

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

Report

Subject : Weed Control 2024/25 Option Paper
Committee : Environment & Climate Committee
Date : 11 December 2023
Author : Marc Read, Environmental Services Manager

1. Report Summary:

1.1. This report gives an overview of options for weed control for consideration:

2. Background

- 2.1. The responsibility for weed control in Salisbury was delegated from Wiltshire Council to Salisbury City Council, in April 2017. Although delegated, there is no statutory minimum standard that Salisbury City Council has to comply with.
- 2.2. Wiltshire Council continued to use glyphosate on the highway up to and including 2022, so Salisbury City Council had no need to take further action.
- 2.3. In 2023, Wiltshire Council made the decision to stop weed spraying, however, this decision was not communicated to Salisbury City Council. This meant that the Streetscene Team could only offer sporadic hand weeding across Salisbury. This drew a significant number of complaints from residents as the team were not able to meet demand.
- 2.4. In September 2021, Salisbury City Council voted to halt the use of glyphosate. This decision was amended in October 2023, to allow the use of glyphosate to treat invasive species.

3. Options

Option	Additional Cost	Comments
Weed Spraying (Glyphosate)	Estimated £30,000 for a contractor to deliver 2 sprays	This figure is based on coverage of the area previously sprayed by Wiltshire Council i.e. 260km of kerb edges Would need to amend policy on use of glyphosate but is known to be effective in weed treatment.
Weed Spraying (Non-Glyphosate)	Currently estimated at £90,000 for contractor to deliver 2 sprays	This figure is based on coverage of the area previously sprayed by Wiltshire Council i.e. 260km of kerb edges The volume (litres) of non-glyphosate weed killer required to treat the same area is

		<p>much larger, hence the significant increase on price in comparison to glyphosate.</p> <p>However, it should be noted that new products are due to be released onto the market in 2024. These are expected to cost significantly less than the price currently estimated but exact details are not available.</p>
Weed Ripper (Equipment)	Estimated cost £7,000 for one machine	Trialled and did not seem suitable for highway use as kicks off stones and other detritus, which could easily cause damage to parked vehicles etc. Further trials would be needed.
Additional 2xStreetscene Operatives & Van	Estimate £70,000 for Operatives, Van, Fuel etc	Dedicated to weed control in the spring/summer and can be utilised on enhancing Streetscene activity in the autumn/winter.
Redirection of 2x Seasonal Streetscene Operatives	£0	<p>Each summer 2 x seasonal Streetscene Operatives are employed to undertake a late barrow shift in the city centre, because of additional waste created.</p> <p>These could be redirected to tackle weeds, noting the late barrow shift would cease.</p> <p>It should also be noted that we are not always able to recruit to these positions for the full season.</p>
Reactionary Streetscene Weeding Service	Estimate £7,000 for extra van	As per summer 2023. Existing team will tackle what they can but results unlikely to meet residents' expectations.

4. Recommendations

4.1. It is recommended that the Committee:

- Consider the options outlined in this paper and make a recommendation of their preferred option, so that this can be considered by Council as part of budget setting for 2024/25

1. **Wards Affected:** All

2. **Background Papers:** Nil

3. **Implications:**

3.1. **Financial:** As outlined above.

3.2. **Personnel:** As outlined above.

3.3. **Environmental Impact:** As outlined above.

3.4. **Equalities Impact Statement:** Nil in relation to this report.