

## DIRECTOR DECISION

<b>Decision Title: Weed Management of Highways and Associated Areas – Pilot wards</b>				
<b>Type of Decision:</b> Director	Key	N	Non-Key	Y
<b>Portfolio Area that decision relates to:</b>				
Leader (in Policy & S&P)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance & Performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Deputy Leader & Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	Culture, Leisure & Comm	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environment & Climate C	x	Children & Young P & Edui	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economy & Strategic Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Adult Social Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Housing & Safety Neigh	<input type="checkbox"/>			

**Background:**

At the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and subsequent call-in session, it was agreed that for the next two years the Council would:

- Continue to spray around obstacles in verges e.g. lampposts, street signs, trees, around communal drying areas and some parks and garden path edges.
- Continue to spray kerbs, footpaths / pavement joints, wall bottoms and back lanes, the bar walls upper footpath, bridges and supporting structures. This takes place 3 times a year - April, July and September (subject to weather conditions)

The Executive member also committed the Council to working with a range of third parties (e.g. PAN, Defra etc) to test alternative methods and approaches during 2022.

A concession was made by the Executive Member at the call in to let wards self select to trial a strim rather than a week killing spray around obstacles and to opt out of the third and final spray of the highway.

As part of this process in early March all ward councillors were written to and asked if they wished to take place in a reduce spraying regime for their ward. Members were asked to respond by 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to indicate if they wanted their ward to be considered for the Weed Pilot.

The following responses had been received:

Ward	Request to be Pilot Ward ?	Other comments or proposals from Elected Members
Guildhall	Yes	
Osbalwick and Derwent	Yes	
Hull Road	Yes	
Micklegate	Yes	
Holgate	Yes	<p>A specific request to undertake no spraying in a defined area of the ward (St Paul Square) See annex 1 for map.</p> <p>Want to be a pilot but a few isolated areas to receive a third spray see maps at annex 2, annex 3 and annex 4</p> <p>Whilst officers will support the request the risk is that these small areas get forgotten. The Ward Councillor accepts a street by street approach may not be possible in the future.</p>

Fishergate	Yes	Happy to be a pilot ward but a specific request to undertake no spraying in a defined area of the ward (2 x backstreets to be defined).  Ward Councillor accepts a street by street approach may not be possible in the future  See map annex 5.
Wheldrake	Yes	Happy to be a pilot ward but a specific request for there to be no highway spraying at all in Elvington see annex 6 for a map
Rural West	Yes	Happy to be a pilot ward but a specific request for Skelton to be excluded from the trial and receive a third treatment see annex 7

### Options and analysis

The principal options are :

- a) Agree to all of the requests listed in the table above
- b) Reject the suggested requests listed in the table above and only approve those wards that have outlined a 'whole ward' approach

### Other considerations

The contract for the highway weed treatment has been let for 2022 and 2023. The contractor has been informed of the proposals being considered by Ward Councillors and the possibility of Pilot wards. In addition, Public Realm teams have commenced spraying in wards who have not put themselves forward as a Pilot ward but will need to commence on strimming activities over the coming weeks.

A non standard approach with specific areas excluded from spraying is more complicated for the contractor to deliver and the risk of mistakes through human error much greater. However, this is a trial pilot and therefore on the basis that lessons are to be learnt there is benefit to accepting these limited and constrained variations. If they were more complex the recommendation would not be to approve, but on the basis they are relatively easily defined they can be added to the trial.

This proposal supports and contributes to the following Council Plan priority - a greener and cleaner city.

In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified in this report are that a decision is not made on a proposed weed treatment option which could in turn damage the Council's image and reputation. A reduced weed treatment regime could result in increased complaints, but the Ward Councillors have requested these changes.

<b>Implications:</b> Crime & Disorder	<input type="checkbox"/>	Equalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	
Human Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highways	
Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>	ITT	<input type="checkbox"/>	Property	

**Decision Date:**

**18 May 2022**

**Wards Affected:**

All Wards	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fishergate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Holgate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rural West York	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Acomb	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fulford & Heslington	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hull Road	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strensall	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bishopthorpe	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guildhall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Huntington & New Earswick	<input type="checkbox"/>	Westfield	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clifton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Haxby & Wigginton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Micklegate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wheldrake	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Copmanthorpe	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heworth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Osbalwick & Derwent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heworth Without	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rawcliffe & Clifton	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

**Decision:**

Approve the request of ward councillors for their wards to:-

- a) replace spraying with single strim around highway obstacles by Public Realm teams and
- b) not receive one highway weed treatment spray as undertaken by Contractors (i.e. the third and final spray of the season).
- c) exclude sections from any spraying at all

*Reason: To test out difference approaches to weed management with a view to reporting results back following the Pilot*

**Decision Made by:** James Gilchrist, Director of Transport, Environment and Planning in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change.

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**On behalf of:** Neil Ferris, Corporate Director of Place

**To be implemented by:** Ben Grabham

**On Completion – Signed off by:**

**Date:** 18 May 2022



**James Gilchrist**

**Director of Transport, Environment and Planning**