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**North East
Derbyshire**
District Council

Contact: Nicola Calver
Tel: 01246 217753
Date: Thursday, 7 May 2020

To: **All Members of the Council**

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held on **Monday, 18 May 2020 at 3.30 pm (or following the preceding Council meeting, whichever is the later)** held through virtual meeting software. Access credentials to the meeting will be sent to you under separate cover. This meeting will be audio-live streamed to the Website via YouTube.

Group meetings will be arranged, where necessary, by the Group Leaders.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Steuberg".

Joint Head of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interests, not already on their register of interests, in any items on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

3 Chair's Announcements (if any)

4 Public Participation

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 8 to allow members of the public to ask questions about the Council's activities for a period up to fifteen minutes. The replies to any such questions will be given by the appropriate Cabinet Member. Questions must be received in writing or by email to the Monitoring Officer by 12 noon seven clear working days before the meeting.

No questions have been submitted under Procedure Rule No 8 for this meeting.

5 **Sky Lanterns & Helium Balloons** (Pages 4 - 7)

Report of Councillor C Cupit, Portfolio Holder for Environment.

6 **To answer any questions from Members asked under Procedure Rule No 9.2**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 9.2 to allow Members to ask questions about Council activities. The replies to any such questions will be given by the Chair of the Council or relevant Committee or the appropriate Cabinet Member. Questions must be received in writing or by email to the Monitoring Officer by 12 noon seven clear working days before the meeting.

No questions have been submitted under Procedure Rule No 9.2 for this meeting.

7 **To consider any Motions from Members under Procedure Rule No 10**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 10 to consider Motions on notice from Members. Motions must be received in writing or by email to the Monitoring Officer by 12 noon seven clear working days before the meeting.

No motions have been submitted under Procedure Rule No 10 for this meeting.

8 **Exclusion of Public**

The Chair to move:-

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following item of business to avoid the disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 & 5 Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

9 **Council's Housing Group Structure** (Pages 8 - 11)

Report of Councillor A Powell, Portfolio Holder for Communications and Housing
– **APPENDIX 1 TO FOLLOW**

10 **Chair's Urgent Business**

To consider any other matter which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.



***We speak
your language***

Polish
Mówimy Twoim językiem

French
Nous parlons votre langue

Spanish
***Hablamos su
idioma***

Slovak
***Rozprávame Vaším
jazykom***

Chinese
我们会说你的语言

If you require
this agenda in
large print

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format
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us on

**01246
217753**

If you require an adjustment to enable you to participate in or access the meeting please contact the Governance Team at least 72 hours before the meeting starts.

North East Derbyshire District Council

Council

18 May 2020

Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons

Report of Councillor C Cupit, Portfolio Holder for Environment

Purpose of the Report

- To alert Members of the Council to the risks posed by sky lanterns and Helium filled balloons.
- To recommend that North East Derbyshire District Council and Rykneld Homes Ltd introduce a charter to ban the release of Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons on any land or property owned by the Council.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 The release of Sky Lanterns or Helium Balloons might look pretty, but they are a serious danger to animals and the countryside.
- 1.2 Sky Lanterns and Helium balloons are usually used in Britain to mark special celebrations such as weddings, parties and New Year, but many people are not aware of the dangers they can cause.
- 1.3 Essentially, a small hot air balloon made of paper, with an opening at the bottom where a candle is suspended, sky lanterns, or Chinese lanterns as they're also known, can float for miles before they fall to the ground, causing a danger to animals and a fire hazard.
- 1.4 Helium filled balloons can travel similar distances and also present a danger to animals and litter the environment.
- 1.5 The risks presented include: -
 - 1.5.1 **Litter Nuisance:** Farmers and other landowners have to clear up the remnants of sky lanterns and balloons from their fields. Whilst 'biodegradable' lanterns made from Bamboo are available, they still take months or years to degrade.
 - 1.5.2 **Fire:** Once a sky lantern is lit, nobody knows exactly where it will land. Fields of standing crops, hay and straw stacks, farm buildings housing animals, thatched roofs plus lots more are all at a significant risk of being set alight.

1.5.3 **Animals and Livestock:** Sky Lanterns can cause suffering or even kill animals and livestock. Not just by fire, sky lantern debris can cause immense stress and injury. Some of the key dangers are: -

- Animals eating lantern debris which can cause tears or punctures to internal organs leading to a potentially life-threatening situation
- Animals getting splinters in their skin which may cause infection
- Animals becoming trapped or tangled in debris
- Frames of lanterns can contaminate crops which are then unknowingly fed to animals.

1.5.4 **False alarms:** Sky Lanterns pose a significant danger to aviation traffic such as planes and helicopters. There are concerns that lanterns can be drawn into aircraft engines and can delay take-off and landing. In addition, lanterns drifting across a night sky have also been mistaken by the public and coast guards for marine distress signals.

1.6 A number of other councils have backed the campaign and banned the release of Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons on council owned land. Councils taking action include: -

- Lincoln City Council
- Newark & Sherwood District Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Rushcliffe Borough Council
- South Kesteven District Council
- West Lindsey District Council

1.7 Other organisations, including the Peak District National Park, the Countryside Alliance and the RSPCA are calling for bans.

1.8 There are many fun alternatives to Helium Balloon and Sky Lantern releases such as tree planting, flag flying, jam jar lights, or even releasing giant bubbles. The RSPCA website has more suggestions.

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/litter/balloon-and-sky-lantern-alternatives>).

2 **Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation**

2.1 Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloon releases pose a significant risk of harm to animals and the environment.

2.2 There are many fun alternatives to balloon and sky lantern releases such as tree planting, flag flying, jam jar lights, or even releasing giant bubbles. The RSPCA website has more suggestions.

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/litter/balloon-and-sky-lantern-alternatives>).

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 There are no impacts on equality arising from this report, although it is noted that the impact of fires or damage caused by Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons can have a disproportionate impact on vulnerable people in society.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 The alternative option would be to take no action in response to these concerns and issues.
- 4.2 This option has been rejected as it is recommended the Council and Rykneld Homes takes action and sets a positive example with regard to the release of Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

- 5.1.1 None

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

- 5.2.1 None

5.3 Human Resources Implications

- 5.3.1 None

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Council, together with Rykneld Homes Ltd, adopts and promotes a charter as follows: -

North East Derbyshire District Council and Rykneld Homes Ltd has banned the release of sky lanterns and balloons on any land or property owned by the Council.

We are committed to encouraging businesses, communities, landowners and individuals to switch to alternative ways of celebrating and commemorating events.

North East Derbyshire District Council and Rykneld Homes Ltd pledges to: -

- Promote the restriction of the release of all types of helium-filled balloon and sky lantern on property and land owned by the Council. This includes those that are made from bamboo or claim to be biodegradable.*
- Engage with businesses, communities, landowners, schools and individuals to encourage them to sign up to this charter.*
- Raise awareness of safer and more environmentally friendly alternatives that people can celebrate with, through promotion and campaigns.*

7 Decision Information

<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: BDC: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £250,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please indicate which threshold applies</p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	No
<p>Has the relevant Portfolio Holder been informed</p>	Yes
<p>District Wards Affected</p>	All
<p>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</p>	All

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
<p>Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)</p>	
Report Author	Contact Number
Ken Eastwood, Head of Service, Environmental Health	01246 217851

Agenda Item 9

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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