

Christmas Lights in Balsall Common centre – funding background paper

1. Balsall Common village centre Christmas decorations

Item	Balsall Parish	Berkswell Parish
Lit Christmas trees in village centre	By Estate Agents By library	None
Station Road Centre - lamp posts with Xmas lights adaptor	7	3
Kenilworth Road Lighting sockets	10 sockets as follows 4 on roundabout 2 towards library 1 south of roundabout 2 sockets on one post on Station Road (west) Lit oak tree on Station Road (West)	Nil
Shops	16 on Station Road (Including Vivendi) 11 on Kenilworth Road (including Shell)	6 on station Road

2. Background issues

- 2.1. Balsall PC made a radical change, with significant enhanced costs, to the Balsall Common lights in 2017/18 and did not consult or inform Berkswell PC
- 2.2. The Balsall total budget for Christmas decorations is £8k. This covers erection, dismantling and storage by SMBC
- 2.3. A “request” for a contribution to the annual cost of those Christmas lights was received after the budget was prepared by Berkswell for 2019/20. The PC resolved to look at the issue later this year
- 2.4. Historically Berkswell PC did make a contribution in some years of £500 but it is not definitely known why that stopped. It is believed that Balsall PC stopped asking for it and it got lost as an issue.
- 2.5. Berkswell PC funds a festival of Christmas trees in Balsall Common. This is a low-cost event using volunteers, battery operated lights and a mix of council and private decorations. The cost is about £450 per annum. It includes a large decorated tree on the Station Road Roundabout and 6 other trees around Balsall Common
- 2.6. Berkswell PC has made ad hoc payments for lights etc for the Berkswell village tree but has not bought the tree which was always obtained free of charge by villagers. The Council has committed to fund a tree in 2019.
- 2.7. The capital cost of the lights in Balsall was significant. Berkswell has not been asked to contribute.
- 2.8. There are 3 lamp posts in Balsall Common within Berkswell Parish adapted to take lights - outside of the butchers, Deli and Masala Club. Two of those 3 were decorated in 2018 but not the one outside of the Masala Club. Leaflets published by an unknown source during the boundary review indicated that the publisher thought that boundary was such as to include

2 of those 3 lamp posts within Balsall Parish. The Balsall Clerk confirms there is a set of lights available to place on the lamp post outside the Masala Club.