

Briefing note

Directorate: Environment, Housing and Regeneration (EHR)
Recipients: Local Committee Carshalton and Clockhouse
From: LB Sutton Christmas Lights Project Team, Senior Responsible Officer, Warren Shadbolt
Subject: Christmas lights commissioning approach
Date: 25 April 2017



Summary

To provide a note to Local Committees on the planned commissioning approach to Christmas Lights in Sutton from 2017 and beyond.

Background

Christmas lights activity delivered by the Council has grown in complexity and cost. Many of the lighting systems are old and becoming unserviceable. We are currently coming to the end of contract and the present level of spend will exceed OJEU threshold levels, requiring a formal procurement process to be run. This will be an opportunity to retest the market for cost and quality purposes.

Staff resource to manage the current service is shrinking and the current system is no longer sustainable. A move towards greater standardisation and use of a contractor's services will assist.

Following discussions with Chairs and Vice Chairs of Local Committees it has been agreed to not spend more than last year on Christmas Lights and Local Committees have agreed to allocate the no more than the same spend for this year.

Commissioning for 2017 and beyond

Christmas lights will continue to be funded through the Local Committee public realm funding while a borough wide service continues to be commissioned. This approach will achieve benefits from consistent, safe delivery and economies of scale.

It is anticipated that a planned and agreed contract, with a more consistent delivery and administration process should result in a more efficient and cost effective service. However this may result in some loss of freedom in determining designs and total quantity of lighting systems available.

Commissioning principles:

- Christmas lights commissioning is an operational activity within officer delegated powers with views and agreement in relation to allocation of public realm funding from Local Committees.
- A 5 year contract term will result in the contractor being able to discount capital costs over 5 years which will result in better value.
- The new commission will be based on 2016 lighting locations and incorporate additional lots to secure quotes for Local Committee owned systems and tree lights - all lighting activity and servicing will be brought into the one contract as the current mixed economy model is not sustainable nor compliant. It may be possible to vary locations to some degree within the terms of the contract, but not substantially increase the number of systems.
- Due to the loading implications on lamp columns, the industry standard maximum size of 2 x 1m will be adopted for all motifs, while a design choice for each area can be made at each contract renewal as part of a standard contract. Any further significant variations to design schemes, or locations, would increase contracted costs beyond the agreed funding limit.

Financial

Local Committees have allocated similar spend to 2016 for 2017 (£114,000). This amount will be the maximum annual sum within the 5 year contract for the general service. It should be noted that additional costs for Local Committee lights outside of the standard contract e.g. tree lights and lights owned by a Local Committee will be costed as part of the soft market testing for the new contract and would be in addition to the amounts already allocated by Local Committees.

Next steps:

- Officers to proceed with an OJEU procurement process for a 5 year contract from 2017 on the basis outlined above.
- Officers to communicate progress and outcome with Local Committee representatives.