

Motion by Councillors B Leishman and E Drysdale

Alternative Methods of Celebration

As a Council, we know that individuals, families, and local businesses are facing huge pressures in these difficult and challenging times. We therefore recognise the importance and the positive benefits, in terms of personal wellbeing and bolstering the local economy in bringing our communities together to celebrate events such as Bonfire Night or our Christmas lights switch on. It is important however that everyone can participate in the fun and celebration – but unfortunately our continuing reliance on traditional fireworks makes that impossible. We know now that for many people fireworks are the opposite of fun - they mean fear and distress. If we think about children, young people and adults living with autism – our veterans who having bravely served our country and are now living with stress and trauma – for refugees who have settled here looking to rebuild their lives after fleeing war. We also claim to be a nation of animal lovers, yet we regularly frighten and traumatise our pets and wildlife by our use of fireworks. We recognise the importance of our environment and are committed to tackling climate change but ironically, we then choose to deliberately release significant amounts of Carbon Dioxide and Carbon Monoxide into the atmosphere and a cocktail of chemicals such as Barium, Strontium and Cadmium, that are detrimental to air, land and water.

As a Council we are continuously looking to improve services and the “customer experience” for want of a better phrase. We have to move with the times, and I would suggest that the time for the traditional firework is up! I therefore propose the following Motion.

Council is asked to:

- Acknowledge the importance and the benefit to our communities in bringing them together to have fun and to celebrate key events in the calendar
- Note that the use of traditional fireworks can cause distress and upset to many individuals and animals and has a detrimental impact on the environment
- Lead by example and move away from the use of traditional fireworks and adopt a more contemporary and sustainable method of marking events and celebrations