

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Streetscene Scrutiny Panel

Date **16 November 2023**

Report of: **Head of Streetscene**

Subject: **Draft Streetscene Sustainable Pesticide Use Policy**

SUMMARY

The draft policy sets out what pesticides the Council uses, why, how, and where they are used and the controls restrictions and best practice in place with an assessment of the current appropriate alternatives.

The policy will ensure the Council has a sustainable method for weed control that will continue with the process already underway of reducing pesticide usage on public land in Fareham wherever possible.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Streetscene Panel scrutinises the content of the Draft Streetscene Sustainable Use of Pesticide Policy in preparation for the adoption of the policy as a working document for the Streetscene Public Spaces team.

INTRODUCTION

1. On 20 April 2023 the Council received a petition submitted by Councillor Ms C Bainbridge on behalf of Conserving Habitats in Portchester (C.H.I.P), which requested that Fareham Borough Council ensure that, in public areas, it replaces the use of Glyphosate with chemical free weed removal methods, which are better for the environment and pose no risk to humans, wildlife and pets.
2. Following research conducted by Council Officers, it was found that some Councils have initiated either a partial herbicide ban, or glyphosate ban for general use. However, it appears that all authorities are still using glyphosate to treat invasive species such as Japanese knotweed.
3. The Council's Streetscene Scrutiny Panel received a presentation on the Council's Pesticide Treatment Programme at the meeting on 26 January 2023. Members of the Panel were very supportive of the suggestion put forward in the presentation that a policy be developed to regulate the Council's use of pesticides and to provide details of the measures being considered to reduce them.
4. The Council's Executive met on Monday, 5 June 2023 to receive a report to inform Members of the Executive about the current use of pesticides on public land by the Council's Streetscene team. The report also outlined the legislation controlling pesticide use and what alternative measures other local authorities are currently adopting. It was resolved that the Executive notes the content of the report.
5. The Streetscene Scrutiny Panel met on 5 July 2023 and agreed to scrutinise the draft Sustainable Use of Pesticide Policy at the meeting scheduled for 2 November 2023.

DRAFT PESTICIDE POLICY

6. A copy of the Draft Streetscene Sustainable Pesticide Use Policy is contained at Appendix A to this report.
7. The policy is a living document that can be adjusted and reviewed as circumstances change such as legislative changes on available pesticides that can be used, or as new technologies and developments allow sustainable alternatives to facilitate pesticide reduction or elimination.
8. The policy sets out what pesticides the Council uses, why, how and where they are used and the controls restrictions and best practice in place with an assessment of the current appropriate alternatives.
9. If adopted, the policy will ensure the Council has a sustainable method for weed control that will continue with the process already underway of reducing pesticide usage on public land in Fareham wherever possible. The goal being to eventually phase out pesticide use on Fareham Borough Council owned land completely as and when suitable sustainable alternative solutions can be found, other than in exceptional circumstances.

RISK ASSESSMENT

10. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report.

CONCLUSION

11. Members of the Panel are invited to scrutinise and debate the draft policy and make suggestions as appropriate in readiness for the adoption of the policy as a working document for the Streetscene Public Spaces team.
12. The Policy, if adopted, will ensure the Council has a robust management process in place to ensure pesticides are not used needlessly and that use of chemicals is only permitted after an assessment has concluded chemical control is necessary as the most sustainable option of weed or pest control.

Appendix A - Draft Streetscene Sustainable Pesticide Use Policy

Reference Papers:

Executive Streetscene Sustainable Pesticide Use Report - 05 June 2023

Presentation and Minutes of the Streetscene Scrutiny Panel - 26 January 2023

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Mick Gore 01329 824459