

Title of proposed EIA	INTRODUCTION OF LOCAL CONTROLS REGARDING THE RELEASE OF BALLOONS AND SKY LANTERNS
Reference No	EQUA441
EA is in support of	New Policy
Review Frequency	No preference
Date of first review	05/04/2021
Directorate	Neighbourhoods
Division	Regulation and Enforcement
Service Area	City Centre Operations
Responsible Officer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mahendra Chauhan
Quality Control Officer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tony Quigley
Accountable Officer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Paul Lankester
Purpose of proposal	to prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns on the grounds of environmental and safety impact relevant research
Data sources	
Please include any other sources of data	
ASSESS THE POTENTIAL IMPACT AGAINST THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS	
Protected characteristic: Age	<p>Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community</p> <p>The policy will prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns from land managed by the Council, on grounds of the harm that they cause to wildlife, the aesthetic damage to the environment and (fire) safety.</p> <p>The policy will apply to people of all ages who may make use of land managed by the Council. This policy will apply to all age ranges and there is no specific impact on age.</p> <p>This policy will encourage all members of the public to consider alternatives.</p>
Age details:	
Protected characteristic: Disability	<p>Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community</p> <p>The policy will prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns from land managed by the Council, on grounds of the harm that they cause to wildlife, the aesthetic damage to the environment and (fire) safety.</p> <p>The policy will apply to people with disability, who make use of land managed by the Council.</p> <p>This policy will encourage all members of the public to consider alternatives.</p>
Disability details:	
Protected characteristic: Gender	<p>Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community</p> <p>The policy will prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns from land managed by the Council, on grounds of the harm that they cause to wildlife, the aesthetic damage to the environment and (fire) safety.</p> <p>The policy will apply to all genders, making use of land managed by the Council.</p> <p>This policy will encourage all members of the public to consider alternatives.</p>
Gender details:	
Protected characteristics: Gender Reassignment	<p>Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community</p> <p>The policy will prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns from land managed by the Council, on grounds of the harm that they cause to wildlife, the aesthetic damage to the environment and (fire) safety.</p> <p>The policy will apply to people of gender reassignment, making use of land managed by the Council.</p>
Gender reassignment details:	
Protected characteristics: Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>This policy will encourage all members of the public to consider alternatives. The policy will prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns from land managed by the Council, on grounds of the harm that they cause to wildlife, the aesthetic damage to the environment and (fire) safety. The policy will apply to people who are married or in a civil partnership, making use of land managed by the Council.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership details:	

This policy will encourage all members of the public to consider alternatives.

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Protected characteristics: Pregnancy and Maternity

Pregnancy and maternity details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

The policy will prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns from land managed by the Council, on grounds of the harm that they cause to wildlife, the aesthetic damage to the environment and (fire) safety.

The policy will apply to those making use of land managed by the Council.

This policy will encourage all members of the public to consider alternatives.

Protected characteristics: Race

Race details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

The policy will prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns from land managed by the Council, on grounds of the harm that they cause to wildlife, the aesthetic damage to the environment and (fire) safety.

The policy will apply to people of all race, making use of land managed by the Council.

This policy will encourage all members of the public to consider alternatives.

Protected characteristics: Religion or Beliefs

Religion or beliefs details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

The policy will prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns from land managed by the Council, on grounds of the harm that they cause to wildlife, the aesthetic damage to the environment and (fire) safety.

It is acknowledged that the use of lanterns is an important part of Buddhist, Shinto and Hindu religious practice, as well as cultural practices across the world, however lanterns other than sky lanterns can be used in these contexts. Please see the following links:-

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T%C5%8Dr%C5%8D/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sky_lantern

The policy will apply to people of all religion and belief, making use of land managed by the Council.

Members of the public will be encouraged to take up alternatives.

Protected characteristics: Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

The policy will prohibit the release of balloons and sky lanterns from land managed by the Council, on grounds of the harm that they cause to wildlife, the aesthetic damage to the environment and (fire) safety.

The policy will apply to people of all sexual orientation, making use of land managed by the Council.

This policy will encourage all members of the public to consider alternatives.

Please indicate any actions arising from completing this screening exercise.

Please indicate whether a full impact assessment is recommended

NO

What data has been collected to facilitate the assessment of this policy/proposal?

The Birmingham City Council Outdoor Event Organisers Guide (Edition 1 - 2016) references a 'voluntary ban' on the use of sky lanterns at all Council organised events or events that take place on council owned land.

The Council's Outdoor Event Organisers Guide (Edition 1 _2016) references that the Council shares the views with, Marine Conservation society, Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), Tidy Britain Group and the National Farmers Union, that balloon releases should be given 'great consideration' by the event organiser given the evidence that the harm that they cause to wildlife and the aesthetic damage to the environment.

KIMO, the Local Authorities International Environmental Association has also called for a ban on balloon releases.

West Midlands Fire Service has publicly stated that it does not support the release of sky lanterns

West Midlands Fire Service has publicly stated that it does not support the release of sky lanterns and urges the public and event organisers not to use them.

The Marine Conservation Society has published a position paper challenging the balloon industry's claims of latex biodegradability and citing numerous case studies of injury to marine life as a result of balloon ingestion. They have called for a blanket ban on both balloon releases and sky lantern releases.

Consultation analysis

Internally: Environmental Health, Licensing, Sports and Events, Parks, Bereavement Services, Housing, LEA schools.

External: Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Business Improvement Districts, Safety Advisory Group.

All are fully supportive of the policy.

Adverse impact on any people with protected characteristics.

No

Could the policy/proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any adverse impact? Not Applicable

How will the effect(s) of this policy/proposal on equality be monitored?

Officer responsible for managing the use of Council land will land monitor adherence and impact of policy.

Officer representation on Safety Advisory Groups will endorse the policy but will also monitor impact.

What data is required in the future?

number of events that did not take place as a result of the policy

number of occasions when the event organiser opted to take up alternatives to the release of balloons and sky lanterns

Are there any adverse impacts on any particular group(s)

No

If yes, please explain your reasons for going ahead.

not applicable

Initial equality impact assessment of your proposal

Consulted People or Groups

Informed People or Groups

Summary and evidence of findings from your EIA

Evidence in support of policy:

www.expressandstar.com/news/2015/01/13/ban-for-sky-lanterns-in-black-country-and-staffordshire/ .

Birmingham City Council's Outdoor Event Organisers Guide V1 2016

The Balloon and Party Professionals Association – Guidance and Code of Conduct for Balloon Releases <https://www.nabas.co.uk/balloons-and-releases/>

The Marine Conservation Society – Pollution Policy and Position Statement – Balloons and Chinese Sky Lanterns.

www.mcsuk.org/downloads/pollution/beachwatch/MCS_balloons_and_chinese_lanterns_policy.pdf

KIMO Resolution 1/5 Mass Balloon Releases - http://www.kimonederlandbelgie.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Balloon-Release-Resolution_final.pdf

Express and Star Article 'ban for Sky Lanterns in Black Country and Staffordshire' www.expressandstar.com/news/2015/01/13/ban-for-sky-lanterns-in-black-country-and-staffordshire/

West Midlands Fire Service- Response to FOI re: Sky Lanterns <https://www.wmfs.net/sky-lanterns-17005/>

RSPCA [End Sky Litter](#)

QUALITY CONTROL SECTION

Submit to the Quality Control Officer for reviewing?

Yes

Quality Control Officer comments

Decision by Quality Control Officer

Proceed for final approval

Submit draft to Accountable Officer?

Yes

Decision by Accountable Officer

Approve

Date approved / rejected by the Accountable Officer

16/01/2020

Reasons for approval or rejection

Approved on behalf of Paul Lankester on 16/01/2020 - Planning and Performance Team

Please print and save a PDF copy for your records

Yes

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