



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## Officer Delegated Decision

11 March 2026

Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive  
and s151 Officer

# Allocation of Funds from the Grantham Special Expense Reserve for Grantham Christmas Celebrations

### Contact

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place

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|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Decision made by:</b>      | Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer   |
| <b>Decision:</b>              | To release the sum of £33,615 from the Grantham Special Expense Reserve to provide an increased level of funding to provide celebratory Christmas events in Grantham for 2026.  |
| <b>Public or Exempt:</b>      | Public  |
| <b>Reasons for exemption:</b> | Not applicable  |
| <b>Conflicts of interest:</b> | No  |
| <b>Policy compliant:</b>      | Yes   |
| <b>Details of delegation:</b> | <p>The Deputy Chief Executive has a delegation within the Council's Financial Regulations to use General Fund reserves to fund one off expenditure.</p> <p><b>Approval to use General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Reserves with the exception of the relevant Working Balances</b></p> <p>Accessing reserves to fund specific one-off expenditure can be agreed by the Chief Finance Officer or Cabinet Member, dependant on the amount.</p> |

## 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**

- 1.1 The Grantham Special Expense Budget has an existing allocation of £5,000 to provide a light switch on event in Grantham. This level of funding is currently insufficient to provide an artistic programme of events. In addition, the Grantham Special Expense Budget does not include any funding to support the purchase of a Christmas tree for Grantham Marketplace. The proposed increase is £33,615 for 2026/27 which will extend the Christmas offer including events, additional lighting and a Christmas Tree for the Marketplace. A budget proposal will need to be submitted for 2027/28 if the increased funding level is required.

**Financial Implications reviewed by: *Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer***

### **Legal and Governance**

- 1.2 There are no legal and governance implications arising from this report. The Deputy Chief Executive has a delegation within the Council's Financial Regulations to use General Fund reserves to fund one-off expenditure. As the proposed increase is £33,615 the Chief Finance Officer can approve this.

Governance Implications reviewed by: *James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

## 2. The Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 This report provides details of an allocation of funding from the Grantham Special Expense Reserve to support the annual Christmas light switch on event in Grantham for Christmas 2026.

## 3. Available Options Considered

- 3.1 **Option 1** – to increase the budget for the Christmas light switch on event by £33,615 to a total allocation of £38,615. The additional funding will provide:

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Total budget for Christmas light switch on event | £25,000 |
| Christmas tree for the Market Place              | £2,000  |
| Additions to Christmas lighting scheme           | £8,315  |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Infrastructure required for lighting columns | £2,800         |
| Additional safety checks on lighting columns | £500           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                 | <b>£38,615</b> |

3.2 **Option 2** – to maintain the budget for the Christmas light switch on event at £5,000, reducing the level of activity accordingly and not to enhance the Christmas light display or provide a Christmas tree for the Marketplace.

#### 4. Preferred Option

4.1 **Option 1** – to increase the budget by £33,615 to provide a total funding allocation of £38,615 for Christmas celebrations in Grantham in 2026.

#### 5. Reasons for the Decision(s)

5.1 Historically, in the absence of a Town Council for Grantham, the Council has been responsible for the provision of the festive lighting display and associated light switch on event. Following a governance review in May 2024 Grantham Town Council was re-established. However, currently there are no plans to transfer this responsibility to them.

5.2 In 2023 the provision of Christmas lights was outsourced to an external provider and the arrangements for the event increased significantly. This included the introduction of an events programme to support the market and fair that had previously been provided.

5.3 The enhanced light switch on events held in 2024 and 2025 attracted significant numbers of visitors, subsequently the Council has received positive feedback from residents and retailers. This has built an expectation that the same level of event will be provided to support the light switch on event planned for 29 November 2026.

5.4 Through the recent procurement exercise to provide Christmas lights in Grantham there is an opportunity to increase the number of lights provided and the area covered. This will provide an enhanced experience for residents and visitors during the Christmas retail period.

Signed by: **Richard Wyles**

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Dated: **11 March 2026**