

## POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE

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<b>Date:</b>	Monday 13th July 2020
<b>Title:</b>	Marking Community & National Campaigns by Lighting-up Public Buildings
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Office Manager – Adam Clapton

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### Background

The Town Council receives periodic requests from charities or organisations requesting illumination of its buildings to support causes and campaigns – which in larger cities is quite common.

In recent years, such requests have been made of St Mary's and the Corn Exchange to mark, LibFest, Baby Loss Awareness Week, Turn Witney Blue for Dementia, the Black Lives Matter campaign and for national commemorations. St Mary's Church is not currently suitable due to the heat generated from its up-lighters (the Council maintains these lights).

### Current Situation

The Facade of the Corn Exchange is grade-two listed, so it is therefore not possible to install lighting to the exterior. However, the Gallery Room was successfully turned purple in June of this year using third party LED lights which were situated on tables near to the windows.

Members may like to consider making the illumination of the Corn Exchange a formal function of the Town Council. If in favour, a policy will also need to be agreed, possibly as part of the Council's flag-flying procedure/calendar (attached as Appendix A) on the types of organisations that the council will accept these requests from.

The practicalities of an event taking place on the same evening lights are needed to be set up, as well as necessary checking of third- party equipment should be taken into consideration. The Council could purchase strip LED colour changeable lamps which could be fitted under the inner windows of the building which could be used for these events. They would have the dual purpose for events held in the hall. Please see Appendix B.

### Environmental impact

- Although low energy, LED lights would be left on in the building all night to achieve the desired effect.
- There are no policies of the WODC Local Plan directly concerning light pollution in the town centre.

### Risk

In decision making, Councillors should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- The Town Council as a corporate body is apolitical and should not show allegiance to any politically officiated organisation. A clear policy on what is acceptable and why is required to avoid any reputational damage.
- The Council has previously objected through planning to the installation of illuminated signs in the town centre conservation area so members will need to show consistency in this regard moving forward if the lighting of the building should be agreed.

### **Financial implications**

- There is a potential minimal cost of staff having to manage this function.
- There is a cost for lights and usage should the council consider purchasing equipment for this function. There is no pre-agreed budget for lighting up of the Corn Exchange.

### **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Whether the Council supports organisations by agreeing to light up the interior of the Corn Exchange by way of an agreed policy; and if yes,
2. That the Council considers purchasing fixed colour changing led lights for the Corn Exchange windows,
3. Or requests organisations provide their own lights for this purpose (subject to all the necessary electrical testing).