

**Committee: Open Spaces**

**Date: 6 December 2022**

**Title: Pesticide Free Towns**

**Purpose of Report**

To consider a draft policy on the use of pesticides within the Town Council

**Recommendation:**

1. Members resolve to adopt the draft pesticide policy
2. Members consider committing going pesticide free as soon as reasonably practical

**Report:**

1. In January 2022 Ilminster Town Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and that it recognises the ten “One Planet Principles”.
2. With the ever-increasing awareness of the environmental and undesirable effects of pesticides; both to the staff concerned with applying them, the general public and the environment, consideration must now be given to the use of alternative methods to replace and phase out pesticides.
3. Alternative products and techniques are currently being identified and researched within the industry to replace pesticides. The development of these has progressed significantly in recent years as more end users are seeking alternatives.
4. At the same time strict controls are being applied by those organisations involved in the authorising and licencing of pesticides. Progressively over time, fewer pesticide products are now available on the market as they are phased out, due to the health concerns and scientific evidence over the impacts they pose to human health and the environment in general.
5. It is the aim of the council to stop using pesticides. The approach taken should be to phase out their use as quickly as is practical, recognising that at present it may not always be possible to eliminate their use altogether.
6. It will take time to explore all the alternatives, and, in some cases, it may cost the council more to use alternative methods to provide the same level of control. Where chemicals are to be used, they are considered based on current knowledge as those that will have least effect on the environment
7. However, it should be noted that it is not an impossible task. Across Europe there are now many areas that have been moving away from the use of pesticides in towns and cities. In France, as a result of national legislation that came into force in 2017, the use of almost all non-agricultural pesticides has been banned, resulting in public spaces being managed without pesticides.

## AGENDA ITEM 8

8. Paris itself has been pesticide free for over a decade and other big cities such as Barcelona and Hamburg have stopped using Glyphosate.
9. In Belgium, towns and cities in the region of Flanders and Wallonia have stopped the use of pesticides completely and the city of Ghent has been pesticide free for over twenty years.
10. There are other councils in the UK, including Bristol and Frome, that have or are planning similar motions regarding pesticides and eliminating the use of Glyphosate. This presents the council with an opportunity to take stock and review what its approach should be over the use of pesticides.
11. At present there is no policy in place regarding the use of pesticides by Ilminster Town Council, so a draft has been put together considering current practices and what can be done to immediately reduce our pesticide usage, at **APPENDIX 8A**.
12. Should Members wish to pursue going pesticide 'free', it is suggested a three-year phase out plan be considered.
13. Year 1, we will explore alternative options to pesticide use and talk with other local towns who have or are considering similar motions and to put a strategy together to how we will achieve our goals.
14. Year 2, we eliminate the use of glyphosate on council owned land and encourage other land managers to follow suit.
15. Year 3, if alternatives have been identified, to eliminate use of all pesticides altogether where practically possible or to continue trialing and researching alternative measures with the goal of eliminating pesticide use at the earliest possibility.

**Jake Taylor**  
**Countryside Manager**  
**December 2022**