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**MM6/17 BALLOON RELEASE BAN - The Mayor, Councillor Bill Pickering****File Number: MYR/07/10/7 - BP17/442**

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In March of this year, Eurobodalla Shire Council considered a report on the effect of balloon releases on the natural environment. Following consideration of the report, it was resolved to ban the release of balloons at Council events and in Council-managed reserves.

I support the stance taken by Eurobodalla and believe a similar ban by this Council would raise public awareness of the damage caused by this seemingly harmless activity.

When balloons are released into the atmosphere, they and associated debris, travel long distances. The end destination for these items is often waterways where they can be ingested by birdlife and sea faring animals. The impacts to marine life can include deformity, internal injuries and death due to starvation, suffocation or strangulation.

Since November 2000, NSW Government legislation has made it illegal to release 20 or more gas inflated balloons at the same time. Further, it is an aggravated offence to release more than 100 balloons, although there are exceptions to these offences.

Given the number of parks and waterways in the City of Ryde, I believe that a program of public awareness to highlight the issues associated with balloon releases, particularly with regard to injury to animals, is appropriate.

A formal “no balloon release” policy could also be instigated in Council’s parks and at Council events.

Council could also support Eurobodalla Council in its advocacy for a State and National education program on the issues associated with balloon release and in its efforts to encourage the banning of balloon release.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- (a) That Council ban the release of balloons at Council events and in Council managed reserves.
- (b) That Council include a “No release of balloons” policy in Council’s Events Guidelines.

**MM6/17 (continued)**

- (c) That Council advocate for a State and National education program on the issues associated with balloon release and encourage the banning of balloon release.

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no attachments for this report.

Report Prepared By:



**Councillor Bill Pickering**  
**The Mayor**