

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of depositions from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes following which one Member of the Council, nominated by the Mayor, may speak in response. It shall then be moved by the Mayor and voted on without discussion that the deputation be thanked for attending and its subject matter noted.

Notification of two Deputations have been received. The spokesperson is entitled to speak for 5 minutes.

(1) Deputation concerning Mass Release of Balloons**Spokesperson Ms T. Fowler**

Supported by:

Stella King

Denice Friend

Maria Marshall

Jane Clarke

Adam Englebright

Maureen Hawthorne

Ward affected: All

Councillor Yates, Leader of the Council will reply.

(1) Deputation concerning the Mass Release of Balloons

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

