

Notice of Motions

To consider the following motions, which have been submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 12.1:

a) **Fireworks.** Councillor Hobson to propose.

Fireworks are used by people throughout the year to mark different events. While they can bring much enjoyment to some people, they can cause significant problems and fear for other people and animals. They can be a source of fear and distress for many animals (including pet animals, farm livestock and wildlife). Animals affected not only suffer psychological distress but can also cause themselves injuries – sometimes very serious ones – as they attempt to run away or hide from the noise.

The unpredictable, loud and high intensity noises that many fireworks make can cause fear. For example, studies have found fireworks to be the most common cause for fear responses in dogs, and it is estimated that 45 percent of dogs show signs of fear when they hear fireworks. A New Zealand survey recorded 79 percent of horses as either anxious or very anxious around fireworks or over the Guy Fawkes Day period.

Although there is limited direct evidence, it is also likely that fireworks and their debris will cause disturbance to wildlife and are likely to cause suffering or distress, depending on the distance from the explosive and the noise level.

The RSPCA believes that a licensing system would help with better enforcement of the law by allowing enforcement bodies to know where licensed events are being held so they can focus on locations and incidents elsewhere.

The RSPCA also believes that there is a real need to raise awareness amongst owners of animals about fireworks phobia. This phobia can be treated (in dogs at least) in the long term but owners need to prepare themselves and their pets sooner, rather than just before the fireworks are let off. There is a need to raise awareness about the impact of fireworks on animals to the wider public to encourage them to be more considerate of those with pets, horses and livestock as well as local wildlife.

The RSPCA believes the law is failing as it does not prevent or sufficiently reduce the risk of fireworks causing distress, injury or anxiety to people, as well as death, injury or distress to animals.

The RSPCA also believe that further research is needed to properly understand the impact of noise on animals and a number of things can be done to improve the situation for animals and people by:

- introducing a limit on the public use of fireworks on or close to specific dates and times
- tightening restrictions on the sale of fireworks in the run up to Bonfire night

- reducing the maximum noise level of fireworks sold to the public, ensuring they are labelled accurately
- licensing all public firework displays – and ensuring displays are better advertised to the public

Therefore, this Council resolves:

1. That the Chief Executive be requested to write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy urging him to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays.
2. That the Director of Community and Environmental Services be requested to:
 - look at ways to encourage and promote all public firework displays within the local authority boundary to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people;
 - to develop and promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks; and
 - to look at ways to encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display.

b) Supporting a healthier meal option for our older communities through Meals on Wheels. Councillor T Williams to propose.

Even before the pandemic, more than an estimated 1.3 million people over the age of 65 were thought to be malnourished. Malnutrition makes people more susceptible to physical and mental ill-health, extends hospital stays and makes re-admission more likely – malnutrition accounts for nearly £20bn of health and social care spending in England.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult for many people to access good food daily, not least, older people and disabled people, who were already at high risk of malnutrition. During the crisis, many older people and disabled people struggled to access good food every day and indeed this issue predated the crisis.

Whilst there are a number of ways to support people – like investing in lunch clubs or good care-home and hospital food – having a robust Meals on Wheels service locally is a cornerstone to tackling the issue. Meals on Wheels services provide a lifeline to people struggling to feed themselves in their own homes, ensure that older and disabled people at risk of malnutrition or social isolation can access regular social contact every day and at least one nutritious meal every day, and are cost-saving in the long-term to local authorities and NHS trusts.

Now more than ever the Council must support older and disabled people to be able to stay healthy, safe and nourished in their own homes.

This Council resolves:

To request the Executive to adopt and budget for, a subsidised Meals on Wheels service with an accredited local supplier similar to the scheme currently being delivered by Chorley Council, where the most disadvantaged in Blackpool's older communities can receive financial support to have access to wholesome food every day.