

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	26 September 2014
Title:	Use of Sky Lanterns on County Council Property
Reference:	6082
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Sky lanterns are effectively small hot air balloons made of paper. They are intended to be launched into free flight, rising by the enclosed hot air.
- 1.2 Sky lanterns have given rise to a growing number of safety concerns. Given these concerns this report proposes that the County Council bans their use on its property with immediate effect.

2. Background

- 2.1 The County Council has been concerned about the safety of sky lanterns and the potential damage they can cause for some time and debated the matter at the County Council meeting on 14 July 2011. The following motion was passed and the relevant actions to write to District and Borough Councils in Hampshire and the Government were taken:

"This Council calls upon the Government to ban the use of sky lanterns in England as has been done by the majority of states in Germany. This Council also asks District Councils to ban the sale or use of sky lanterns when issuing Premises Licences for open-air events. These lanterns are a potential hazard to air traffic, coastal shipping, livestock and property."

- 2.2 A Government ban on sky lanterns has not been introduced although a comprehensive Industry Code of Practice has recently been approved and a number of local authorities have introduced bans relating to their own property. Many national organisations such as the RSPCA, the National Farmers Union and the Marine Conservation Society support a ban.

2.3 The key concerns relating to the use of sky lanterns include:

- Risks to livestock and animal health (including marine animals)
- Fire risk and damage to crops and property
- Impact on the environment, including littering on land and at sea
- Risks to aviation
- Risk to coastal rescue services
- risks to consumer safety

3. County Council Land and Property

- 3.1 Given the known risks that sky lanterns present and evidence of the actual harm and damage they have caused it is proposed that their use is banned on all County Council property and that the council's tenants are also included through the inclusion of a clause in all new tenancy agreements. The ban would also apply to events organised by others on County Council property. The ban would take immediate effect with information provided locally and on the website amended accordingly.
- 3.2 In addition it is proposed to write to all schools urging them to consider imposing a similar ban relating to events and activities in their grounds and premises.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that the use of sky lanterns on County Council owned property is banned with immediate effect.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Maximising well-being:	Yes
Enhancing our quality of place:	no

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u> County Council Minutes	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u> 14/07/2011
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

No impacts on protected groups have been identified

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. No impact has been identified.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption? Not applicable.
- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts? Not Applicable.