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Fireworks:

I appreciate the concerns raised by some constituents. Fireworks displays run by local charities and organisations can provide a safe and organised way for people to enjoy fireworks, while promoting community cohesion and raising funds for local causes.

However, I believe it is important to look at how we can better protect people, animals and the planet from the misuse of fireworks, and the stress and anxiety it can cause to smaller children, older people and those who suffer from mental health issues, as well as to pets and livestock.

Since January 2005, the sale of fireworks to the public has been prohibited, except for from licensed traders. However, fireworks can be sold by unlicensed traders for Chinese New Year, Diwali, Bonfire Night celebrations and new year.

On the use of fireworks, under the Fireworks Regulations 2004, it is an offence to use fireworks after 11pm and before 7am without permission, except on permitted fireworks nights, when the times are extended. The regulations also allow fireworks use by local authority employees to put on displays permitted by the local authority, or for a national public celebration.

I believe it is clear that when it comes to our firework regulations, the law has not kept pace with developments, and the Government should look at them to determine the changing impact of fireworks and whether any changes are needed. It needs, for example, to consider the growing calls for fireworks use to be permitted only in public displays or at certain times of year, as well as to look at the current decibel level cap. I will continue to monitor developments on this issue and keep in mind the points raised.

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