

Meeting	Full Council
Date	22 nd September 2026
Report Title	Christmas Programme Update
	13A
Author	Liz Matthews – Marketing & Events Co-ordinator Laura Cutter – Deputy Clerk & HR/Services Manager

Recommendations

1. To note the report.
2. To agree in principle to the revised Christmas Event - Christmas Celebration in Lights
3. To agree in principle to Pantomime ticket pricing

Background

The 2026 Christmas Programme is designed to bring residents together through a range of festive events that promote community connection, partnership working and inclusive participation throughout the season.

1. Christmas Celebration in Lights

Friday 27th November 2026

It is proposed that this year's main Christmas event evolves into a Christmas Celebration in Lights, creating a more sustainable format while retaining a strong community focus. The event would feature festive illuminations, Christmas music, carol singing and the switch-on of a community Christmas Wishing Tree.

Discussions are underway with St John's Church regarding potential partnership opportunities, including tree placement, power supply and a community carol service. Sponsorship opportunities are also being explored with local businesses.

Potential locations include:

- Green space adjacent to St John's Church (subject to site visit)
- Green space adjacent to the Parish Council Offices and The Squirrel, enabling links with the Council Offices (meeting room, kitchen, toilets)



A **"Light Up Haydon Wick"** initiative is also proposed, encouraging residents, businesses and community groups to decorate their properties and submit photographs by 6 December. Participants would be entered into a prize draw to win a family ticket to the Parish Council pantomime.

The popular Community Wishing Tree would return, inviting residents to display messages of hope, remembrance and goodwill on star and dove-shaped tags available online and at community venues.

Additional attractions under consideration include:

- Illuminated vehicle (POS Fleet) displays and a festive procession.
- Fundraising for the Parish Council's chosen charity, CALM.
- Seasonal refreshments, including mulled wine and mince pies.

2. Peter Pan Pantomime

Saturday 12th December 2026 - 4.00pm to 6.00pm

Following discussions with M&M Productions, the performance will commence at 4.00pm, improving accessibility for families and aligning with library opening hours. Set-up will begin at 2.00pm.

Work is ongoing to secure sponsorship and explore ticket subsidies to keep the event affordable. Final ticket pricing will be presented following consideration by the Finance Committee.

In partnership with North Swindon Library, the following pre-event activities are proposed:

- Peter Pan Treasure Map Trail during half term, with participants entered into a family ticket prize draw.
- Peter Pan Story Time Sessions to engage younger audiences and promote the performance.

Potential event-day enhancements include:

- Refreshments provided by a local vendor.
- Sweet and popcorn cones from CALM Ambassador Tracey Boxell, subject to confirmation.

Councillor support will be welcomed for:

- 2.00pm: Venue set-up.
- 3.00pm: Concessions stand support.
- 3.30pm: Ticket collection and ushering.
- 6.00pm to 7.00pm: Venue clear-down.



Marketing activity is ready to commence once ticket pricing is agreed and will include social media, parish communications, library displays, community noticeboards and partner networks.

Ticket Pricing Update

The current proposal is to offer a subsidised flat-rate ticket price of £8 per seat. Capacity is planned at 150 seats, with approximately 10 seats reserved for competition winners and community giveaways. Sponsorship opportunities continue to be explored to offset event costs, support accessibility and provide additional children's giveaways where possible.

3. Christmas Wreath Making Workshop

Proposed: Thursday 18th December 2026

Following continued demand, the workshop is proposed to return with two sessions:

- 1.00pm to 3.00pm
- 6.30pm to 8.30pm

The additional daytime session will improve accessibility and provide greater flexibility for residents. The workshop offers a creative opportunity for residents to connect socially and support wellbeing during the festive period.

Material costs remain consistent with previous years, and it is recommended that tickets remain at £15 per person. Early promotion is advised as sessions are expected to sell out.

4. Summary

The proposed Christmas Programme will provide a varied programme of festive activities that encourage community participation, strengthen local partnerships and create opportunities for residents of all ages to come together and celebrate the festive season.