



# HERBICIDE USE

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TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT 33/19

8 APRIL 2019

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The purpose of this Report is to ask Members to consider a resolution proposed by Councillor Stephen Cockett to require the Isle of Wight Council to phase out the use of herbicides from its managed spaces.

**No. DETAILS**

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**1) BACKGROUND**

Councillor Stephen Cockett's outline of the reasons for the proposal and a related resolution are attached to this Report.

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## **Background.**

There is a body of compelling scientific evidence demonstrating steep falls in insect numbers both nationally and internationally.

Insects are a crucial part of the natural world providing essential services such as pollination, organic matter decomposition they also act as a food source for birds which have seen large declines in numbers.

Alongside urbanisation and land use change herbicides are often cited as a driver of insect losses.

The most commonly used active ingredient in municipal herbicides – glyphosate – has frequently been named as a carcinogen, including in recent law suits in the States which have resulted in large compensation payments being made. As of March 2019, there are a further 11,000 cases awaiting trial.

## **Local context.**

Residents are rightly proud of the flora and fauna present around the town, some of which is unique and of scientific importance.

VTC controls 19 green spaces, many of which attract frequent use by families.

Island Roads contractors are known to spray Gallop – a glyphosate-based herbicide – on kerbsides and walls. As well as health concerns is the matter of spraying walls which kills delicate native flowers, and the habitat they provide for insects and lizards which also promotes their replacement with sturdier and less attractive plants which in turn require more treatment.

## **Resolution.**

1. Ventnor town council resolves to phase out herbicide use from its managed spaces by the end of 2019 for an initial monitoring period of one year. Exceptions to this may be to treat cases of Japanese Knotweed and one-off usage to recover previously derelict spaces to municipal standard.
2. The council shall also inform the relevant representatives at IWC of its intent and invite IWC to review its own operations within the town.
3. The council shall also inform Island Roads and invite representatives to meet and discuss Ventnor's unique flora and fauna circumstances, with the aim of strictly limiting spraying and prohibiting spraying on sensitive walls and around public amenity spaces.