

Midlothian Council

Labour Group



Midlothian Council
Tuesday 8 November 2016

Notice of Counter Motion

SKY LANTERNS/CHINESE LANTERNS

The National Farmers Union Scotland represents over 8,500 farmers and crofters from across Scotland, and is seeking Council support to improve the safety in the countryside.

Sky lanterns, also known as Chinese lanterns, can cause untold harm and damage not only to the environment, but also to animals and can cause fires on farms and crofts too.

To date, eight local authorities in Scotland have banned the use of sky lanterns and/or helium balloon release on council-owned land, and the National Farmers Union Scotland is working to urge other councils to follow suit and help to make farms, crofts, and wider countryside safer.

The lanterns are constructed from paper with a wire or wooden frame and contain a lighted candle. Whilst seemingly innocent as they are released they can pose a fire hazard to stacks of straw, woodland and farm buildings and amount to litter when they return to the ground. If they land within livestock fields, or amongst crops grown for livestock feed, the wires risk being ingested by livestock and have been seen to cause great harm and suffering to animals.

Given the damage that Chinese lanterns can cause to the environment, property and animals, National Farmers Union Scotland would like to see greater public awareness of these risks. The Union believes that it is the responsibility of councils to publicly recognise these risks by banning the use of Sky Lanterns on council owned property and at council run events.

Midlothian Council agrees to follow the example of other councils within Scotland and take similar measures to demonstrate taking responsibility towards the environment, property and animal welfare seriously by supporting a ban on sky lanterns within our area.

In addition to the aforementioned Council agrees to include banning fireworks from being set off from Council land except for organised / licensed displays.

Moved



Councillor Adam Montgomery

Seconded



Councillor Russell Imrie