Broadstone Christmas Lights Upgrade

Feasibility Study

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This feasibility study considers whether Broadstone Town Council should invest in upgrading the Christmas lights along the Broadway section of Lower Blandford Road, from Broadstone roundabout to the junction with Ridgeway, in preparation for the 2026 festive season. The study has been prepared in response to the recognised importance of the Christmas lights to the town centre, both as a visible expression of community pride and as part of the wider festive offer that supports local businesses, community activity and seasonal footfall. The scope of the study is limited to the installation of lighting motifs on existing streetlighting infrastructure along the Broadway; it does not include further upgrades to the roundabout, Dunyeats Road or Station Approach.

The report assesses the feasibility of delivering an improved lighting scheme against three main criteria: economic feasibility within the current £3,000 precept provision, technical feasibility including procurement, installation, testing and compliance requirements, and the wider economic and community benefits of improving the festive display. The assessment recognises that any scheme must be capable of delivery before the anticipated switch-on event in early December 2026, and that successful delivery will depend on the suitability of existing streetlighting columns, the availability of compatible power supplies, and timely liaison with BCP Council regarding permissions, infrastructure and compliance documentation.

Five options are considered. Option 1, Do Nothing, avoids immediate expenditure and reduces short-term procurement and delivery risk, but does not address the risk of existing lights becoming dated, unreliable or less attractive when compared with neighbouring areas. Option 2, Do Minimum, uses donated lighting assets from another parish council and offers a low-cost opportunity to make visible improvements in 2026, although it depends on the condition, suitability, testing and certification of those assets. Option 3 involves the Council purchasing its own lights and contracting separately for installation and maintenance, giving the Council greater control but creating asset ownership, storage, maintenance and replacement responsibilities. Option 4 is a full rental turnkey service delivered by a specialist contractor, offering the strongest professional delivery model but at the highest cost. Option 5 proposes a phased hybrid approach, beginning with Option 2 in 2026 and progressing toward Option 4 once infrastructure, permissions and budget implications are better understood.

The financial appraisal shows a significant difference between the options. Option 1 has no initial or annual cost but offers no improvement. Option 2 has the lowest identifiable initial cost, currently estimated at £250, and no stated annual cost, making it the only option clearly capable of being explored within the current £3,000 budget. However, this figure should be treated cautiously because inspection, transport, repairs, adaptation, installation, storage or insurance costs may still arise. Option 3 has an estimated initial cost of £8,500–£11,500 and annual costs of £4,400–£6,500, reflecting the purchase of ex-hire motifs, installation, administration, testing and storage. Option 4 has an estimated initial cost of £10,000–£14,000 and annual costs of £4,400–£6,500, reflecting hire, installation and service costs. For both Options 3 and 4, infrastructure work by BCP Council remains to be confirmed and represents a key financial uncertainty.

The risk analysis identifies technical, financial and reputational risks across the options. Option 1 carries limited immediate financial risk but creates a high likelihood of reputational risk if Broadstone's display appears dated or inadequate, and a medium technical risk if existing lights deteriorate or fail. Option 2 is financially attractive but carries a medium likelihood and high severity technical risk if donated assets prove unsuitable or fail inspection. Option 3 creates the greatest ownership burden for the Council, with high technical risk around infrastructure suitability and high financial likelihood associated with storage, repair and replacement responsibilities. Option 4 reduces operational and technical delivery risk by using a specialist provider, but the financial risk is high because contract costs may exceed available budget or increase in future years.

The evaluation concludes that no single option fully satisfies the Council's immediate budget constraint, 2026 delivery timetable and longer-term aspiration for a higher-quality festive display. Option 1 is affordable but does not meet the strategic objective of improvement. Option 2 offers the most realistic short-term route because it allows progress within the current financial year, provided the donated lights are safe, compatible and cost-effective to deploy. Option 3 provides control but is financially and operationally demanding. Option 4 is the strongest long-term service model because it offers professional design, installation, maintenance and removal, but it requires further budget planning, infrastructure preparation and liaison with BCP Council before it can be delivered with confidence.

The recommended approach is therefore a phased hybrid route. Full Council is asked to approve Option 2 as the basis for a limited and controlled 2026 installation, subject to donated lighting assets being inspected, electrically tested and confirmed as suitable for the relevant streetlighting infrastructure. Expenditure should be capped within the approved budget unless Full Council agrees otherwise, and any costs associated with transport, repairs, testing, installation, removal, storage or insurance should be identified before final commitment.

In parallel, the Council should authorise early liaison with BCP Council and a technical review of the Broadway infrastructure to confirm column suitability, power availability, permissions, compliance requirements and any ancillary electrical works needed. This information will reduce uncertainty and form the basis of any future procurement specification. Beyond 2026, full Council should agree in principle that Option 4 is developed as the preferred long-term model, with a further report brought back once infrastructure requirements, budget implications, procurement options and lessons from the 2026 installation have been established. This staged approach balances ambition with prudence, enabling Broadstone to improve its festive display in the short term while preparing responsibly for a more reliable, attractive and professionally managed Christmas lighting scheme in future years.

The recommended decision for Full Council is therefore threefold:

1. To approve Option 2 as the basis for a limited and controlled 2026 installation, subject to safety, suitability, cost and permissions being confirmed;
2. To authorise the technical assessment, BCP liaison, financial controls and governance arrangements needed to deliver that interim scheme responsibly;

3. To agree that Option 4 should be developed as the preferred long-term model, with a further report brought back once infrastructure requirements, budget implications, procurement options and lessons from the 2026 installation have been established.

INTRODUCTION

Background and Strategic Need

Historically the residents of Broadstone have enjoyed the Christmas lights along the highstreet and surrounding areas. At one point these also included lighting motifs on the lamp posts which were supported by the then Poole Borough Council. Since the borough council was merged with Bournemouth and Christchurch and prior to the pandemic in 2020, Christmas lights have been a community managed and funded initiative.

The Christmas lights bring a much-welcomed festive atmosphere the Broadway and encourage both residents and those from further afield to visit Broadstone during Christmas. This benefits local businesses bringing much needed commerce to our highstreet. Along with the switch on, markets and other festive activities, the Christmas lights provide an attraction upon which Broadstone businesses are both proud of and dependent on.

Study Objectives and Scope

This report will appraise the feasibility of investing funds from the town council precept in upgrading the existing Christmas lights in preparation for the 2026 festive season, further enhancing the festive atmosphere they create and bringing benefit to the Broadway. This feasibility will focus solely on the installation of lighting motifs onto existing streetlighting infrastructure along the Broadway portion of Lower Blandford Road from Broadstone roundabout to the junction of Ridgeway. It shall not consider further upgrades to the roundabout, Dunyeats Road or Station Approach where the lighting decorations will remain as per previous years.

Approach and Assessment Criteria

To ascertain the feasibility of delivering Christmas lights upgrades ready for the 2026 Christmas period, this feasibility will focus on three outcomes;

I. The economic feasibility of upgrading the Christmas lights based on the assumption that £3000 has been budgeted within the current year's precept.
II. The technical feasibility of procuring the lighting motifs and ancillary equipment, the logistics of installing and testing the lighting infrastructure in time of the estimated switch on event which is likely to be the first weekend in December 2026 and compiling the submitting the necessary paperwork to stakeholders to ensure compliance of the installation.
III. The economic benefits of delivering the installation within the budget provided and within the timescales proposed against other options that will be considered.

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The options appraisal assesses the principal delivery routes available to the Council for improving the festive lighting scheme along the Broadway. Each option has been considered against its likely deliverability, financial implications, operational requirements, technical dependencies and contribution to the Council's objective of enhancing the town centre during the 2026 festive period.

1. Option 1 – Do Nothing
2. Option 2 – Do Minimum using donated lighting assets
3. Option 3 – Purchase lighting motifs and procure separate contractor installation
4. Option 4 – Full rental turnkey service
5. Option 5 – Phased hybrid approach, commencing with Option 2 progressing toward Option 4

Option 1 – Do Nothing

This option would retain the existing Christmas lighting arrangements and make no additional investment in lighting motifs along the Broadway for the 2026 festive season. This option represents the baseline position against which the alternative options are assessed. It would require no additional procurement, no new installation arrangements and no immediate capital expenditure beyond any existing commitments.

The principal benefit of this option is financial certainty. By retaining the current arrangements, the Council would avoid additional capital expenditure, procurement activity, installation costs, storage requirements and project management obligations. This may be considered advantageous where the Council wishes to preserve limited budget provision for other priorities or avoid committing resources before the infrastructure position has been confirmed.

This option also avoids short-term delivery risk. No new supplier engagement, contractor appointment, electrical testing programme or stakeholder approval process would be required. As a result, the Council would not be exposed to procurement delays, supply chain issues or additional installation risks for 2026.

However, the option does not address the strategic objective of improving the festive offer on the Broadway. The existing display may continue to age, and any deterioration in reliability or appearance could reduce the visual impact of the Christmas lights during the main trading period. This creates a reputational risk if the town centre is perceived to be less attractive or less well maintained than neighbouring areas.

The overall assessment is that Option 1 is deliverable and financially low risk in the short term, but it provides no improvement to the festive lighting scheme and does not support the wider economic and civic objectives identified in this study.

Option 2 – Do Minimum

Option 2 would make use of donated lighting assets from another parish council as a limited and cost-controlled enhancement to the existing Christmas lights. This option is intended to provide a practical interim solution for the 2026 festive season, subject to the donated motifs being confirmed as safe, compatible and visually appropriate for installation on the Broadway.

The principal benefit of this option is that it offers the lowest-cost route to making a visible improvement in 2026. Because the lighting assets would be donated, the Council would avoid the significant capital cost associated with purchasing new motifs or entering immediately into a comprehensive rental contract. This makes the option particularly relevant given the current £3,000 budget provision.

The option also supports a proportionate and sustainable approach to asset use. Reusing serviceable lighting equipment would extend the useful life of existing products and reduce the need for new manufacture. It would also allow the Council to test the practical implications of expanding the display before committing to a more comprehensive long-term model.

The main constraint is that the suitability of the donated assets is not yet confirmed. The motifs would need to be inspected, electrically tested and assessed for compatibility with the relevant streetlighting infrastructure. Additional costs may arise for transport, repair, adaptation, certification, installation, removal, storage or insurance. If those costs become material, the apparent financial advantage of this option would reduce.

There is also a presentation and reliability risk. Donated equipment may be older, inconsistent in design or more prone to failure than a new or contractor-managed scheme. If the visual quality is inconsistent, or if the lights fail during the festive period, the Council could face reputational risk despite having adopted a low-cost approach.

The overall assessment is that Option 2 is the most deliverable short-term option, provided strict conditions are applied before installation. It should be treated as a controlled interim measure for 2026, not as a permanent solution. It is suitable only where the donated assets pass inspection, can be installed safely and can be delivered within the approved budget.

Option 3 – Purchase of lights installed by contractor

This option would involve the Council purchasing its own lighting motifs as capital assets and separately procuring a contractor to undertake annual installation, removal, testing and maintenance. Under this model, the Council would retain ownership of the lighting stock and would be responsible for its storage, condition, future replacement and ongoing management.

The principal benefit of this option is control. Ownership of the motifs would allow the Council to determine the design, specification and future development of the festive lighting scheme. It would also

allow future procurement to focus on installation and maintenance services rather than the annual hire of lighting equipment.

The option may offer value over a longer period if the assets remain serviceable and if storage, maintenance and replacement costs are managed effectively. It may also provide flexibility to expand or refresh the display incrementally as budgets allow.

However, Option 3 creates substantial technical and operational obligations for the Council. The Council would need to arrange secure storage, maintain an asset register, manage periodic inspection and testing, commission repairs, procure installation services and ensure that all relevant compliance documentation is obtained each year. The Council would also retain the risk of asset failure, obsolescence or damage outside the scope of any installation contract.

The overall assessment is that Option 3 could provide long-term control, but it is unlikely to be suitable as the preferred route for 2026 because of its higher initial cost, infrastructure uncertainty and ongoing asset-management burden. It would require a more substantial budget allocation and greater organisational capacity than is currently assumed within the feasibility study.

Option 4 – Full Rental Turnkey

Option 4 would procure a specialist contractor to provide a full rental turnkey service, including the design, supply, installation, maintenance and removal of lighting motifs. This model would deliver the Christmas lighting scheme as a managed service rather than through Council ownership of the assets.

The principal benefit of this option is the transfer of operational responsibility to a suitably qualified provider. A specialist contractor would normally provide professional design advice, certified installation, maintenance support, replacement equipment where required, removal services, risk assessments and relevant compliance documentation. This would reduce the Council's direct operational burden and provide a clearer allocation of responsibility during the festive period.

This option would also provide access to modern and professionally maintained lighting stock without the Council needing to purchase and store its own equipment. It would support a more consistent presentation across the town centre and allow the display to be refreshed periodically through the contractor arrangement.

The main constraint is cost. The financial appraisal indicates that the initial and recurring annual costs of a managed service are significantly higher than the current budget provision. The Council would also need to complete infrastructure checks, agree permissions with BCP Council and undertake an appropriate procurement process before this option could be implemented with confidence.

There is also a dependency on contractor availability and the terms of any service agreement. The Council may have less flexibility over installation dates, removal dates or design changes once

contractual arrangements are in place, and rental payments would not result in the Council owning lighting assets at the end of the contract period.

The overall assessment is that Option 4 provides the most robust long-term delivery model, particularly where the Council wishes to minimise operational risk and secure a higher-quality, professionally managed display.

Option 5 - Hybrid Approach – Phased Progression from Option 2 to Option 4

Option 5 would adopt a phased hybrid approach by using Option 2 as a controlled interim measure for 2026, before progressing toward Option 4 once the necessary infrastructure, permissions, procurement specification and budget planning have been completed. This option is designed to balance short-term deliverability with the Council's longer-term objective of securing a reliable and professionally managed festive lighting scheme.

The principal benefit of this option is that it allows visible progress to be made in 2026 without requiring the Council to commit prematurely to a high-cost managed service. Donated lighting assets could be used where they are safe, suitable and affordable, while the 2026 installation would provide evidence on installation logistics, maintenance requirements, public response, visual impact and actual delivery costs.

The phased approach would also create the time required to address the principal technical dependencies. In particular, the Council would be able to assess the suitability of existing streetlighting columns, confirm power supply requirements, identify any enabling works, and liaise with BCP Council regarding permissions, attachments to highway assets, insurance responsibilities and compliance documentation. This would provide a stronger basis for any future procurement of a managed service.

The overall assessment is that Option 5 is the most balanced option. It provides a practical route for 2026, protects the Council from premature long-term financial commitment, and establishes a structured pathway toward Option 4 once the technical and financial uncertainties have been resolved.

FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

This financial appraisal provides an indicative comparison of the likely costs associated with each option considered in the feasibility study. The figures are intended to support decision-making by identifying the relative scale of investment required, distinguishing between initial capital costs and recurring annual costs, and highlighting areas where further information is required before a final commitment can be made.

The costs have been prepared on a consistent basis across the options, using indicative pricing for ten lamp post columns along the Broadway from the roundabout to the entrance of Ridgeway. For the purposes of this appraisal, it is assumed that the lamp posts are of broadly similar construction and have comparable access requirements. Costs are presented as ranges where appropriate because formal quotations have not yet been obtained and actual prices may vary once contractors, suppliers or BCP Council provide confirmed information. All figures exclude VAT. In addition, the cost of any infrastructure works required to ensure compatible power supplies to the relevant lamp post columns remains to be confirmed, as detailed information from BCP Council has not yet been available. This should be treated as a key financial uncertainty when comparing the options.

Option 1

Item	Initial Cost	Annual Cost
Do Nothing	**£0**	**£0**

Option 2

Item	Initial Cost	Annual Cost
Donation to Wilton Parish Council	**£250**	**£0**
Inspections and Testing	**£0**	**£50**

Option 3

Item	Initial Cost	Annual Cost
Purchase of 10x Ex-hire light motifs	£1,500 - £2,500	£0
Installation of sockets and other ancillary electrical infrastructure	£7,000 – £9,000	£0
Installation of light motifs	£0	£2,000 - £3,000
Council Administration fee	£0	£440
Lights PAT Test	£0	£50
Storage of 10 Motifs	£0	£2,000 - £3,000
Infrastructure work by BCP	TBC	£0
TOTAL	**£8,500 - £11,500**	**£4,400 - £6,500**

Option 4

Item	Initial Cost	Annual Cost
Hire	£3,000 - £5000	£0
Installation of sockets and other ancillary electrical infrastructure	£7,000 – £9000	£0

Installation of lights	£0	£2,000 - £3,000
Council Administration fee	£0	£440
Lights PAT Test	£0	£50
Storage of 10 Motifs	£0	£2,000 - £3,000
Infrastructure work by BCP	TBC	£0
TOTAL	**£10,000 - £14,000**	**£4,400 - £6,500**

RISK ANALYSIS

Risk analysis is a key part of the feasibility assessment because it considers not only whether each option can be delivered, but also the potential consequences if assumptions prove incorrect or implementation does not proceed as planned. For this project, risk should be considered in the context of the Council's budget, the proposed 2026 delivery timescale, the dependency on existing streetlighting infrastructure, the need for liaison with BCP Council, and the importance of maintaining public confidence in the town's festive offer.

The main project risks fall into three broad categories. Technical risks relate to the suitability of lighting columns, electrical supplies, testing, certification, safe installation and the reliability of the lights during the festive period. Financial risks include the potential for costs to exceed the current budget, the risk of hidden expenditure such as storage, repairs or enabling works, and the possibility that annual costs become difficult to sustain. Reputational risks arise where the public, businesses or partner organisations perceive the Council to have failed to invest appropriately, delivered a poor-quality display, or undertaken work without sufficient planning and coordination.

The assessment below uses a simple low, medium and high rating to compare the likelihood and severity of the principal risks for each option. These ratings are indicative and should be reviewed once detailed quotations, infrastructure surveys, permissions and contractor proposals have been obtained. In general terms, Option 1 carries lower delivery risk but higher reputational and strategic risk; Option 2 reduces immediate financial exposure but relies heavily on the quality and suitability of donated assets; Option 3 gives the Council more control but increases ownership and maintenance obligations; and Option 4 transfers a greater proportion of delivery risk to a specialist contractor, although at a higher financial cost.

Table 1 - Assessment of risks for each option.

Option	Risk	Risk Type	Likelihood	Severity
Option 1 – Do Nothing	Existing lights deteriorate or fail during the festive period.	Technical	Medium	Medium
Option 1 – Do Nothing	Town centre display appears dated or inadequate compared with neighbouring areas.	Reputational	High	Medium
Option 2 – Do Minimum	Donated lighting assets are unsuitable, damaged or fail inspection.	Technical	Medium	High

Option 2 – Do Minimum	Additional testing, repair, adaptation, transport or installation costs exceed the assumed low-cost approach.	Financial	Medium	Medium
Option 3 – Purchase Decorations	Infrastructure works, column suitability checks or electrical upgrades are more complex than anticipated.	Technical	High	High
Option 3 – Purchase Decorations	Council assumes ongoing ownership responsibilities including storage, maintenance, repair and replacement.	Financial	High	Medium
Option 4 – Outsourced Service	Annual contract costs exceed available budget or increase in future years.	Financial	High	High
Option 4 – Outsourced Service	Contractor availability, procurement timescales or BCP permissions delay delivery.	Technical	Medium	High

The table indicates that the lowest-cost options are not necessarily the lowest-risk options. Option 1 avoids immediate expenditure but exposes the Council to a higher risk of public dissatisfaction and missed economic opportunity. Option 2 provides a pragmatic interim solution but depends on the condition, compatibility and certification of donated equipment. Option 3 may offer long-term control but places the greatest ownership and asset-management burden on the Council. Option 4 has the highest financial exposure, but it also provides the clearest route to transferring operational and technical delivery risk to a specialist provider, provided that procurement and BCP liaison are commenced early enough.

EVALUATION

The risk table shows that each option carries a different balance of technical, financial and reputational risk. Option 1 has limited immediate financial risk, but it carries a medium technical risk if existing lights deteriorate or fail and a high likelihood reputational risk if Broadstone's festive display appears dated or inadequate compared with neighbouring areas. Option 2 is a relatively low-cost interim option, but it depends heavily on the condition, suitability and certification of donated lighting assets; the principal risk is that the donated lights may be unsuitable or fail inspection, which is assessed as medium likelihood but high severity. Option 3 gives the Council greater control but creates significant technical and financial exposure, particularly where infrastructure works, column suitability checks or electrical upgrades are more complex than anticipated. Option 4 transfers much of the technical delivery risk to a specialist contractor, but it has the highest financial exposure, with contract costs and future annual increases representing a high likelihood and high severity risk.

The financial appraisal reinforces the importance of distinguishing between affordability in 2026 and longer-term sustainability. Option 1 has no initial or annual cost, but this does not address deterioration, public expectations or the opportunity to improve the Broadway offer. Option 2 has the lowest identifiable initial cost at £250 and low annual cost in the current appraisal, making it the only option that clearly fits within the existing £3,000 budget provision. However, this apparent affordability should be treated cautiously because inspection, repair, adaptation, transport, storage and installation costs may still arise. Option 3 requires a substantially higher initial commitment of £8,500–£11,500, with estimated annual costs of £4,400–£6,500, placing it beyond the current budget and creating ongoing ownership liabilities. Option 4 has the highest initial cost at £10,000–£14,000, with annual costs also estimated at £4,400–£6,500, but provides the strongest service model where a specialist contractor is responsible for supply, installation, maintenance and removal.

Taken together, the options appraisal, financial appraisal and risk analysis indicate that no single option fully satisfies the Council's immediate budget constraint, delivery timetable and long-term aspiration for a higher-quality festive display. Option 1 is the least costly but does not meet the strategic objective of enhancing the Christmas lights and presents reputational risk. Option 2 offers the most realistic short-term route for 2026 because it allows visible improvement within the available budget, but it should only proceed if the donated assets are inspected, certified and confirmed as suitable. Option 3 offers control over assets but is financially and operationally demanding, particularly given the infrastructure and storage requirements. Option 4 is the most robust long-term delivery model because it reduces operational burden and improves reliability, but it requires further budget planning, infrastructure preparation and liaison with BCP Council before it can be delivered with confidence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Full Council approves a phased hybrid approach to improving Broadstone's Christmas lights, commencing with Option 2 for the 2026 festive season and progressing toward Option 4 as the preferred long-term model once technical, financial and stakeholder arrangements have been properly resolved. This approach reflects the findings of the options appraisal, financial appraisal and risk analysis. It allows the Council to make a visible improvement in 2026 by using donated lighting assets where they are safe, suitable and affordable, while avoiding a premature commitment to a higher-cost managed service before infrastructure requirements, BCP Council permissions and longer-term budget implications are fully understood.

Full Council is asked to agree that the 2026 scheme should proceed on the basis of Option 2 only if the donated lighting assets can be inspected, electrically tested and confirmed as suitable for use on the relevant streetlighting infrastructure. Approval should therefore be treated as approval in principle for a controlled interim scheme, not as an unconditional commitment to install all donated lights. Any motifs that are damaged, visually unsuitable, disproportionately costly to repair, or unable to meet safety and compliance requirements should not be used. This safeguard is important because the benefit of Option 2 depends on keeping the scheme modest, reliable and deliverable within the Council's available resources.

The recommendation is also proportionate to the Council's current financial position. The existing £3,000 budget is sufficient to explore a modest improvement using donated assets, but it is not sufficient to support either the purchase of a full lighting stock or the immediate appointment of a specialist contractor. Options 3 and 4 both require significantly higher initial expenditure and assume the need for ancillary electrical infrastructure, sockets or other enabling works. Starting with Option 2 protects public funds, avoids premature long-term liabilities and gives the Council time to confirm the true cost of a more comprehensive future scheme.

Beyond 2026, full council should authorise early liaison with BCP Council and a technical review of the Broadway infrastructure. This work should confirm which columns are suitable, what permissions are required, whether additional sockets or electrical works are needed, and what compliance, insurance or installation requirements must be met. Establishing this information before progressing to a larger scheme will reduce uncertainty, improve cost control and provide the basis for any future procurement specification.

Clear governance and financial controls should be put in place for the interim phase. An appropriate working group of nominated councillors should be authorised to progress inspections, obtain quotations, liaise with BCP Council and report back on any matters requiring further approval. Expenditure in 2026 should be capped within the approved budget and the remainder carried over to 2027 unless Full Council agrees otherwise, and all costs associated with transport, testing, repairs, installation, removal, insurance or storage should be identified before final commitment.

Subject to the outcome of the 2026, Full Council should agree in principle that Option 4 is developed as the preferred long-term direction of travel. A fully managed contractor service offers the strongest future model because it would provide professional design, installation, maintenance, removal and compliance support, while reducing the operational burden on the Council. However, progression to procurement should only take place once infrastructure requirements, desired scope, service standards and budget implications have been confirmed.

It is recommended that the Council reviews the future budget provision for Christmas lights and develops a 4-year strategy for 2027 - 2030. The review should consider the potential impact of motif lights along the Broadway, represent value for money and are likely to generate a positive public response. It should also capture lessons from BCP liaison, contractor availability, installation logistics and any health and safety or compliance issues.

The recommended decision for Full Council is therefore threefold:

1. To approve Option 2 as the basis for a limited and controlled 2026 installation, subject to safety, suitability, cost and permissions being confirmed;

2. To authorise the technical assessment, BCP liaison, financial controls and governance arrangements needed to deliver that interim scheme responsibly;

3. To agree that Option 4 should be developed as the preferred long-term model, with a further report brought back once infrastructure requirements, budget implications, procurement options and lessons from the 2026 installation have been established.