

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Policy

Summary

Due to an increase of the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in our parks and open spaces there is a need to establish the council's stance on the operation of these devices.

Portfolio - Business

Date Signed off – 30 January 2017

Wards Affected

All

Recommendation

The Executive is advised to resolve to adopt the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Policy attached as Annex 1 prior to a review and amendment of the current Byelaws.

1. Key Issues

- 1.1 Neighbouring authorities have recently adopted a zero-tolerance approach to the operating of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles within their parks and open spaces. Consequentially, this is pushing more operators to move across boundaries, increasing the use of our parks and open spaces.
- 1.2 A number of these UAV's can be flown to capture or observe the images beneath which have privacy implications of the subsequent use of the material captured.
- 1.3 There is currently no set standard which must be met prior to flying or operating a UAV. Learning to use this type of equipment is usually done through trial and error and so naturally results in a number of collision and accidents all of which have the potential to be a health and safety risk within our Parks and Open Spaces.
- 1.4 We have seen a significant increase in the number of complaints from not only residents neighbouring our facilities but also from other users of the Parks and Open Spaces.
- 1.5 As these devices have become more affordable, the number of in-experienced operators is also increasing.
- 1.6 One of our parks, in particular, is on the flight path into Farnborough Airport which has further implications and restrictions imposed from the Civil Aviation Authority.

2. Resource Implications

- 2.1 The number of visitors to our parks and open spaces who are operating Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV's) is increasing significantly. Currently the Council have not adopted any policy with regards to Surrey Heath Borough Council owned land.
- 2.2 A review of the Open Space Byelaws is in its early stages; however this is a large project and is due to be completed before the end of 2017. In the interim, it is requested that a Policy is adopted allowing the Council to regulate these activities within our open spaces.

3. Options

- 3.1 The Council has the option to:
 - i) Adopt the proposed Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Policy
 - ii) Not adopt the policy and await the amended Byelaws
 - iii) Amend and adopt the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Policy

4. Proposals

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Council adopt the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Policy and include suitable amendments within the Byelaws when they are reviewed.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 Having researched a number of neighbouring authorities, it the majority are either adopting a policy or have amended their Byelaws to reflect a zero-tolerance position.
- 5.2 Exemptions will only be considered, where users are part of a formalised model aircraft flying club that can demonstrate all health and safety and insurance measures are in place. A license agreement must be made with Surrey Heath Borough Council and the formalised club before site usage can be established.

6. Corporate Objectives And Key Priorities

- 6.1 This proposal support corporate objectives to keep the Borough Clean Green and Healthy.

7. Governance Issues

- 7.1 The policy will be observed and enforced by Council Officers and any contractor appointed by the authority to act on their behalf.
- 7.2 Once the Byelaws are in place, they will again be enforced by Officers of the Council prior to any legal proceedings.

8. Risk Management

- 8.1 This is considered medium risk as inexperienced operators are likely to mis-handle the equipment which could result in damage to people, equipment, surrounding areas and or personal equipment or injury.

Annexes	Annex 1 - Policy
Background Papers	None
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Consultations, Implications And Issues Addressed

Resources	Required	Consulted
Revenue	✓	
Capital		
Human Resources		
Asset Management		
IT		

Other Issues	Required	Consulted
Corporate Objectives & Key Priorities	✓	
Policy Framework		
Legal		
Governance		
Sustainability		
Risk Management		
Equalities Impact Assessment		
Community Safety		
Human Rights		
Consultation		
P R & Marketing		

Review Date:

Version: