

## **Motion for Time Limited Debate – Environmental Action within Kent**

**Proposer:** Mr Stuart Jeffery

**Seconder:** Mr Paul Stepto

### **Background Information provided by the Green Group**

Glyphosate is a pesticide often used by local authorities to manage unwanted vegetation in public places. In 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a part of the World Health Organisation, classified glyphosate as a group 2A, indicating that it is “probably carcinogenic to humans” and that there was “strong evidence for genotoxicity”.<sup>1</sup> The use of glyphosate raises serious concerns about its environmental impact as well as the potential health risks to humans and animals.

Verges managed for biodiversity are vital habitats for pollinating insects. They also help to reverse pollinator decline and contribute to healthier landscapes. Due to this, it is important that the correct measures are taken to educate individuals on how best to maintain the verges.

Kent County Council introduced the Plan Bee initiative which set out a plan on how Kent residents, businesses and voluntary groups could help protect bees and other pollinators who are essential to Kent’s biodiversity. The strategy previously won The Bees’ Needs Champion, a national award coordinated by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for exceptional work.<sup>2</sup>

### **This Council resolves the following:**

- 1) Call on the Cabinet Member for Environment to introduce and promote a new initiative which would allow residents to adopt their streets, to reduce the use of glyphosate to control weeds to areas which are not adopted.
- 2) Call on the Cabinet Member for Environment to work with the responsible Officers to investigate and consider alternatives to glyphosate.
- 3) Request that all verges which are managed for biodiversity improvements are marked with a bee symbol to ensure they are easily recognised and avoided by contractors and are not accidentally mowed.
- 4) Recognise the exceptional work that KCC Officers have undertaken to develop and manage the Plan Bee initiative to protect Kent’s biodiversity, and the work of residents in engaging with the initiative.
- 5) Call on the Cabinet Member for Environment to work with the responsible Officers to investigate ways to make it easier for residents to adopt verges with an agreement to enhance and improve the biodiversity in them.
- 6) Ask that the Executive agree an ongoing commitment to fund the Plan Bee initiative.

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<sup>1</sup> [IARC Monograph on Glyphosate – IARC](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Kent’s Plan Bee awarded Bees’ Needs Champion status - News & Features - Kent County Council](#)