

## Members' Library Service Request Form

Date of Document	01/08/19
Originator	E John
Originator's Ref (if any)	Bonfire Policy
Document Title	Cessation of Authorised Bonfire Sites

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Additional information:

Authorised By	Tom Reid
Designation	Head of Infrastructure
Date	01/08/19

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**REPORT TO:** Members' Library Service

**MEETING DATE:**

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)

**SUBJECT:** Cessation of Authorised Bonfire Sites

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To remind members of the existence of and highlight the implications of maintaining an Authorised Bonfire Site list for unorganised public firework displays and to consider deletion of this list in favour of individual event notification and approval through the Council's Safety Advisory Group (SAG).

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That members note the decision by Head of Infrastructure, under delegated powers, to abolish the list of Authorised Bonfire Sites and facilitate the management of future fireworks and bonfire displays through the established SAG process on an event by event basis.
- 2.2 To actively promote and publicise this change through all available media channels to ensure compliance with the new arrangements in future.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Dating back in excess of thirty years the Council has maintained a list of Authorised Sites for Bonfires (Appendix 1) on which the general public could set up a bonfire as part of a Guy Fawkes type event and to do so without any controls or safety management.
- 3.2 The list of approved sites and activity on the remaining sites has gradually declined in recent years but the presence of an authorised site list effectively permits the general public to stage bonfire displays without any adequate organisational control or liability on the part of the organiser.

- 3.3 Further to this the existence of authorised bonfire sites is effectively a vehicle to legitimise fly tipping and this became particularly evident in the Wallyford and Musselburgh areas in 2018 when an individual reporting to be a licenced waste carrier posted on social media a cut price opportunity for household waste disposal. This resulted in over 100 tonnes of material including electrical goods and non-combustible waste being dumped and requiring action by the Council to clear and dispose of. Uncontrolled bonfire sites also act as a focus and stimulus for higher levels of antisocial behaviour.
- 3.4 The other area of consideration relates to the Authorised Bonfire Sites list acting as effective approval for unidentified groups and individuals to stage unmanaged bonfire and firework displays on Council managed property. Since 2016 the Council has required all event organisers to register their event with the Safety Advisory Group so that an adequate Risk Assessment and Event Safety Plan can be prepared to manage risk down to an acceptable level.
- 3.5 Based on the foregoing background information and current best practice the Council should remove this Authorised Bonfire Site list and replace management of community bonfires with the standardised Safety Advisory Group process in order to ensure proper control of this type of event.
- 3.6 Internal consultation with Manager or Protective Services / Safer Communities and the Emergency Planning and Risk Team concurred that the current arrangements did expose the Council to risk and on this basis Head of Infrastructure made the decision to abolish the Authorised Bonfires Site list on 3 April 2019

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report, adequate alternative measure already being in place that provide protection for the Council and our communities.

#### **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The subject of this report does have an impact on the local community and environment which could be considered to be detrimental.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – The majority of community led firework and bonfire night events already register with the Safety Advisory Group process so the additional administrative burden this report would generate if approved is limited to a level capable of being absorbed with existing SAG capacity.

6.2 Infrastructure and Safer Communities resources already have to be allocated to managing the size of uncontrolled bonfires within residential areas and removing dangerous materials in the lead up to traditional bonfire night celebrations.

6.3 Personnel - As above

6.4 Other – None

## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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<b>DATE</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> August 2019

**AUTHORISED SITES FOR BONFIRES ; WEST AREA**

Musselburgh	Macbeth Moir Road Delta Crescent Pinkie West / Pinkie Avenue Shops Goose Green
Whitecraig	Grass Area at top of Carberry Court
Wallyford	Grass Area at St Clement's Terrace Garage Site, Wemyss Gardens Fa'side Avenue South
Tranent	Football Pitch (APOGI Park) Muirpark Road

**AUTHORISED SITES FOR BONFIRES ; EAST AREA**

North Berwick	Beach area (Unknown if East or West Beach) Law Car Park
Dunbar	Ashfield (rough area towards pond) Pine Street (rough area of grass) Wingate (small bonfire only) Harbour (at Battery)
East Linton	Public Park (rear of Primary School)
Haddington	Whittinghame Drive
Athelstaneford	Adjacent to football pitch
Garvald	Park adjacent to burn
Gullane	Muirfield Drive (rough area to South)
Innerwick	Public park (North of play area)

Stenton

Public park

Longniddry

Public park

List last updated 2002

\*no activity noted in recent years