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# SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

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**TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL**

**FRIDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 4PM**

**THE EXECUTIVE MEETING ROOM - THIRD FLOOR, THE GUILDHALL,  
PORTSMOUTH**

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## **Membership**

Councillor Judith Smyth (Chair)

Councillor Charlotte Gerada (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Simon Boshier

Councillor Chris Dike

Councillor Jason Fazackarley

Councillor Mark Jeffery

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(NB This supplementary agenda should be retained for future reference with the main agenda and minutes of this meeting).

## **SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

**4 Reducing the use of pesticides on council land (Pages 3 - 10)**

**RECOMMENDED that the attached report into reducing the use of pesticides on council land be signed off.**

The completed budget and policy implications table is attached.

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	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Policy Framework</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<u>Pace of Change</u>			
1	To continue to work at pace. Even if none of the recommendations in this report are accepted by the Cabinet continuing as now will be significant.	Across council	Within existing framework	None
2	To aim for continued reduction in the use of pesticides on Portsmouth City Council owned and managed land at the same rate as 2021 to now to 25% by November 2024. Accept slower progress in 2025 and aim to achieve a reduction to 5% of 2021 use in 2026.	Across council	Within existing framework	Will require additional operative resource
3	To monitor the development and marketing of safe affordable alternatives and adopt as quickly as possible. To replicate the success of the Estates Department with no additional costs, continuous communication with residents, learning new ways of working together and experimentation on the job.	Across council	Within existing framework	To replicate Housing approach Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services will require additional operative resource.
4	Using other methods to reduce the prevalence of unwanted plants, by reducing the extend of ground requiring weed control (such as replacing paving with planted areas, changing the type of planting and reducing the frequency of some operations). Accepting green areas that are generally wilder and therefore better for biodiversity.	Across council	Within existing framework	Ongoing task to identify and select suitable areas  Cost of works to introduce changes.

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Policy Framework</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<u>Accountability and measuring results</u>			
5	The reduction in the use of pesticides should be continued to be overseen by the three departmental cabinet members. They will need to report to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Greening the City who will hold accountability for the overall reduction of the use of pesticides and improving biodiversity.	Across council	Within existing framework	Staff time
6	The Cabinet should consider a full report of progress annually starting in November 2024. The report and cabinet decisions should be then reported to Full Council.	Across council	Cabinet and Full Council meeting	Staff time
7	Each department should report on achievements since 2022, planned reduction in the coming year and achievements against targets.	Across council	Cabinet and Full Council meeting	Staff time
8	Parks department needs to break these figures down into different land uses.	Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services	Within existing framework	Staff time
9	The main reason for eliminating the use of pesticides is to improve biodiversity. The City Council needs to develop a methodology for measuring changes in biodiversity (over and above the land use' mapping that will be part of the new Biodiversity legislation that will apply to our Local Plan to be enforced in 2024).	Across council - Public Health (Green and Healthy City), Planning, CL&RS, HNB and Regeneration	New policy	May require additional resource to apply any methodology across council land  The current plan can be read here: <a href="#">Biodiversity action plan</a>

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Policy Framework</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
10	The Cabinet to take advice from local environmental groups such as Friends of the Earth, RSPB, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust etc to develop an approach that involves local residents – such as annual or more frequent small-scale surveys (of vegetation, wildlife and soil quality) that would, if started soon, provide a baseline and enable scientific monitoring or the effect of reducing the use of pesticides and other greening policy. This would enhance other observations by professionals and others.	Action to be taken by directorates that engage with relevant environmental groups as BAU and use links and forums established following Scrutiny Panel review into biodiversity enhancement.	Within existing framework	Within existing resources
	<u>The Parks Department</u>			
11	The Parks and Highways departments continue to increase the use of non- mechanical ways of controlling unwanted plants and/or further increase the areas of land left untreated or with much reduced treatment. Vinegar (acetic acid) should be used in specific situations.	Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Service	Within existing framework	Will require additional operative resource if increase manual treatment
12	To request that the departmental staffing structure be reviewed to ascertain whether additional staff members are required. This process to conclude prior to the 2024/25 budget setting process, in order that any additional costs incurred (both for the 2024/25 financial year and taking into account the longer-term sustainability of any additional staffing in future financial years) can be considered for the relevant budget as part of the budget setting process.	Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services	Within existing framework	Staff time
13	Further work should be done to enable the Parks department to ascertain where pesticides are used at the moment and what reductions are planned in each situation.	Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services	Within existing framework	Staff time

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Policy Framework</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	In this way the reduction in use in specific situations can be closely monitored. We recommend that this is completed by November 2024 for inclusion in the annual Cabinet report of progress.			
14	To increase the number of notices to explain changes in land management including planting, biodiversity and the use of pesticides in future and enable staff on site to explain to people what is happening.	Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services	Within existing framework	Cost of signage
15	Regarding allotments, set target date of 2026 for the elimination of the use of pesticides following a full consultation with allotment associations and their members including the monitoring arrangements.	Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services	New policy (or amendment to Allotment and Leisure Garden Rules)	Staff time
	<u>Highways Department</u>			
16	Development of a city-wide policy.	Across Council departments.	New policy	Staff time to assist in development.
17	Further discussions with Colas about increasing the use of non-mechanical ways of controlling unwanted plants and reduce the areas of land left untreated or with much reduced treatment, within the existing contract as far as possible.	Regeneration and Colas	Within existing continuous improvement framework. Changes in work practices will require negotiation / financial review.	Discussions included within frameworks. Changes in work practices will require negotiation / financial review.
18	When new service/contract arrangements are considered reducing the use of pesticides should be central to our requirements.	Regeneration	New Policy	Staff time

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Policy Framework</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<u>Estates Department</u>			
19	Keep up the good work. At the right time when more estates have been 'greened,' consider publicising the Portsmouth approach in the housing and environmental press, encourage site visits. Our success is worth sharing.	Head of Estate Services.	Within Housing Revenue Account	Within existing resource levels  Including signage / information boards regarding changes to land use link to action 14.
	<u>Land where services are externally procured.</u>			
20	Reducing the use of pesticides (and enhancing biodiversity) should be added to the council's social, environmental and economic policy as part of its Social Value statement and policies. Anyone working with the city council including contractors, leaseholders, will be expected to comply and report on progress.	Across council (contracted services)	New policy (amendment to Social Value statement and policies)	Staff time
21	In the November 2024 report, the cabinet should conduct a review of and amendments to contracts and leases regarding compliance and progress in reducing pesticide use.	Across council, Regeneration	New policy (amendment to contracts and leases)	Staff time to manage compliance reporting
	<u>Other landowners including NHS, University, Business and homeowners.</u>			
22	Wildlife does not respect land ownership and arguably all our efforts to improve biodiversity can be undermined if a neighbour is using pesticides. Cabinet should agree that the council should develop and publish a clear ambition to make Portsmouth a biodiverse city which is pesticide free.	Full Council.	Not known.	Not known.

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Policy Framework</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
23	The council should lead the way in influencing and persuading external agencies to reduce the use of pesticides hand in hand with ‘improving biodiversity’ and that members and officers representing the city in bilateral and collective meetings with these agencies routinely include city policy on biodiversity/ elimination of pesticide use in order to influence them. (See Communications below).	Across departments as appropriate.	Within existing framework.	Within existing resources.
24	The Local plan has a chapter on biodiversity and now needs to include new government legislation on increasing biodiversity on new developments by January 2024. The use of pesticides should be taken into account in this as far as possible.  <u>Public Health, safety and risk</u>	Local planning team	Within existing resources	Within existing resources.
25	The City Council (Director of Public Health) be asked to include information about the risks to health of using pesticides on our website and to contribute to the November 2024 Cabinet report on progress.	Director of Public Health.	Basic information on the potential harm of pesticides to population health can be included on the PCC website as part of BAU public health advice.  For detailed advice on using individual pesticides for the public, additional resources may be	Officer time in Public Health and Communications to complete and maintain.



	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Policy Framework</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
			needed, as resources are finite.	
	<u>Communication with the public – residents and businesses</u>			
26	Use 'low cost' existing channels such as Flagship and social media to inform people about improving biodiversity including reducing pesticides - what the council is doing and what residents and businesses could do.	Marketing and communications to produce Flagship article and social media using information provided by relevant directorates.	Refer to the next column.	Resources needed will depend on the scale of activity required. If an on-going campaign is required, additional resources may be needed, or priorities for marketing and comms will need to be reviewed and updated as resources are finite.
27	Raise biodiversity and elimination of the use of pesticides at forums such as Shaping future Portsmouth, Hive. Meetings of landlords, Registered Social Landlords etc	Action to be taken by directorates that engage with relevant forums as BAU.	Within existing framework.	Within existing resources.
28	Create a website page providing a regular source of information and advice about improving biodiversity including reducing pesticides (including health and safety risks of use). This is to include gardening advice for homeowners and those wanting to care for tree pits etc in	Marketing and communications to create web page and supporting materials, using information	Refer to the next column.	Resources needed will depend on the scale of activity required. If an on-going campaign is

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	their neighbourhoods. It should also include, after discussion with allotment associations, advice for allotment holders as we move towards a ban of pesticide use there by 2026.	provided by relevant directorates.		required, additional resources may be needed, or priorities for marketing and comms will need to be reviewed and updated as resources are finite.
29	Communicate with all council officers, community workers and voluntary organisations who may be approached by residents concerned about changes in local landscapes and land management so that they can inform and reassure people.	Marketing and communications to produce information for staff, community groups and VCS organisations, using information provided by relevant directorates.	Refer to the next column.	Resources needed will depend on the scale of activity required. If an on-going campaign is required, additional resources may be needed, or priorities for marketing and comms will need to be reviewed and updated as resources are finite.