

Motion - Use of BBQ's

The summer of 2022 has set new records in the UK for heat. Connected to this have been numerous fires that have devastated large plots of land, destroyed properties, killed animals, caused injuries and endangered life. Fortunately, it appears no life was lost but the impact of these fires will last for years.

Some of these fires were caused by people having BBQ's and failing to dispose of them after they have finished. One ember can cause a large fire these can be from a BBQ or other means with a naked flame.

Barbecues and any naked flames pose a significant fire risk if they are not put out properly and, if necessary, disposed of. These can cause grass fires in open spaces and scorching the grassed areas. The dry spell has left grassland like a tinderbox and increases the chances of a fire caused by a disposable barbecue.

London's Fire Commissioner Andy Roe has said "Despite our grass fire warnings, we've still seen some people behaving carelessly and recklessly. On Saturday (23rd July) firefighters prevented a serious blaze at Wanstead Flats caused using a disposable barbecue. We need urgent action now to see a national ban on the sale of disposable barbecues. They can be bought for as little as five pounds and can cause untold damage, especially when the grass is as dry as it has been over the last few weeks".

This council recognises the threat BBQ's and naked flames can have on our land but also that they can also be used appropriately and are an important aspect to the tourism of the area. Several years ago this council agreed a motion to ban the use of lanterns on council land due to the risk they present to livestock and fire. BBQ's if unmanaged are an even greater risk.

This council recognises the comments from Andy Roe and resolves to ban the use of disposable BBQ's from all council owned land with the exception of registered campsites or events that have a risk assessment in place and method regarding use and disposal agreed with the council.

This council:

- Recognises the comments from Andy Roe.
- Would support a ban on the use of BBQs from all council owned land, to the extent that this is possible, with the exception of registered campsites, beach huts or events that have a risk assessment in place and a method agreed with the council regarding use and disposal.
- Would support the introduction of a charge/fine to people who did not follow such a ban, to the extent that this is possible.
- Requests the Environment committee to undertake the necessary work to develop and adopt a policy which would fulfil these objectives, to the extent that they are feasible within the law and any other relevant constraints.
- Calls on the Government to introduce a national ban on the sale of disposable barbecues as soon as possible and resolves to write to the relevant Government Departments and our local MP's expressing this view.

The intention of this motion is also connected to the environmental emergency and our need to protect of grass lands for peoples leisure and welfare of animals and all those who rely on the grasslands. We recognise that a blanket ban on BBQ's would have serious consequences on aspects of our tourism in Swale as it is popular with people when camping and we do not wish to deter this.

Proposer: Cllr Bowen
Secunder: Cllr Dendor