

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Motions to Council – Assessment Form

On receipt of a Motion from a Councillor, the Governance Team will carry out an assessment as to its contents to establish whether there are likely to be significant consequences to the Council should the Motion be carried at the subsequent Full Council meeting.

The first question to be addressed will be:-

“Can the Motion, if approved, be implemented without the need for any resource (financial and otherwise) to be identified outside existing budgets or staffing capacity?”

If the answer is ‘yes’, then the Motion can proceed towards discussion and resolution.

An example of a Motion which would fall into the above category would be where the Council is being asked to lobby the Government, Somerset County Council or other body on a particular issue. If the motion is carried, the action required will usually involve no more than a letter being prepared and sent to the intended recipient.

However, as in the case of the recent Motion on ‘Climate Change’, the answer to the above question would clearly be ‘no’.

In such circumstances, detailed analysis of the wording of the Motion will be required to identify what will be needed if the Motion – when it comes before Full Council – is carried.

Such analysis will include:-

- What additional resource would be required to ensure the Motion (if approved) could be implemented?
- What needs to be done to identify the level of resource necessary both in financial and staff terms?
- Are any approvals needed to provide these resources?
- Will this require reports to be submitted through Scrutiny and the Executive? If a Supplementary Estimate is required, Full Council approval will be required too.

If such analysis is required, the Governance Team will arrange for the attached pro-forma to be completed and this will accompany the relevant Motion onto the agenda of the Full Council meeting so all Members are aware that further investigation will be required before the Motion – even if it is carried – can be implemented.

Motions to Council – Assessment Proforma

(To be used in circumstances where it appears the wording of a proposed Motion will commit the Council to providing further financial or staffing resources which cannot be met from existing budgets)

Brief Details of the Motion –

Motion to ban sky lanterns and ceremonial balloons on Council land and raise awareness of their environmental impact

This Council resolves:

1. To end the use of sky lanterns and balloons for ceremonial release to the open air from Council-owned public land.
2. To request the Leader of the Council to write a letter to the Environment Secretary of the UK Government to initiate legislation to ban sky lanterns and balloons for ceremonial use
3. To raise public awareness of the harmful environmental effects and risk to animals as a result of the release of sky lanterns and balloons.

Questions to be addressed

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What additional resource would be required to ensure the Motion (if approved) could be implemented?</i> |
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<p>Answer – There would be a resource requirement spanning a number of functional areas of the council both in financial terms and employee activity.</p>

<p>Terms and conditions for bookings need to be amended / updated. This is an activity on the comms and engagement team.</p>

<p>Signage in parks and open spaces would need to be designed and installed, most likely through the Open Spaces service.</p>

<p>Public awareness would need to be raised through media releases via the coms team</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What needs to be done to identify the level of resource necessary both in financial and staff terms?</i> |
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<p>Answer – The likely cost have not been assessed as this would take time to evaluate the number of sign in each location, and how many locations would have these installed. Would we sign every open space across the district? Is that a proportional response? Is the carbon cost of installing all of the signs greater than the environmental benefit they may achieve?</p>

<p>The council could chose to implement the motion without he signage and this would save time and money but may be less effective.</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are any approvals needed to provide these resources?</i> |
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Answer – This is currently un-resourced work and unbudgeted cost. The activity does not feature in the service plans of the functional areas that would need to implement the changes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Will this require reports to be submitted through Scrutiny and the Executive? If a Supplementary Estimate is required, Full Council approval will be required too.</i>
Answer – If a new budget is the route to funding these cost then yes, if there are other means to fund them, such as in year underspends or other budget virements then possibly not. Again this assumes that the council wish to sign the open spaces.

Likely timescale involved –

If the motion is approved teams will need to resource the design and implementation plan for signage. This may also require consultation with the planning service and the impacted communities.