

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Council

## Agenda Item 24

**Subject:** Petition for Debate – Keep Brighton and Hove Free of Toxic Weedkillers

**Date of meeting:** 28 March 2024

**Report of:** Executive Director for Governance, People & Resources

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**Ward(s) affected:** All

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Under the Council's Petition Scheme if a petition contains more than 1,250 signatures and is not petition requesting officer evidence, it will be debated by the Full Council.
- 1.2 The e-petition has resulted in triggering a debate at the council meeting, having exceeded the threshold with a total of 6994 signatures confirmed at the time of printing the report.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the petition is noted and referred to the relevant Committee for consideration.

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION / CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

##### 3.1 The Petition:

Dear Bella Sankey,

We write to ask that you urgently cancel your plan to reintroduce toxic, carcinogenic weedkillers in Brighton and Hove.

Glyphosate is a toxic weedkiller that is believed to be carcinogenic in humans and destructive to the natural environment and wildlife. In 2019, Brighton and Hove City Council pledged to become glyphosate free by 2022, introducing a three-year phased plan to stop using glyphosate in the city's parks, open spaces and pavements.

**Brighton and Hove City Council is now proposing to reintroduce the use of toxic glyphosates on our pavements and verges.**

There is evidence to suggest that in the years since 2019, biodiversity in Brighton and Hove has improved, for example, the starling, hedgehog and sparrow population. By creating and supporting biodiverse green spaces in the city, Brighton and Hove City Council is enabling vulnerable people to access nature. Glyphosates have been described as likely carcinogens by the World Health Organisation. The reintroduction of glyphosates in Brighton and Hove would put people and nature at risk.

You will say that you need to keep pavement weeds under control and we do recognise how important it is to ensure safe pavements, especially for residents with mobility challenges. However, we believe that an effective, organic, integrated weed management strategy is possible. This must be further explored.

We recognise that organic methods are not as successful at eradicating weeds as toxic weedkiller. However, the total eradication of weeds should not be our goal.

We can do better than this. We urge you to cancel your plans to reintroduce toxic, carcinogenic weedkiller to Brighton and Hove.

#### **4. PROCEDURE:**

4.1 The petition will be debated at the Council meeting in accordance with the agreed protocol:

- (i) The Lead petitioner will be invited by the Mayor to present the petition and will have up to 3 minutes in which to outline the petition and confirm the number of signatures;
- (ii) The Mayor will then open the matter up for debate by councillors for period of 15 minutes and will first call on the relevant Committee Chair to respond to the petition and move a proposed response. The Mayor will then call on those councillors who have indicated a desire to speak in the matter, before calling on the relevant Committee Chair to respond to the debate;
- (iii) An amendment to the recommendation in paragraph 2.1 of the report or to add additional recommendations should be submitted by 10.00am on the day before the meeting; otherwise it will be subject to the Mayor's discretion as to being appropriate. Any such amendment will need to be formally moved and seconded at the meeting;
- (iv) After the 15 minutes set aside for the debate, the Mayor will then formally put:
- (v) (a) Any amendments in the order in which they are moved, and  
(b) The substantive recommendation(s) as amended (if amended).