
**Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny
Management Committee (Calling In)**

7 February 2022

Report of the Director of Governance

Called-in Item: **Weed Treatment - Options**

Summary

1. This report sets out the reasons for the call-in of the decisions made by the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change on 12 January 2022 in respect of the above item. The report also sets out the powers and role of the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee (Calling-In) in dealing with the call-in.

Background

2. An extract from the Decision Sheet published after the Executive Member Decision Session on 12 January 2022 is attached as Annex A to this report. This sets out the decisions taken on the called-in item. The original report to the Executive Member, together with the annexes relevant to the called-in decisions, is attached at Annex B.
3. The decisions have been called in for review by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee (Calling-In) by Cllrs Vassie, Baker, D Taylor, K Taylor and Warters, in accordance with the Constitutional requirements, for the following reasons:-
 - a) *That [the decisions] fail to demonstrate any commitment to the aims of the council's adopted Pollinator Strategy, namely aim 2.3: 'reduce the impact of pesticides on pollinators and other wildlife'.*
 - b) *The decisions of the Executive Member deliver no action whatsoever on reducing pesticide use until at least 2024, and possibly 2026, seven years after Full Council voted unanimously to call for action to protect pollinators and to reduce the use of pesticides;*
 - c) *The Decision Session report included no performance appraisal of the existing contract, or detailed options of alternatives to allow a meaningful comparison and confidence the local taxpayer is securing good value for money;*

- d) *We believe that any weed control contract continuing the use of glyphosate must include annual glyphosate reduction targets (year on year for the period of the contract), including through reducing the number of sprays from the current 3 times a year to twice a year in the first year of any new contract;*
- e) *City of York Council should be joining more than 80 other UK councils – including Hackney, Glastonbury, Doncaster, Brighton, Bristol, Guilford, Chichester, Folkstone, Chelmsford and Trafford – who've already committed to end pesticide use;*
- f) *To recommend that if the council cannot find a contractor to agree to targets and changes of weed management that are consistent with the council's Pollinator Strategy, such as the use of strimming, weed brushing, and thermal lances or other methods that reduce or eliminate pesticide use, that an option is considered to bring the weed control programme back in-house.*

Consultation

- 4. In accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, the calling-in Members have been invited to attend and/or speak at the Calling-in meeting, as appropriate.

Given the cross-party nature of this particular call-in, the Calling-in Members have been invited to submit written comments ahead of the meeting if they wish. The comments submitted are contained in Annex C to this report.

Options

- 5. The following options are available to the CCSMC (Calling-In) in relation to dealing with this call-in, in accordance with the constitutional and legal requirements under the Local Government Act 2000:
 - a) To decide that there are no grounds to make specific recommendations to the Executive in respect of the decisions called in. If this option is chosen, the original decisions taken by on the item by the Executive Member will be confirmed and will take effect from the date of the CCSMC (Calling-in) meeting; or
 - b) To make specific recommendations to the Executive on the decisions called in, in light of the reason given for post-decision call-in. If this option is chosen, the matter will be considered at a meeting of Executive (Calling-In).

Analysis

6. Members need to consider the reasons for the call-in and the original report to the Executive Member and form a view on whether there is a basis to make specific recommendations to the Executive in respect of the decisions called in.

Council Plan

7. There are no direct implications for this call-in in relation to the delivery of the Council Plan and its priorities for 2019-23.

Implications

8. There are no known Financial, HR, Legal, Property, Equalities, or Crime and Disorder implications in relation to handling the call in of the issue under consideration.

Risk Management

9. There are no risk management implications associated with the call in of this matter.

Recommendations

10. Members are asked to consider the reasons for calling in these decisions and decide whether they wish to confirm the affected decisions or to refer it back for reconsideration and make specific recommendations to the Executive on the decisions called in.

Reason: To enable the called-in matter to be dealt with efficiently and in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

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Report Approved



Date:

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex A – Extract from the Decision Sheet produced following the Executive Member Decision Session on 12 January 2022, setting out the decisions made on the called-in item.

Annex B – Report of the Director of Transport, Environment and Planning to the Executive Member Decision Session on 12 January 2022.

Annex C – Written comments submitted by the Calling-in Members.