

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY –  
WEDNESDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2026**



<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>EVENTS UPDATE 2026/27</b>
<b>Presented by</b>	Paul Wheatley Head of Property and Regeneration
<b>Background Papers</b>	None.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	All proposals are within the 2025/26 events budget. The draft 2026/27 events programme is subject to confirmation of the 2026/27 Coalville Special Expenses approved budget by Council on 19 February 2026.
	<b>Signed off by the Section 151 Officer:</b> Yes
<b>Legal Implications</b>	The holding of events in Coalville is a discretionary service. The Coalville Special Expenses Working Party (CSEWP) recommends to Cabinet the events it wishes to run in the year using its available budget.
	<b>Signed off by the Monitoring Officer:</b> Yes
<b>Staffing and Corporate Implications</b>	Staff resources are used to manage and deliver the agreed events programme with the associated costs charged to the Special Expenses budget.
	<b>Signed off by the Head of Paid Service:</b> Yes
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To present an update of the 2025/26 Christmas in Coalville and Christmas Lights Programme and the 2026/27 Draft Events Programme to the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>THAT THE WORKING PARTY:</b>  1) <b>NOTES THE PROGRESS MADE AGAINST THE 2025/26 EVENTS AND CHRISTMAS LIGHTS PROGRAMME</b>  2) <b>NOTES THE 2026/27 DRAFT EVENTS PROGRAMME.</b>

## 1. EVENTS UPDATE

- 1.1 The 2025/26 event programme has been delivered. All events were delivered as planned and within budget.
- 1.2 Planning for the 2026/27 events programme is now underway. No increase or decrease in budget or officer capacity is assumed at this stage.

## 2. 2025/26 CHRISTMAS IN COALVILLE AND CHRISTMAS LIGHTS PROGRAMME

The 2025/26 Christmas in Coalville and Christmas Lights programme is as below:

Date	Event	Description	CSE budget	Additional budget* for 2025	Actual expenditure	Income	Status
29 Nov	Christmas in Coalville	A day of Christmas festivities in Coalville town centre	£14,600	£159.14 (General Fund) £1900 (A47005 Fund)*	£16,659.14	£917.00**	Delivered
29 Nov	Christmas lights programme	Town centre Christmas decorations, comprising of lamp post mounted decorations (where permitted), bespoke decorations on Memorial Clock Tower, pea lights in trees (High Street and Memorial Square) and one large Christmas tree in Memorial Square (Nordmann variety as 2024)	£30,000	£2,617.50 (General Fund)*	<b>£29,954.39</b> CSE £2617.50 (GF) Total <b>£32,571.89</b>	nil	Delivered - installation contract agreed until January 2027

\*£159.14 from the Council's general fund budget has been allocated to the 2025 Christmas in Coalville event and £2,617.50 to the Christmas lights programme, specifically towards the Marlborough Square project. Additional funding was also secured for additional entertainment for the Christmas in Coalville event.

\*\*The income received is generated from stall fees

2.1 **Christmas lights** - Decorations this year included a Nordmann Christmas tree in Memorial Square, decorations on the four faces of Memorial Clock Tower, pea lights in permanent trees in Memorial Square and High Street and pole mounted decorations on lamp posts in Memorial Square, Ashby Road, Hotel Street, Marlborough Square and Jackson Street.

2.1.1 The town centre decorations included the 22 artificial trees (Marlborough Square) and nine boa wraps (Belvoir Road), which were introduced to the decoration schedule in 2024 and a Nordmann Christmas tree for Marlborough Square, made possible by earlier UKSPF funding. The maintenance, installation and take down of these decorations is funded by the Council's general fund (Economic Regeneration budget) as they relate to the Council's Coalville Regeneration Framework initiatives.

2.2 **Christmas in Coalville** – The Christmas in Coalville event was delivered on 29 November 2025 in Coalville town centre from 10am to 5pm. Heavy rain throughout the day did result in some trader cancellations just before the event and on the day. The Fair was planned to be held in the Needhams Walk car park, but with the bad weather, was reduced instead to four small children's rides within the Belvoir Shopping Centre.

2.2.1 Despite the weather, all elements of the event were delivered and footfall was steady throughout the day, with the greatest footfall between 4pm-6pm for the Christmas Light Switch On countdown and event. Total footfall throughout the day was 5,283, with high footfall too in Newmarket throughout the day. Event locations and attractions included the below:

- a) The Belvoir Shopping Centre hosted the food, drink and festive market, four small children's fairground rides, street theatre performances and a satellite stage with live music, entertainment and performances. The stage was compared by Coalville Public Radio throughout the day.
- b) Marlborough Square hosted the main stage and entertainment, with food and drink stalls, family entertainment, street theatre performances, free face painting and a viewing area for the fire show finale and Christmas Light Switch On. The main stage was again compared by Coalville Public Radio throughout the day.
- c) The Santa's Grotto and Elf Workshop were held in the Marlene Reid Centre on Belvoir Road from 1.30pm-4.30pm, with Santa making appearances in the town centre throughout the day and on stage in Marlborough Square for the Christmas Light Switch On itself.
- d) Street performers delivered entertainment throughout the town during the event, including Festive Street Walkers, Giant Bubbles, Pixel Spinning, Bad Santas, Bouncing Snowmen, A Very Curious Contrivance, Century Theatre Aladdin pantomime characters and the Flame Oz Fire Show finale.
- e) The satellite stage hosted performances from Thornley Dance Academy, Leicestershire Co-op Band and Coalville Public Radio, who ran competitions with the audience, promoted local business offers and discounts and provided live coverage of the event.

- 2.2.2 Newmarket hosted regular and guest stalls and entertainment, launching their Christmas trading period and attracted strong footfall throughout the day. Christmas in Coalville launched the town's Christmas campaign, with a Christmas Market held in Newmarket and Marlborough Square on 6 December and Visit Santa at Newmarket event and market on 13 and 20 December, with Santa's Grotto, family entertainment, live music, free Christmas tree giveaway and arts and crafts.
- 2.2.3 The event had a strong community focus and was supported by a number of local charities including Coalville Public Radio, MRC Community Action, Coalville CAN and the Ashby and Coalville Lions. 2025 was also a landmark year for local charity Canine Partners, celebrating 35 years of service and creation of their 1000<sup>th</sup> life-changing partnership. The Council welcomed Canine Partners to take to the stage, with one of their services dogs to assist with the Christmas Light Switch On itself, as part of this special anniversary.
- 2.2.4 Live music and entertainment throughout the day, included performances from pupils at St Clare's RC and Whitwick St John the Baptist CE Primary schools, Sing for the Soul Choir, Thornley Dance Academy, High Pressure, Leicestershire Co-op Band and The Inspired.
- 2.2.5 The Christmas Light Switch On was at 5pm, preceded by a Fire Show and on stage was the Chair, Coalville Public Radio, Canine Partners and Santa for the light switch on itself on 5pm.

The lights were left illuminated continuously throughout the festive season until twelfth night, 5 January when the lights were switched off. Festive lights were all removed throughout the town in January, with final lights removed on 19 January. There was an ongoing issue with the festive light outside the Marlborough Day Nursery on Jackson Street throughout the festive season, despite electrical and structural column testing and lighting infrastructure testing. It is suggested that this column be reviewed when installing in 2026.

- 2.2.6 Event communication comprised of press and social media releases, as well as leaflets and posters which were distributed throughout the town to promote the Christmas in Coalville event and to showcase what Coalville has to offer. There was also a distribution of 17,000 Autumn Coalville Town Centre Event Guides to town centre residents, businesses and visitors in the Coalville Life and Coalville Community Voice publications. This included additional Christmas in Coalville adverts and a social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram, as well as support from Coalville Public Radio. Participatory activities included a Where's the Elf? and Best Dressed Window and Coalville Illuminations competitions. Examples of the promotional and marketing campaign are shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.2.7 The Best Dressed Window, Best Illuminated Window and "Where's the Elf?" trail competitions were launched on 29 November, which ran throughout December to encourage footfall and visitors to shop locally throughout the town centre over the festive period.
- 2.2.8 Window displays were judged by NWLDC Deputy Chair Councillor Jenny Simmons, who presented the coveted Chair's Choice trophy to Splashout on Belvoir Road. Hinckley and Rugby Building Society on Marlborough Square received a highly commended award for their display and were awarded a certificate and banner by the Deputy Chair. A public vote also took place crowning MRC - Recycle as the winner.

Birds Bakery in the Belvoir Centre and Kool Guys who are located in Newmarket both received highly commended as runners up.

### 3. Draft Events Programme 2026/2027

3.1 In preparation for the 2026/27 budget setting process, the following draft events programme is presented for consideration. The draft has been set against the 2025/26 budget and officer resource available to deliver the work. The estimated cost is included for guidance at this stage and may alter as part of the budget setting process.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated budget</b>
4 and 5 July 2026	Music and Picnic in the Park	A free family event in Coalville Park, featuring a main stage, live music, craft and food stalls, on field activities and entertainment and local charity stalls.	£20,000
28 Nov 2026	Christmas in Coalville	A day of Christmas festivities in Coalville town centre.	£14,600
28 Nov 2026 to 3 Jan 2027	Coalville Christmas Decorations	Town centre Christmas decorations, comprising of lamp post mounted decorations (where permitted), bespoke decorations on Memorial Clock Tower, pea lights in trees (High Street and Memorial Square) and two large Christmas trees.	£30,000

3.2 It is proposed that the summer event in Coalville Park in 2026/27 is delivered on 4 and 5 July 2026. Suppliers are now being contacted for quotes for the infrastructure for this year's event. The Health and Wellbeing team is also discussing options to build on last year's event on the Saturday afternoon in Coalville Park, which will lead into the early evening event of Music in the Park.

3.3 The officer time costs required to deliver the above draft programme will be included in the budget setting process. If the draft programme is subject to change this could impact on the officer time allocated to deliver the programme, this will be considered as part of the budget setting process.

<b>Policies and other considerations, as appropriate</b>	
Council Priorities:	Planning and regeneration
Policy Considerations:	None
Safeguarding:	None
Equalities/Diversity:	None
Customer Impact:	The provision of events and festive lighting creating pride in our town centres.
Economic and Social Impact:	Additional expenditure generated within a defined area, as a direct consequence of staging events. Access for all to local free and affordable events.
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon	Supporting the Zero Carbon agenda through the delivery of local events and renewing Christmas lighting stock to reduce energy consumption.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	None
Risks:	None identified
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