

Motion: Treatment and reducing the significant spread of giant hogweed

In the names of Councillors: Carol Birchmore, Ken Simpson, Mary Walsh, Des Duncalfe, Judi Sheppard and Mike Smith.

This Council Notes:

- Giant hogweed is a dangerous plant and is non native to the UK ecology makeup.
- The plant is now growing completely out of control in several areas especially our river valleys where the movement of water carries seed further down waterways to inhabit new areas.
- Hogweed is now in public areas to which the general public have easy access.
- The council must make use of powers to eradicate this species whenever possible on its own land and enable powers to make the treatment and eradication on private lands more enforceable.
- Provide advertising and enable the public to clearly recognise the dangers this plant holds.
- The Council is aware that work is beginning to look at the regulatory issues to resolve the root cause of this issue with the Council as a partner alongside local MPs, community groups, and other organisations.

This Council further recognises:

- Giant hogweed carries extremely toxic chemicals that presents a danger to humans and some animal species.
- Most residents are still not aware of the serious consequences of any form of contact with this plant which can include serious blistering and burn like wounds when skin is exposed to sunlight
- Eradication of this plant can be achieved not only by spraying with the correct chemicals but also by root cutting and seed head removal before germination
- This plant is an imported nonnative species and adds nothing to the ecology of our landscape.
- The long-term effects of exposure to this plant can be life altering and disfiguring in humans.

Therefore, this council resolves to continue the work it does in this area to;

- Carry out regular surveys and work with community groups to survey council-owned land, parks, river corridors and public rights of way to identify infestations.
- Ensure that giant hogweed on council land is removed safely by trained professionals using recognised control methods.
- Continue to work in partnership with neighbouring authorities, local environmental groups and private landowners to coordinate eradication efforts across boundaries, noting that this may be in a supportive role as this requires legislative change.
- Launch a public awareness campaign so residents know how to identify giant hogweed, understand the health risks and know how to report sightings.
- Establish an easy-to-use reporting system that enables residents to notify the council quickly when new infestations are discovered.
- Prioritise the removal of Giant Hogweed on publicly accessible areas of council land and agree this in advance.

Supporting Statement:

The toxicity and Dangers are well recognised by councils in the UK, and the severe consequences of exposure should not be understated and must be well publicised to the general public. There has been clear and documented proof both visual in photographs and from statements and evidence of people affected. These can include blindness when contact has been made with the eyes of the unfortunate person involved. Control of Giant Hogweed is not only desirable but necessary to protect our residents.