

**Item 11 – Town Centre management and Local parades Initiative Update
March 2016**

**Comments received from Councillor Kathy Bance, Ward Member for
Penge and Cator**

‘Christmas Lights Policy

Thank you for allowing our submission to be heard.

We are very grateful that we have been allowed to retain a TCM for this year but as the post holder is new to our High Street, it will take a little time for them to meet and engage in this work with our local businesses.

We Councillors are working with other local organisations to encourage all our local businesses to join our Traders Association and so overcome the reluctance amongst businesses to contribute to Christmas decorations and other Town Centre events. We have depended on a few very generous and supportive traders for too long.

We Councillors and our traders are very much committed to being a BID town; it is the future we want, so will support LBB and our TCM in doing our best to achieve a successful outcome. We have already requested a meeting with the TCM as have our traders and last night we put forward suggestions for our previous TCM to have a desk in the high street (shop front) so that she can continue working with the traders and us during the handover period.

This very short timeframe for the TCM change and BID process has caught us mid-stream in our own work plan so without LBB funding this year, December 2016, we will be unable to put Christmas lights on our High Street. We are not looking to stay dependent but we are very much working to become an independent BID town.

We ask for just a little more support in this journey.

Please support Option A:-

- a) Commission and fund lights in Beckenham and Penge, with some contributions from local businesses where possible (similar to the model for previous years). This would cost a minimum of £10k (possibly more as the existing lights for Penge are coming to the end of their useful life).

If you are not able to do so, would you please consider Option B so we can have some lights this year:-

- b) Make a modest contribution (up to £5k) to the funds raised locally by the business associations or town teams in Beckenham and Penge.’