**Proposals for lights on copper beech tree**

There is a large copper beech tree in in the Coop car park. Its branches overhang the car park and Mother Hubbards. Since 2014, the branches have been wrapped in lights, giving a festive display at Christmas.

The tree was spectacular when first wrapped but some of the lights have now failed and cannot be repaired or replaced (no longer available).

Councillors are asked to consider the following proposals:

1. **To ‘make the best’ of the existing lighting system:**
   1. Remove existing lights, test and report. Re-install existing lighting that is still in a working condition. Would mean some branches not lit, as was the case last Christmas.
      * Total cost: £2053

OR

* 1. Remove existing lights. Purchase new 45 replacement static light strings and install. Tree would be restored to its former lighting effect.
     + Total cost: £4216.80

OR

1. **Invest in a new system – Twinkly-Pro**

Purchase a new system of modern LED lights that can be controlled remotely by smartphone or computer, allowing the colours of the lights to be changed. e.g. pink/red at Valentine’s day; green for St Patricks; red for Remembrance day; colour-changing at Xmas.

* + - The total cost of the Twinkly-Pro is £7010.40 (made up of: removing existing equipment while installing Twinkly-Pro £509; supplying Twinkly-Pro with router, without SIM card £3986; installation of Twinkly-Pro in branch-wrapped effect £1347, all ex-VAT).

**Budget considerations**

This year’s budget for Xmas decorations is £8,500.

About half of this - £4k – is taken up with our annual contract with Christmas Plus to put up, take down, test and store our lights.

The Christmas tree itself in the village costs around £800.

The remainder has been allocated to repairing/replacing/upgrading our existing display. E.g. new motifs and clusterline for Coach Rd shops, some new motifs on Westgate, installation of new outside power points.

The cost of Twinkly-Pro cannot be met from the current budget but councillors are asked to consider the use of Economy reserves, general reserves, and the possibility of sponsorship.

Gill Jennison, July 2023