

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### Bulletin Summary – topic [Use of Glyphosate to control weeds]

#### Overview:

#### The questions posed by Members.

- Background information on the Pros vs Cons of its use,
- Frequency, how and where.
- Alternatives to its uses, including manual weeding
- What consideration has been given to the impact on the biosphere and eco System.

An update on the Class Action in the USA in terms of the impact on human health (It is important to note that legal proceedings may evolve over time, so it is advisable to consult up to date sources or legal experts for the latest information on class action lawsuits and outcomes)

#### A summary of the key issues

The Council carries out weed control on a variety of elements such as pavements, gullies, shrub beds and facilities, for both HCC and EHC owned assets. Controlling weeds helps to prevent damage to the surface infrastructure and reduces trip hazards.

Some hand weeding is carried out in ornamental areas where it is the most effective way of maintaining high standards.

#### Pro's

Highly effective weed control across a broad spectrum of weeds including annual and perennial.

Considered less harmful to the environment compared to other herbicides and breaks down quickly in soil and water offering low long terms contamination.

Cost effective compared to other options.

#### Cons

Potential for health risks to those exposed to high levels of herbicide.

Its considered controversial and potential environmental impact on non-target organisms

Development of resistance by some plants

The control of weeds is delivered via two applications per year. Mar/Apr & Sept/Oct

#### Officers observations / comments

##### Practical Perspective

- offers a good balance to support the mechanical sweeping.
- more cost effective and efficient than the alternatives such as hot foam or flame guns.

##### EHC Perspective

- it supports our Waste team.

- provides a much more cost-effective alternative for the Waste team instead of hand pulling, strimming and brushing the weeds

### HCC perspective

- Requested and funded by HCC within the street scene

Note: If HCC they felt that they could do without it, they would make the resultant saving. Our understanding is that they would not be comfortable with the level of complaints or the damage to infrastructure that would ensue.

Overall while glyphosate offers several benefits in terms of weed control and cost-effectiveness, its use is not without risk and careful consideration should be given to its application to minimise potential negative impacts (Human health/Environment etc)

### **How the key issues could be approached / resolved /**

- The Waste team could optimise the level of mechanical sweeping in gullies and in areas where there has been a build-up of detritus as this provides a medium for weed growth.
- Integrated control strategies that combine glyphosate and other weed control methods may help mitigate some of these concerns, so a combination of both elements where gullies are only sprayed where there are visible weeds.
- The Agency agreement could be terminated and handed back to HCC, who could either continue or discontinue its use.

### **Whether Members wish to progress the issue and what further information is needed?**

Full extent of herbicide used annually, Where areas can be reduced and wha

**Topic will be discussed within the context of the next Work**

**Programme on .....**