

Subject:	Mass Balloon Release : Extract from the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on the 20 October 2016		
Date of Meeting:	10 October 2018		
Report of:	Executive Lead for Strategy, Governance & Law		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Lisa Johnson	Tel: 29-1228
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee

To receive the item referred from the Council for consideration.

Recommendation:

1. That the Committee give consideration to the Deputation.

Deputation:

The mass release of balloons and sky lanterns released in Britain are killing birds and sea life here and across the North Sea. Beaches in Europe are littered with thousands of deflated balloons – many from this country. So far more than 50 local councils have agreed to prevent the release of balloons and lanterns and I urge Brighton and Hove City Council to do the same. In the last few years it has grown in fashion to release balloons and sky lanterns at special event, funerals and memorials. In Brighton a number of schools and nursery's release balloons in parks at the end of the school year. The Marine Conservation Society has said that more than 53% of balloon related litter has been found on our beaches this year than in 2015.

The release of balloons is intended to be beautiful and positive but, the reality is when the balloons make their way back down to earth or water, there are serious consequences. The only way to describe them is as litter. Unfortunately, plastic pollution is a real problem and balloons only add to this problem. Balloons are made up of two types of materials:

- 1. Mylar balloons are composed of synthetic nylon with metallic coating and are non-biodegradable.*
- 2. Latex is widely considered a safe option; however, decomposition can take anywhere from 6 months to 4 years giving plenty of time to cause harm.*

Both marine and terrestrial animals mistake balloons as food. Whales, dolphins and seals often eat them as they look like food. Once ingested balloons cause stomach or intestinal blockages, leading to starvation.

Last year a whale that washed up in Norway had plastic waste in its stomach, some of which originated from the UK that had caused it to starve to death. Also, recently a pilot whale was found dying that had over 70 plastic bags in its stomach. The strings attached to balloons can be just as dangerous. Birds become entangled and sea creatures such as seals and dolphins have flippers and fins that get snared and restrict their movement and ability to feed. These entanglements can cause infections, amputations, starvation, drowning and death. The plight of a 3-year-old horse that died after choking on a balloon string was featured on BBC, and there was also a case where 2 swans were entangled together.

On Dutch coastlines campaigners say about 13,000 balloons are washing up every week. Many appear to have come from the U.K, with logos on the balloons which have included the charity bike ride in Birmingham, a hospice in London and a car dealership in Southport, and thousands of McDonalds balloons which are given away daily.

The RSPCA and Civil aviation authority have also spoken out against the release of sky lanterns and balloons and the National Farmers Union have also been calling for a ban on sky lanterns for quite some time.

Spokesperson Theresa Fowler

Supported by:

Stella King

Denice Friend

Maria Marshall

Jane Clarke

Adam Englebright

Maureen Hawthorne

MINUTES FROM COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2018

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

4.30pm 19 JULY 2018

COUNCIL CHAMBER - HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Simson (Chair), Phillips (Deputy Chair), Allen, Atkinson, Barford, Barnett, Bell, Bennett, Bewick, Brown, Cattell, Chapman, Cobb, Daniel, Deane, Druitt, Gibson, Gilbey, Greenbaum, Hamilton, Hill, Horan, Hyde, Inkpin-Leissner, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Marsh, Meadows, Mears, Miller, Mitchell, Moonan, Morris, Nemeth, A Norman, K Norman, O'Quinn, Page, Peltzer Dunn, Platts, Robins, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, G Theobald, Wares, Wealls, West and Yates.

16 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

- 16.1 The Mayor reported that one deputation had been received from members of the public and invited Ms. Fowler as the spokesperson for the deputation to come forward and address the council.
- 16.2 Ms. Fowler thanked the Mayor and stated that: "The mass release of balloons and sky lanterns released in Britain are killing birds and sea life here and across the North Sea. Beaches in Europe are littered with thousands of deflated balloons – many from this country. So far more than 50 local councils have agreed to prevent the release of balloons and lanterns and I urge Brighton and Hove City Council to do the same. In the last few years it has grown in fashion to release balloons and sky lanterns at special event, funerals and memorials. In Brighton a number of schools and nursery's release balloons in parks at the end of the school year. The Marine Conservation Society has said that more than 53% of balloon related litter has been found on our beaches this year than in 2015.

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16.3 Councillor Yates thanked Ms Fowler for the deputation and welcomed the opportunity to give further consideration to the matter of how plastics were harming the environment. He stated that a report was due to come to the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee in the autumn and he would ensure that the concerns raised in the deputation were taken into account within the report.

16.4 The Mayor thanked Ms. Fowler for attending the meeting and speaking on behalf of the deputation. She explained that the points had been noted and the deputation would be referred to the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee for consideration. The persons forming the deputation would be invited to attend the meeting and would be informed subsequently of any action to be taken or proposed in relation to the matter set out in the deputation.