

REPORT TO ENVIRONMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL WEEDSPRAYING

Report Reference EN-21-16
Meeting Date 20th September 2021
Agenda Item 10
Prepared by Town Clerk



1.0 BACKGROUND

At the May Environment working group meeting, members agreed that the current Cheshire East Council policy of spraying weeds/grass around trees/lampposts was unfavourable and that Cheshire East Council should be petitioned to change it. The opinion was expressed that the Town should receive something in return of the spraying stopping in lieu of the time it takes.

At the July working group meeting, members noted information provided by ANSA and Cheshire East Highways which confirmed that:

- Cheshire East Highways undertakes spraying limited to the footway, top of the kerb and the channel where the kerb meets the road. This is undertaken once annually at a cost of around £50,000 across the borough.
- ANSA maintain the verges and undertake weed spraying four times per year as part of the grass cutting regime. Spraying takes place around the bases of trees, lampposts, fenceposts, along fence lines, around grids, play equipment and path edges. The operative is on a fortnightly work schedule, spraying every three months. The chemical takes two weeks to work and is a glyphosate compound which kills organic matter. It takes approximately two weeks (within the three-month cycle).

At the July meeting, it was agreed that members would consider the following points prior to the September meeting:

- Does the committee want a complete stop on all herbicide use in Knutsford/the borough?
- Does the committee want to stop the yellowing/killing of areas around obstacles?
- Would the committee be content for weeds to grow in areas where weed spraying currently takes place e.g. along highways, in the town centre etc?
- Does the committee wish to invest Town Council resources (staff time and/or budget) in undertaking works to reduce the necessity for weed spraying e.g. strimming, planting or mulching?

2.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should determine what action it wishes to take with respect to reducing the amount of weed spraying in Knutsford.