

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

15 MARCH 2016

Report of: Shahzia Daya, Interim Service Director – Legal & Democratic Services

Title: **Petition – Stop spraying glyphosates on Bristol’s streets and parks**

RECOMMENDATION

That Full Council debates the petition and decides how to respond to the petition, and the body to which the petition may be referred.

Summary

1. Under the Council's petitions scheme, where a petition has 3,500 or more signatures from people who live, work or study in Bristol, the petition organiser can request a Full Council debate.
2. The Council has received a petition entitled “Stop spraying glyphosates on Bristol’s streets and parks.”
3. The petition organiser has requested that the Full Council debates the petition.

Details of the petition

1. The wording of the petition is as follows:

Petition title/subject: “Stop spraying glyphosates on Bristol’s streets and parks.”

“Please ban the spraying of Monsanto's Roundup and other glyphosate herbicides on the streets and parks of Bristol.

Why is this important?

Bristol Council currently uses four glyphosate herbicides including Monsanto's Roundup on our streets and parks. This is despite the fact that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has identified glyphosate as likely to cause cancer in humans. The WHO finding sits alongside a wealth of existing evidence that raises alarming questions marks over the long term safety of exposure to glyphosate both on its own and in combination with other chemicals found in formulas such as Roundup.

The use of glyphosates has already been banned or restricted in 8 countries. It is not acceptable that ourselves, our children and the animals we share this city with are being routinely exposed to these chemicals whether we like it or not. If Bristol is to have any credentials as the current European Green Capital, it must exercise the precautionary principle and follow the example of cities such as Chicago, Paris and Rotterdam by banning this spraying in public places. This is a matter of great importance for those of us who care about each other's health and the health of our children, our cats, our dogs and all the flora and fauna of this city, of course including our beloved bees.

For more information see this article from The Bristol Cable:

<https://thebristolcable.org/2015/10/bristol-monsanto-and-chemicals/>

There are viable safe alternatives to glyphosates. The Netherlands have outright banned glyphosates in public spaces and are using a hot water treatment instead. A hot water and foam method is also available in the UK and Bristol Council is already aware that this can be a more effective alternative than hot water on its own. Glyphosates are the cheapest option but we must send the message loud and clear that value is not just about price and that the health and safety issues around glyphosate render its 'cheap and easy' status irrelevant. Other effective methods may cost more in cash terms but represent far better value to local residents. Using a formula such as Roundup in our public spaces is simply unacceptable no matter how cheap and quick it makes the task of urban weed management.”

The petition secured 6452 signatures, 5956 of which were from Bristol and the immediate “travel to work” area.

2. The Full Council is requested to debate the petition and decide how to respond to the petition.

Under the petition scheme, the petition organiser(s), Zaheer Mamon, is permitted up to 5 minutes to present and speak to the petition. The petition scheme allows a further period of up to 15 minutes for discussion by councillors at the Full Council meeting.

3. The Full Council has agreed the following in relation to dealing with petitions with over 3,500 signatures:

The topic of the debate should be referred to the Mayor / Cabinet, or other relevant body with the petitioner's views and Full Council's views.

The Full Council is therefore recommended to refer the petition to the Mayor, together with the comments as expressed by members in the debate at this meeting, in order that he can consider his response (in liaison with the relevant Assistant Mayor as appropriate).