

# Report to Council



**DATE:** 29 August 2024  
**TO:** Mayor and Councillors  
**FROM:** Facilities and Properties Manager

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## HOKITIKA CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an update on the Christmas lights and provide council with the options for the costs of the Christmas light installation going forward.
- 1.2. This issue arises from council requesting the community to raise funds for the new Christmas lights during the July council meeting.
- 1.3. Council seeks to meet its obligations under the Local Government Act 2002 and the achievement of the District Vision adopted by the Council in June 2024, which are set out in the Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/2025. Refer to page 2 of the agenda.
- 1.4. This report concludes by recommending that the Council proceed with making up the new system of installing and removing the Christmas lights which are more easily installed, removed in less time, and is the most cost-effective, with the community raising funds and buying the new Christmas lights.

### 2. Background

- 2.1. The reason this report has come before the Council is due to the poor condition of the current Christmas lights and frames.
- 2.2. Following the installation and removal of the Christmas lights in January 2024 it was assessed that they will not last another Christmas season.
- 2.3. The cost to install and remove the Christmas lights each festive season has increased due to the equipment needed and repairs to the lights required.
- 2.4. The Hokitika Christmas lights were purchased by Destination Hokitika Limited with support from the Westland District Council prior to 2018. Electricians have inspected the lights and advised the condition of the lights and frames has deteriorated to the stage where they cannot be maintained. The frames, the wiring and the electrical connections are badly corroded.
- 2.5. Installing the current Christmas lights requires a cherry picker or bucket Hiab as well as upwards of six staff for up to six hours.

- 2.6. The costs to repair the current Christmas lights and install and remove the lights each year has increased each year for the last three years. On average around \$12,000 has been spent repairing the lights.
- 2.7. Faults will often only show in the days following installation, this then requires a Hiab/cherry picker and staff to lower the lights, repair, and reinstall.
- 2.8. During the council meeting on 25 July 2024, a report was presented to council requesting \$26,528 for the purchase of the new engineered support frames for \$14,528, and new Christmas lights for \$12,000. Council requested staff to approach Destination Hokitika and the wider community to fund the new Christmas lights and installation system.
- 2.9. After the council meeting of 25 July 2024, a meeting was held with Destination Hokitika and other community members on 26 August 2024, who confirmed that they would fund-raise for the purchase of the new Christmas lights, however requested that council purchase the new installation system and by doing so extend the lifespan of the new lights and reduce the installation costs going forward.

### **3. Current Situation**

- 3.1. The current situation is that following discussions with Hamilton Electrical and Coastal Engineering an alternative design has been discussed which allows quicker installation of the lights from the ground, as shown in appendix 1. There would be no need for machinery, instead, the staff could lift the light frames into place from the ground. Access to installation machinery e.g. Hiab and/or a cherry picker is not always easily accessible. This was identified during the 2023/2024 festive period when there was no machinery available until mid-December.
- 3.2. The newly proposed design, drafted by the electricians and engineer has an initial set-up cost of \$14,528. This includes hot-dipped galvanized support frames to suspend Christmas lighting across four street crossings, supply, and installation of stainless-steel cables, pulleys, and labour costs.
- 3.3. The use of the support frames is seen as essential as they prevent the light frames from damage during installation/removal and the framed motifs will not hit against each other causing damage.
- 3.4. After implementing the new design, it is expected the installation and removal of the Christmas lights will take three people, three hours. Including the costs of traffic management, it is expected that the overall cost to install and take down the lights each festive season will be \$3,000 or less.
- 3.5. The purchasing of the new Christmas lights will be fund-raised by the community.

### **4. Options**

- 4.1. Option 1: Purchase and install 4x new engineered support frames, cabling, and winches. Install new Christmas lights purchased by the community onto the new support frames.
- 4.2. Option 2: Purchase and install 2x new engineered support frames, cabling, and winches. Install new Christmas lights purchased by the community onto the new support frames.
- 4.3. Option 3: Install the new Christmas lights purchased by the community. Install these new lights in the same way the current Christmas lights are installed.
- 4.4. Option 4: Do not install any Christmas lights this festive season.

### **5. Risk Analysis**

5.1. Risk has been considered and the following risks have been identified: The current Christmas lights and support frames are corroded, and not replacing them poses a risk of the frame breaking off, which can cause harm to persons or damage to vehicles.

## **6. Health and Safety**

6.1 Health and Safety has been considered and the following items have been identified:

- The current Christmas lights and support frames are corroded, and not replacing them poses a risk of the frame breaking off, which can cause harm to persons or damage to vehicles.

## **7. Significance and Engagement**

7.1. The level of significance has been assessed as low.

- No public consultation is considered necessary.

## **8. Assessment of Options (including Financial Considerations)**

8.1. Option 1 – Purchase 4x new engineered support frames at four crossings.

- The cost of the new steel supports is \$14,528. With an annual cost of \$3,000 for installation and removal.
- Simple installation and removal which also allows easy lowering of frame to fix faults.
- Not limited to Christmas lighting and can be used for other purposes.
- This project is funded through the Westland District Council annual plan lighting budget.
- New Christmas lights to be fund-raised and purchased by the community.

8.2. Option 2 – Purchase 2x new engineered support frames at four crossings.

- The cost of the new steel supports is \$7,264. With an annual cost of \$1,500 for installation and removal.
- Simple installation and removal which also allows easy lowering of frame to fix faults.
- Not limited to Christmas lighting and can be used for other purposes.
- This project is funded through the Westland District Council annual plan lighting budget.
- New Christmas lights to be fund-raised and purchased by the community.

8.3. Option 3 - Install new lights as done previously:

- The purchase of new Christmas lights for four crossings is fundraised by the community, with an annual install removal cost of over \$8,000.
- Installation involves the use of Hiab or similar and would take up to 3 hours per crossing.
- If faults are identified they need to employ a Hiab (or similar) to lower lights, repair, and re-install.
- Likelihood of damage to the lights during installation/removal and while installed.
- This project is funded through the Westland District Council annual plan lighting budget.

8.4. Option 5- Do not install any Christmas lights this festive season.

- No financial implications.
- The local community may feel that Council is neglecting its obligations under the four well-beings to consider cultural and social well-being. Christmas lights are traditionally erected to celebrate the season and enhance the town centre.

## **9. Preferred Option(s) and Reasons**

9.1. The preferred option is Option 1.

9.2. The reason that Option 1 has been identified as the preferred option for the following reasons:

- The purchase of the new Christmas lights would be done by the community, thus not costing council any additional funds.
- This new lighting installation system would also reduce the annual installation cost by up to 63%.
- With the increased purchase cost of the new engineered support frames, but the reduced maintenance and installation costs, the new lighting installation system will pay for itself after year 2 compared to the current install costs.

## **10. Recommendation(s)**

10.1. That the report be received.

10.2. That Council purchase 4x new engineered support frames at a cost of \$14,528 for the Christmas lights supplied by the community, and install & remove them for the festive period

**Jan Visser**

**Facilities and Properties Manager**

**Appendix 1:** Drawing of design of support frames

**Appendix One:** Drawing of design of support frames and motifs available for consideration

