Opportunities as key priorities. This includes the Council's ambitions to promote the district as an attractive place to visit, work, invest, study and do business, and to maintain and strengthen the relationships with the business community to understand and support their needs and aspirations.
- 2.2 Historically South Kesteven District Council have been responsible for the provision of Christmas lights in Grantham. In the absence of a town council, this expenditure and that associated with the Christmas light switch event, has been funded from the Grantham Special Expense Area (SEA) budget. In May 2024, following a governance review, Grantham Town Council was re-established. However, there are no plans currently to transfer the responsibility for the Christmas lights and event.
- 2.3 In 2023 the Council entered a three-year contract with Gala Lights for the provision of Christmas lights in Grantham town centre. The resulting improvement in the

Christmas lights has been received very positively by both residents and the retail sector alike.

- 2.4. Due to the contract coming to an end an open tender opportunity was launched in October 2025 to identify a preferred supplier for Grantham's Christmas lights from Christmas 2026. The contract opportunity was for a three-year period with the option to extend for a further two years.
- 2.5. A total of four companies tendered for the opportunity on the basis of a hire, installation and storage package.
- 2.6. The tenders were subsequently evaluated with 60% of the available score being awarded for quality and 40% relating to price. Welland Procurement supported the evaluation of the tenders and the moderation of scoring.
- 2.7. Following evaluation Gala Lights have been identified as the preferred supplier. Their tender response provides for a wide range of interventions including:
 - Street lighting motifs
 - Across street banners
 - Wall decorations on St Peter's Hill and Guildhall Street
 - Hanging tree motifs for St Peter's Hill
 - Lighting the Council offices and Guildhall Arts Centre
 - String lights in various locations
 - Artificial lit Christmas trees mounted on buildings.
- 2.8. A copy of the presentation provided by Gala Lights to support their tender response is attached to this report at **Appendix One**. This provides a visual representation of a range of lights which can be installed with the final designs to be agreed by the Council upon the award of contract.
- 2.9. The mounting of motifs on lighting columns requires the permission of Lincolnshire County Council. This has been granted subject to each streetlight being inspected annually to ensure it can safely withstand the additional weight. The surveys are carried out annually..
- 2.10. It is proposed the lighting installations will be complemented by the usual large Christmas tree being installed in the Marketplace. This will continue to be supplied by the Council but decorated by Gala Lights under the proposed contract arrangement.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. A compliant tender exercise has been undertaken to identify a preferred supplier to ensure the continuation of an attractive festive lighting display in Grantham. The

proposed contract is for a period of three years with the option to extend for a further two years.

- 3.2. Should Grantham Town Council wish to take on the responsibility for the provision of the Christmas lights then it is possible to novate the contract to them. They would then become responsible for honouring the remaining term of the agreement.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. The Council has an option to purchase Christmas lights rather than hire them. However, the cost of purchase would be significant, and additional costs would be incurred in relation to the installation, storage and ongoing repair and maintenance.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. A compliant procurement exercise has been undertaken to identify a preferred supplier for the provision of Christmas lights in Grantham. Following the expiry of the appropriate standstill period the contract needs to be formally awarded.

6. Appendices

- 6.1. **Appendix One** – Gala Lights Presentation.