

Chemical Pesticide Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The term 'pesticides' is intended as a generic term to include herbicides, insecticides and fungicides.
- 1.2 It is the policy of Frampton Cotterell Parish Council to reduce and aim to eliminate the use of chemical pesticides in the management of all public spaces for which the Council is responsible.
- 1.3 Its employees, contractors and all those responsible for the maintenance of open spaces owned by the Council are required to use non-chemical and mechanical alternatives wherever applicable.
- 1.4 To date, the Parish Council have used chemicals at its open spaces to remove species considered weeds. The increased use of chemical pesticides, herbicides and fungicides can be linked to contaminating water supplies, a reduction in biodiversity and may cause problems with public health.
- 1.5 The Council is dedicated to significantly reducing with the aim to eliminate the use of pesticides on Council owned land and to encourage the reduction of its use across the entire parish.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 To reduce public exposure to the potentially harmful effects of chemical pesticides in all public spaces owned by the Parish Council.
- 2.2 To reduce the harmful effects of pesticides on biodiversity across the parish.
- 2.3 To improve habitats for wildlife across the parish through chemical reduction/elimination.
- 2.4 To reduce, with the aim to eliminate, the use of pesticides on Council owned land.
- 2.5 To communicate with parishioners, landowners and organisations to encourage use of alternatives to pesticides across the parish.

3. Pesticide Use Conditions

- 3.1 Blanket spraying of pesticides shall not be undertaken on any open space owned by the Parish Council.
- 3.2 Areas around posts, bins and fence lines are to be controlled by strimming. A full health and safety check must be undertaken prior to strimming to ensure no stones or objects are hidden within the vegetation.
- 3.3 All staff, contractors, sub-contractors or volunteers to the Council shall not use pesticides on Council owned land without prior permission and reasoning.
- 3.4 Hand pulling of weeds will be the preferred method of weed control. Where hand pulling is not possible, alternative measures to pesticides should be trialled where budget allows, including hot foam, vinegar, heat control, wire brush and any other alternatives.
- 3.5 Chemical herbicides are not permitted in open spaces for vegetation clearance prior to planting wildflowers. Areas for wildflowers must be harrowed/cleared by machine or by hand in order to clear bare ground for planting.

- 3.6 Where time and budget allow, alternative measures will be trialled and reviewed by Estates Officer and Project Officer. Successful alternatives shall replace any limited pesticide use currently used by the Council with the aim to become pesticide free.
- 3.7 Any contracts involving open spaces must include reference to this policy and contractors to be made aware of the Council's stance on reduction and elimination of pesticides.
- 3.8 Weeds on sports pitches are to be regularly reviewed and hand pulled to reduce infestation.
- 3.9 The Council should consider alternatives to pesticides with the aim to fully eliminate chemical control. The most successful alternative trialled by Glastonbury Town Council is hot foam. As the equipment is expensive, the Council should consider engaging with neighbouring Town and Parish Council to joint purchase and share equipment with the collaborative aim of becoming pesticide free.

4. Exceptions for Pesticide Use

- 4.1 If weeds are not controllable via hand pulling/stimming on sports pitches and alternatives to chemicals are not viable, spot treatment permission may be sought from the Parks and Recreation Committee as a last resort if weeds are causing health and safety and quality issues for sports use. If urgent, the Clerk shall have delegated authority to authorise the use of pesticides but must inform the Parks and Recreation Committee.
- 4.2 At the discretion of the Climate and Nature Committee, spot treatments of weeds on hard standing surfaces, including car parks and pavements where budget and time does not allow for alternative methods may be permitted.
- 4.3 This policy will not affect the Council's obligation to eliminate the presence of Japanese knotweed or other invasive species where there is a duty to do so and where there is no other known means of control. In this instance only stem injection or targeted spot application will be permitted to avoid wider contamination. Prior permission must be sought from the Climate and Nature Committee.
- 4.4 Where alternatives to chemical control are not applicable, chemical control may only be permitted as a spot treatment, stem injection or controlled flat nozzle, such as on hard surfaces in car parks and pavements where weed overgrowth could pose a health and safety risk and permission from the Climate and Nature Committee must be sought prior to application.

5. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

- 5.1 The Council staff shall share content on reducing and eliminating the use of pesticides on social media, the Council website and within the Frome Valley Voice newsletter to encourage residents to reduce pesticide use across the parish.
- 5.2 Councillors and office staff shall engage with local organisations and businesses to encourage them to reduce and/or eliminate pesticide use.
- 5.3 Communications with the community shall state how many weeds are wildflowers that are beneficial to pollinators and biodiversity.
- 5.4 Communications highlighting the Council stance on pesticides to be shared online and via the Frome Valley Voice.