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Cyngor sir ddinbych denbighshire County Council

To: Members of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Date: 5 February 2021

Direct Dial: 01824 712554

e-mail: democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021 BY VIDEO CONFERENCE**.

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Pages 3 - 4)

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 5 - 14)

To receive the minutes of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 December 2020 (copy enclosed).

10.05am – 10.10am

5 HIGHWAYS GRASS VERGE AND HEDGE MAINTENANCE AND PESTICIDE APPLICATION POLICIES (Pages 15 - 88)

To consider and discuss a report by the Head of Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services on the Council's policy with respect to Verge/ hedge maintenance and pesticide application (copy enclosed).

10.10am – 11am

BREAK 11am - 11.15am

6 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 89 - 112)

To consider a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (copy enclosed) seeking a review of the committee's forward work programme and updating members on relevant issues.

11.15am – 11.30am

7 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

To receive any updates from Committee representatives on various Council Boards and Groups

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Councillor Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones (Chair)

Councillor Emrys Wynne (Vice-Chair)

Joan Butterfield
Ann Davies
Gareth Davies
Hugh Irving
Pat Jones

Christine Marston
Melvyn Mile
Rhys Thomas
David Williams

COPIES TO:

All Councillors for information
Press and Libraries
Town and Community Councils

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, (*name*)

a *member/co-opted member of
*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Denbighshire County Council

CONFIRM that I have declared a ***personal / personal and prejudicial** interest not previously declared in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members, in respect of the following:-
*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Date of Disclosure:

Committee (*please specify*):

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

*(See the note below)**

Signed

Date

*Note: Please provide sufficient detail e.g. 'I am the owner of land adjacent to the application for planning permission made by Mr Jones', or 'My husband / wife is an employee of the company which has made an application for financial assistance'.

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PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held in BY VIDEO CONFERENCE on Thursday, 17 December 2020 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones (Chair), Hugh Irving, Pat Jones, Christine Marston, Melvyn Mile, Peter Scott, Rhys Thomas and Emrys Wynne (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Mark Young - Lead Member for Planning, Public Protection and Safer Communities
Councillor Brian Jones - Lead Member for Waste, Transport and the Environment.
Councillor Tony Thomas ‑Lead Member for Housing and Communities

Observers – Councillor Graham Timms, Meirick Lloyd Davies.

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director Communities (NS), Community Safety Manager (ST), Strategic Planning Team Manager (NK), Head of Planning and Public Protection (EJ), Traffic, Parking and Road Safety Manager (MJ), Senior Engineer Road Safety and Sustainable Transport (BW-J), Democratic Service Manager (SP), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE), Committee Administrator – Host (SJ) and Committee Administrator (RTJ).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gareth Lloyd Davies and David G Williams.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None were declared.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters had been raised with the Chair prior to the meeting.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5 November 2020 were submitted.

No matters were raised in relation to the contents of the minutes.

Resolved: - to receive the minutes of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5 November 2020 and approve them as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

Prior to the commencement of the following item of business the Chair informed the Committee that it would be discussing it in its capacity as the Council's designated Crime & Disorder Scrutiny committee in accordance with the Police & Justice Act 2006 ss. 19 and 20.

5 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL UPDATE FOR 2019-20

The Lead Member for Planning, Public Protection and Safer Communities introduced the report (previously circulated) whilst the Community Safety Manager explained the detail contained in the associated appendices. They explained that the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) activity and performance report was based on the joint partnership's priorities as identified in the North Wales audit of crime that is conducted annually. The North Wales Safer Communities Board (NWSCB) agrees the priorities and then draws up an action plan that is monitored by the NWSCB, locally the CSP is tasked with facilitating the delivery of the action plan, analysing what is happening in the local area and implementing local solutions. Details were provided of each priority area as follows:

Priority area 1- Work in Partnership to Reduce Crime and Disorder

Overall the performance for the Partnership was acceptable due to the increased numbers of victims of domestic abuse and victims of crime reporting such incidents. The Partnership had improved communication with victims and survivors better understood what support they required. The way the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) worked had changed so that high risk victims were managed more effectively by all agencies. As part of the regional drive the CSP were looking at applying for funding for more non-mandatory perpetrator programmes and applying for Home Office funding for youth support workers in refuges. The work of the Partnership resulted in a number of projects and activities listed in the report.

The Partnership's work plan for 2019-2020 included additional emerging issues, such as Modern Day Slavery, County Lines, Integrated Offender Management etc. Area Planning Board meetings had proved to be a worthwhile exercise as partner activity had improved as a result and the communication lines were improving.

Over the coming months multiple regional boards would be replaced by four main boards. The objective of this change would be to ensure better communication between linked issues and to mitigate against the risk of matters being missed.

Additional work would also take place on County Lines and Modern Day Slavery and on the adverse childhood experiences (ACE) programme. This would be done in conjunction with the Regional Safeguarding Board and new community safety boards.

Priority 2- Reducing reoffending

Overall the performance for this priority was Acceptable

There had been a slight increase in adult offending and Youth Offending during 2019-20 hence the status only being acceptable. However, the CSP had invested time in encouraging multiagency attendance at the Integrated Offender Management programme and assisting with the actions of that programme. It intended to continue to assist with the programme, which would also address Organised Crime Groups and County Lines work.

Priority 3- Local Priorities

Overall performance of the CSP in relation to this priority was Excellent
In 2019-2020 there had been a continued reduction in the number of reports of antisocial behaviour (ASB) and repeat victims of ASB. This success had been achieved through:

- promoting the use of community resolutions to resolve repeat incidents of antisocial behaviour
- using, when appropriate community protection notices / Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs)
- control of licenced premises and enforcement and monitoring of taxi licences undertaken by the Licensing Department.
- operations targeting car washes under modern day slavery action plans
- working collectively on repeat incidents of antisocial behaviour
- sharing information about online fraud utilising national campaigns
- knife amnesty utilising the recycling centres in Denbighshire.

The CSP would continue to support the monthly Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) tasking meeting which monitored repeat incidents of ASB and provide a multi-agency response to issues raised as well as taking part in restorative justice conferences and promoting community resolutions and mediation. An internal process had been established in Denbighshire to manage/monitor repeat ASB locations for those issues causing most concern in communities. This was reported corporately via the bi-monthly community safety report to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The CSP would participate in further awareness raising of Domestic Abuse, Modern Day Slavery and County Lines locally. The direction for this work would from now on come from the newly established Regional Vulnerability and Exploitation Board. Internally the corporate priority on domestic abuse has been split into specific work areas including; Communications (internal and external), training and early intervention. This would complement the work of the region but would provide specific local focus.

The Conwy and Denbighshire priority work areas linked to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Plan and NWSCB community safety agenda all of which were listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Specifically, in relation to the Covid 19 Pandemic CSP activity had initially focussed on managing community tensions during the first 13 weeks of lockdown. Reporting networks had been established with the assistance of the regional cohesion team, the CSP monitored their social network sites and managed any queries from the public and local councillors.

Overall 112 reports of tensions/infringements had been received during that period. All were successfully managed by the CSP acting as a coordination point with partners from other organisations. A number of issues stemming from neighbour tensions had to be managed by the CSP due to people being at home.

Crime statistics were monitored on a monthly basis so that the CSP were able to react to any unusual activity or spike in any crimes. On a positive note crime mainly reduced over the period and those determined to commit crimes were managed very effectively by the Police.

Stalking and harassment figures increased during the first 6 months of 2020/21 in comparison to the same time the year before. Under new Home Office counting rules, as of April 2020, coercive control now features within the Stalking & Harassment category and was adding 10 crimes a week to stalking and harassment category. The CSP was aiming to raise awareness of Stalking, Harassment and Coercive Control by taking part in national campaigns. ASB also increased during this same period. Following a data analysis exercise the reasons for this increase in the number of incidents related to the reporting of breaches of COVID-19 restrictions (lack-of social distancing, large gatherings, people travelling into North Wales from outside the area etc.). Denbighshire had not seen a large increase of reported ASB, but what increases there had been were attributable to the infringements of COVID regulations.

The following points were raised and answered during the discussion:

- areas such as Rhyl West which had a disproportionate number of HMOs, were known problem areas at times. When ASB and other incidents did arise meetings between all relevant bodies were organised to discuss the challenges and these usually dealt with concerns which were raised.
- various forums existed were discussions took place in a bid to resolve crime and disorder matters. The lead agency for each forum would depend on the matter being discussed e.g. for crime the lead agency would be the police. in addition, there would be varying levels of such forums depending on the nature and interest of the matter being discussed i.e. local area, county area, regional area. The challenge in relation to HMOs was the fact that they privately owned and if the owners were abiding by the law, there was not much the authorities could do in relation to them. The challenge was always if people were moved, to where would they go. Public authorities would not choose to cause more homelessness or move the problem to another location. It was therefore important to try and tackle the root cause of the problem.
- the method for recording repeat victims of crime had been changed in recent years therefore the numbers appeared to have increased significantly when this was not the case. Previously multiple calls reporting crimes against the same individual were not recorded as individual incidents, this had since changed, hence the increase in the reported figures.
- With a view to reducing the number of repeat victims of crime and domestic violence work was taking place regionally on devising and delivering perpetrator programmes which were aimed at addressing the root cause of

the crime i.e. alcohol/substance abuse etc., and develop support programmes for the perpetrator and the victim

- assurances were provided that knife related crime was not an issue of wide-concern across the region, however education programmes were run in conjunction with schools.
- Each local authority's relevant lead member represented their authority on the Safer North Wales Partnership Board. There were no elected member representatives on the Vulnerability and Exploitation Board (Managed by the Safeguarding Board) or the other Boards listed in Appendix 2 to the report due to the operational nature of their work. Any issues would be reported to elected members; and
- It was confirmed that the Police and Crime Commissioner attended meetings of the Safer North Wales Partnerships Board.

Resolved: - subject to the above comments and observations to receive the Community Safety Partnership's

(i) performance and statistical update for 2019-20; and
(ii) latest 6-month report on crime statistics and the Partnership's actions

6 COVID-19 ACTIVE TRAVEL PLAN SCHEMES

The Lead Member for Waste, Transport and the Environment introduced the report (previously circulated) which outlined information on the active travel schemes that had been implemented in some Denbighshire town centres and which had been funded by the Welsh Government's (WG) Covid-19 sustainable transport grant. The report also provided the rationale behind the schemes developed and the early findings from their implementation. The Traffic, Parking and Road Safety Manager detailed the application process followed in order to draw down the WG funding and the tight timescales involved with the process.

The Council's Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) had asked the Committee to examine this matter following receipt of a request from a resident in relation to the proposed Covid-19 Active Travel Scheme for Llangollen. SCVCG members had advised the resident that Scrutiny could not examine matters relating to one particular scheme, but would examine the process followed in identifying and developing schemes county-wide. In seeking Partnerships Scrutiny Committee to examine the matter the SCVCG had extended an invitation to the WG Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport, who had responsibility for allocating the grant funding for the scheme, to attend the meeting to discuss the funding application and allocation processes. Whilst the Deputy Minister was unable to attend the meeting for the discussion he had provided the Committee with an evidence paper on the Scheme, which included information on the funding allocated to Denbighshire to date and examples of the different types of schemes funded across Wales. This information had been made available to Committee members ahead of the meeting and was available on the meeting's webpage on the Council's website.

In May 2020, the Welsh Government's Deputy Minister for Economy and

Transport wrote to Council Leaders across Wales inviting Councils to submit expressions of interest for a special grant for "Local sustainable transport measures in response to Covid 19". The rationale behind the grant was twofold:

- to build upon the increases in active travel (cycling and walking) that had been occurring during the first lockdown period;
- to help facilitate social distancing in town centres and other busy public areas such as routes to schools, bus stops and bus stations once non-essential retail and schools reopened.

Upon receipt of the letter officers from the Traffic, Parking and Road Safety Section met to develop initial ideas for proposals that could be implemented on a trial basis of 18 months. Given the limited time available, it was decided to concentrate on developing proposals for the five busiest town centres namely Rhyl, Llangollen, Prestatyn, Denbigh and Ruthin. Some additional proposals were also developed for footpaths surrounding Ysbyty Glan Clwyd. After discussion with the Lead Member, officers contacted the relevant Member Area Groups (MAGs) to outline the proposals within their areas and to invite feedback.

Based on the feedback received, the proposals for Prestatyn were abandoned. Cost estimates were provided and the expressions of interest were then submitted to the WG on the 22nd May 2020. Confirmation was received from the WG on the 19th June 2020 that funding had been awarded funding for all Denbighshire's active travel proposals except for Ysbyty Glan Clwyd. The total value of the grant for the active travel schemes was £825k.

This timescale to deliver the schemes was challenging given that the funding wasn't awarded until the 19th June 2020. Nonetheless, the expectation was that proposals would be implemented quickly. To assist in this secondary legislation relating to emergency Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) had been amended to include Covid related highway works as a justification for making a temporary TRO.

The proposals for Denbigh generated many negative comments on social media. After discussions between senior officers and the Lead Member, it was decided to carry out a two-week online consultation for each town centre scheme. It was also agreed that officers would then present a summary of the consultation feedback for each town to the relevant MAG, followed by the MAG making a recommendation of whether or not to proceed with the scheme.

Robust monitoring plans are in place for each of the town centre schemes. This will enable the impact of the proposals to be closely monitored through the 18-month trial period.

Some minor problems have occurred following the implementation of the schemes, which have been dealt with quickly by officers. Such issues are not uncommon for schemes developed during such a tight timescale such as these.

During the ensuing discussion the following matters were raised and discussed:

- Members referred to proposed scheme for Llangollen and how Llangollen was different to other towns in Denbighshire. The scheme there had been

delayed due to the consultation process. The town was busy in August following the lifting of lockdown. There were differing views in the town between shopkeepers, residents and the need to keep both residents and visitors safe. However, officers and lead members had been extremely helpful and proactive in attempting to find workable solutions. During the lockdown the town had been much quieter than usual. 28 traders had submitted written objections to the scheme whilst a petition signed by more than 100 people in support of the scheme had also been submitted. The local members were in support for the scheme as were the older generation of Llangollen and they felt that the Council required to work with the traders/objectors to devise a workable solution.

- The scheme for Ruthin had originally been supported in 83% of those who had responded to the consultation about the scheme. The local member on the Committee supported the scheme to separate cars, walkers and cyclists in Ruthin, and supported the one-way system in Ruthin. Officers had worked very closely with local members. On paper the scheme looked attractive and the plans were for the implementation of the scheme in August, however due to the consultation process the scheme was delayed. There were some issues of concern, however officers were happy to discuss the matters with local members. Local shops were looking forward to having external furniture etc.to allow people to use the shops and cafes. Some members were of the view that the location of some of the bollards may need to be reviewed to ease any concerns with deliveries etc. for some businesses
- Officers had to respond to the WG request for schemes for grant funding within a very short timescale which had been further curtailed as it spanned an extended bank holiday weekend. However, local authorities were required to encourage active travel and with the need to make people feel safe post COVID lockdown restrictions being lifted, this particular grant funding had provided the Council with an opportunity to pilot a number of schemes for the future whilst attempting to try and attract people into towns to boost the local economy. A delicate balance needed to be struck between losing on-street parking and the benefits of providing a one-way traffic route to facilitate wider, safer walkways for pedestrians.
- Engagement and monitoring plans were in place for each scheme and there was an 8 week cycle of monitoring with online feedback from businesses etc. Where issues were raised these would be dealt with quickly.
- The Committee was advised that the Council was required by Welsh Government to generally encourage and promote active travel (such as walking or cycling) not only as part of the ongoing response to the pandemic. This particular scheme was aimed at town centres, not rural routes.
- In relation to the scheme for Rhyl members felt that the traffic flow in the town centre had suffered due to the scheme. There was concern that officers may have only discussed the proposals with member of the Rhyl Business Improvement District (BID) and not the wider business community. Assurances were given by officers that they discussed the proposals with a wide cross-section of the businesses in the town. Work was now underway exploring the whole concept of active travel in a strategic way for Rhyl for the future. Newsletters would be circulated to businesses in the Rhyl area to raise awareness of the proposed scheme.

- Whilst the grant funding was welcomed by the Council and businesses alike the geography of the county's historic market towns did pose difficulties in devising and implementing workable schemes for those towns that would benefit businesses, residents and visitors alike.
- Members were in agreement that all lessons learnt from this particular exercise needed to be heeded for similar exercises in future and in order to support local businesses post the pandemic, as business owners were concerned about what the future would look like

Resolved: - subject to the above concerns and observations

(i) to acknowledge the process followed by the Council in identifying and developing projects, applying for the grant and implementing projects, along with the difficulties encountered due to the short timescale given by the Welsh Government;

(ii) to emphasise the importance of early engagement in future with local Member Area Groups (MAGs), local members, and town/ community councils for proposed schemes to utilise central government grant funding in specific towns or communities; and

(iii) that a further report be presented to the Committee in six months' time on the impact of the COVID-19 Active Travel Plan Schemes on Denbighshire's towns and the lessons learnt from planning for this particular scheme in readiness for future schemes with short application deadlines and lead-in times.

7 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Coordinator submitted a report (previously circulated) seeking the members' review of the Committee's work programme and provided an update on relevant issues.

Discussion focused on the following –

- The follow-up report on COVID-19 Active Travel Schemes would be included on the agenda in 6 months' time.
- The Health Board had advised that it would be better placed to report on its capital programme schemes in North Denbighshire in April 2021.
- The Committee was requested to appoint a representative to serve on the Sub-Regional Children's Assessment Care Centre Project Board. Councillor Christine Marston indicated an interest in being Denbighshire's Scrutiny representative. Councillor Hugh Irving proposed Councillor Christine Marston be appointed, seconded by Councillor Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones

Resolved: -

(i) subject to the above inclusions and amendments to approve the Committee's forward work programme; and

(ii) to appoint Councillor Christine Marston to serve as Denbighshire's Scrutiny representative on the Sub-Regional Children's Assessment Care Centre Project Board.

8 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Councillor Christine Marston stated she had attended a remote meeting of the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) Stakeholders Reference Group on the 14th December 2020.

She gave a brief update. The Board was out of special measures, however it was still in deficit by £40 million which the Welsh Government (WG) had undertaken to underwrite. The WG had agreed to provide the Board with £82 million over the next three years, this was to get a strategic development plan in place to ensure that BCUHB would deliver a balance budget going forward.

A concept plan on how to deal with the backlog of operations which has been caused by COVID had been outlined.

The Group had also been briefed on the planning application which had been submitted to Denbighshire County Council for a replacement mental health unit for the current Ablett Unit. The budget was £63 million to develop a new mental health department at the rear of the Ysbyty Glan Clwyd site, where the overspill car park was currently situated.

Resolved: - to receive Councillor Marston's report on the discussions that took place at the recent Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Stakeholder Reference Group meeting.

Meeting concluded at 12.40pm

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Cyngor sir ddinbych denbighshire County Council

Report to	**Partnerships Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting	**11th February 2021**
Lead Member / Officer	**Lead Member for Housing and Communities / Lead Member for Highways, Environmental Impact, Waste and Sustainable Travel / Head of Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services**
Report author	**Head of Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services**
Title	**Highways Grass Verge, Hedge Maintenance and Pesticide Application Policies**

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report is about the council's policy with respect to verge/ hedge maintenance and pesticide application.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. This report was requested by members of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 13th February 2020. As part of that discussion, officers highlighted the Council's policy on verge cutting, which had been amended in order to deliver biodiversity benefits. Members requested a further discussion/review be undertaken ahead of the new financial year.

2.2. Furthermore, a separate request was made around the same time to the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group for a discussion at Scrutiny regarding the use of pesticides in public areas.

2.3. This report is the response to the requests highlighted in 2.1 and 2.2, above. This report, and associated appendices, are therefore presented in order to enable Members to discuss the current policy and approach being taken.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee examine the current policy and make comments and recommendations as deemed appropriate.

4. Report details

Denbighshire County Council policy on maintenance of highway verges

4.1. Appendix I sets of the Council's policy on the maintenance of highway verges. The policy can also be found on the Council's website at: https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/parking-roads-and-travel/grass-cutting.aspx The main principle underpinning the policy is that verges must be managed to ensure the safety of all road users. However, verges are also increasingly recognised as important habitats for maintaining biodiversity - to the benefit of species such as bees and other pollinating insects, as living spaces for wild flowers and other wildlife that is being lost from the wider countryside, and as vital wildlife corridors connecting habitats together. The council's policy therefore aims to address these desired outcomes in a realistic and economic way.

4.2. Further information and guidance in regard to the maintenance of highways verges is provided in the Plantlife document, as attached within Appendix III or downloadable at https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/ourwork/publications/roadverge-management-guide Welsh Government, Highways England and Transport Scotland have all supported and adopted this approach.

Denbighshire County Council briefing note on weed spraying, including the use of pesticides

4.3. Appendix II sets out the Council's position on the use of pesticide for the purposes of weed control. The briefing note itself contains an Appendix A, which is a Welsh Government Information Note on the use of Glyphosate-based

products. Denbighshire County Council's Head of Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services requested this information note from Welsh Government because of concerns raised about the use of Glyphosate by some residents. The reason for requesting the information note was to provide assurance that the Council's position is aligned to the position of Welsh Government.

4.4. In respect of pesticide (Glyphosate) use, the current Welsh Government policy is as attached at Appendix IV, which was issued to the Welsh Local Government Association by Welsh Government in August 2018.

4.5. For injurious weeds (under the Weeds Act 1959) e.g. ragwort and invasive species e.g. Giant Hogweed see https://gov.wales/weeds-invasive-nonnativespecies.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1. No decision is being sought by this paper. However, the Council's policy on the maintenance of highway verges does support the corporate priority "to ensure that the environment is both attractive and protected, but also supports community well-being and economic prosperity". One of the specific ambitions within that priority is to "increase the biodiversity quality of important habitats and species across the county".

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. This paper is provided for information, and it contains no proposals for change which would incur any costs or affect other services.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment is generally required for decisions or proposals for change. This paper requests no decision and contains no proposals for change.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. As highlighted in 2.1 and 2.2, the Council's policy on verge cutting and weed spraying was subject to a discussion as part of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee discussion on 13th February 2020.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. The Council's policy on verge-cutting presents risks, but only if it is not applied properly. The main risk relates to the safety of road users, but this is clearly recognised and addressed within the policy. Any risks around the use of pesticides again relate to misapplication, and this is addressed in the briefing note and also within the contract, which is actively monitored via the contract management process.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. No decision is being sought by this paper. However, Scrutiny's powers to examine the matter and to review and develop policies are set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and are outlined in Sections 7.2 and 7.4 of the Council's Constitution.

Appendix I

Denbighshire County Council
Highway Rural Verge/Grass Cutting Policy (A, B and Unclassified Roads)

Introduction

Road verges must be managed to ensure the safety of all road users. They are also increasingly recognised as important habitats for maintaining biodiversity - to the benefit of species such as bees and other pollinating insects, as living spaces for wild flowers and other wildlife that is being lost from the wider countryside, and as vital wildlife corridors connecting habitats together. This policy aims to address these desired outcomes in a realistic and economic way.

1. Underpinning duties and responsibilities

1.1 Denbighshire County Council Highway Authority has a legal responsibility to keep its highways available and safe for the passage of the highway user.

1.2 Denbighshire County Council also has the duty to (reasonably) maintain and repair the highway and to keep the road surface free from material that might otherwise obstruct or prevent its safe use.

1.3 Under Part 1 Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Denbighshire County Council has a legal duty to 'maintain and enhance biodiversity' where it is within the proper exercise of its functions, and in doing so must seek to 'promote the resilience of ecosystems'. This responsibility is supported by the duties placed upon public bodies by the Well Being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to maintain long- term sustainability.

1.4 Sympathetic management of road verges enables Denbighshire County Council to contribute effectively to the Welsh Government's 'Action Plan for Pollinators in Wales', by providing better and more connected flower-rich habitats both in urban and rural areas.
The service has recently identified a number of sites across the county suitable for annual biodiversity cuts to encourage habitation by pollinators.

1.5 The 'Well Maintained Highway – Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance' sets out recommendations and good practice for cutting highway verges, including the advice that local authorities should develop their own local standards.

1.6 Section 41 of The Highways Act 1980 requires all Highway Authorities to ensure that road users have safe passage along the highway. In relation to vegetation, this has been interpreted to mean that overhanging branches are cut back and that grass is cut, such that forward visibility is not unduly impaired.

1.7 In order to fulfil these duties, Denbighshire County Council is required to follow a road verge cutting policy that considers both the needs of the road user as well as the requirements of wildlife.

2. Verge Cutting Frequencies

2.1 Verges require cutting both for the safety of road users (including pedestrians) and for maintaining the species they support. The safety of road users is of paramount importance, and visibility splays and public footpaths need to be maintained at key locations. In all other areas, plants should be allowed to flower and set seed before they are cut, and habitat for animal species needs to be maintained. To achieve these aims requires careful attention to be paid to the timing and height of cuts.

2.2 Throughout the County there will be one cut per year based on the contract schedule to all grass verges on the Principal and Non-Principal Road network. Principal roads are defined as those roads classified as A or B roads. Non-Principal roads are defined as those roads not classified as A or B roads.

2.3 Principal Roads shall be cut after the 1st June with estimated completion by the end of June.

2.4 Non Principal Roads shall be cut from the 1st August with estimated completion by the end of September.

2.5 Existing Biodiversity Areas, which consist of those Community Councils that are wholly or partly within the Clwydian Range, Dee Valley AONB and those Community Councils that chose to become part of the former Biodiversity Area, will now be absorbed into the whole County cutting schedule as defined in Clauses 2.3 and 2.4 above.

Exceptions

2.6 Roadside Nature Reserves will be cut as per their individual management prescriptions.

3. Cut Specifications and Standards.

3.1 The minimum height of all cutting undertaken by a tractor and flail will be 100mm. Other equipment (brush cutters etc.) may be used on a limited number of sites where access with a tractor and flail is not possible. In these instances, it may not be possible to cut to a height of 100mm, and the verge may be cut shorter. In all instances, the height of the cut will be such that the top soil is not exposed or disturbed by the cutting activity.

3.2 On all roads including 'A' and 'B' roads the swathe shall be no more than 1m wide from the edge of the road, to a height of no less than 100mm. A cut greater than 1m wide may be required at specific locations at the discretion of the Highway Authority

for the purposes of Health and Safety. This may result in some roads being cut earlier than the dates stated in clauses 2.3 and 2.4

3.3 More frequent cutting may be required to maintain visibility splays in any location deemed necessary. This will be at the discretion of the Highway Authority for the purposes of Health and Safety.

3.4 Every effort will be made to delay the cutting of the non-principal road network for as long as possible, to allow flowers to set seed and avoid unnecessarily disturbing wildlife.

3.5 A complete cut of the entire verge width may be undertaken at the discretion of the Highway Authority to prevent scrub encroachment onto the verge and to restore forward visibility for health and safety purposes.

3.6 To date, the Council has designated eleven Roadside Nature Reserves, for rare/notable plant species and/or habitats, which receive special environmental management as set out in individual site management prescriptions. These are clearly marked with signs on the verge and white square bracket road markings.

3.7 The Council will collect grass cuttings from designated Roadside Nature Reserves according to their individual management prescription. The Council will work towards a policy of collecting cuttings from grass verges once resources become available.

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Appendix II

Date: 5th January 2021

Report Version: v4.1

Authors: Mark Evans, Andy Clark, Jon Chapman, Michael Bennion

Briefing Note Weed Spraying

Background

Weed growth on the Public Highway is unsightly and can result in damage to the surface of the carriageway or footway. It can also impede the flow of surface water into the highway drainage system. To address this issue, Denbighshire County Council undertake a programme of weed spray treatments 2 times a year usually in March/April and July/August on all urban roads throughout the County. This was previously carried out in March, June and September when the contract was for 3 sprays per annum. Occasionally the scope of the works will increase to include weed spraying of a proportion of the Principal road network.

The weed spray application was undertaken on the urban network by Languard Ltd in 2020. A tender process is currently being undertaken to procure a new supplier with effect from April 1st 2021 for a period of up to 5 years, with an annual review to address supplier performance and effectiveness of the treatments.

The chemical used to treat the weeds is Barclay Trustee Amenity which contains the following chemicals in the concentrations stipulated:

Glyphosate - 3lt/ha in a volume of 80lt/ha of water
Codacide – 2lt per 200lt water
Quartz – 500ml per 100lt water
Balance – 250ml per 100lt water
Driftless 0.1 to 0.2 % volume

Glyphosate is the primary ingredient of a number of weed killing products which has recently been in the news in America. Dewayne Johnson, a 46- year-old former groundskeeper, was successful in a court case recently, with the jury determining that Monsanto's Roundup weed killer caused his cancer and that the corporation

failed to warn him of the health hazards from exposure. The principal ingredient of Roundup is Glyphosate. However, It should be noted that Monsanto have contested this judgement and intend to appeal against the recent court ruling.

Glyphosate is the active substance in many herbicides and is widely used around the world. All pesticide active substance approvals are subject to periodic review and the approval of glyphosate has recently gone through this process. In November 2017, the European Union re-approved the continuing use of glyphosate from 16 December 2017. Reviews of the scientific data by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the

European Chemicals Agency's Committee for Risk Assessment have found no safety concerns that would prevent continuing approval, and UK scientists agree with this assessment. The new approval lasts until 15 December 2022; use beyond that date would be subject to a further decision.

Welsh Government have also issued a recent briefing note following on from the recent legal challenge in America which stipulates that Glyphosate is still an approved product. Refer to Appendix A.

Current Position

As a consequence of the recent court decision and subsequent publicity in America, Denbighshire has received a number of enquiries in respect of our weed spray policy, programme and the chemicals used.

1. Legislation

The Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations, 2012

Part of this legislation requires the government to create a National Action Plan, for the sustainable use of pesticides. This is currently out for industry consultation. The Amenity Forum expect DEFRA will include a requirement for the Amenity Standard.

The UK National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides details legislation applicable to users, those who cause or permit use and distributors. It also details other mechanisms and measures we use to ensure products are used, stored and disposed of in a sustainable fashion.

2. Compliance

All suppliers that are appointed to undertake weed spraying works on the Public Highway are vetted to ensure compliance with current legislation, codes of practice and Health and Safety. Any supplier using pesticides as part of their professional activities must (including those previously operating under grandfather rights) hold a recognised specified training certificate.

Languard Ltd are a BASIS Amenity Assured Compliant Contractor. The Amenity Assured standard has been developed by key UK organisations which have the responsibility to address the concerns of government, local authorities and many other amenity organisations with regard to amenity weed control.

The aim of the standard is to:

- Set standards
- Audit contractor performance
- Certificate staff and businesses
- Award on merit the associated qualifications

Languard Ltd have also attained the following qualifications and competencies:

To comply with legislation, all weed control operatives must have;

- PA1 Handling of pesticides
- PA2 Boom applicator
  And / or
- PA6 hand held applicator

All Languard Limited operatives are qualified with PA1 and PA2.

The Managing Director of Languard Ltd is a Director of the BASIS Amenity Assured Standard Scheme.

3. Chemical Application and rate of spread

All persons applying pesticides in a professional capacity are required to conform to the following;

- Codes of Practice – legislation that specifies training, method of application, environmental protection, record keeping and permissible pesticides to

ensure that pesticides are applied whilst achieving the following;

1. Control the weeds in a safe and controlled manner
2. Protect the public, pets, wildlife, environment and operator
3. Minimise the amount of pesticides, where possible
4. Recorded disposal of containers, packaging and pesticides via registered recycling and disposal companies
5. No weedspraying is undertaken during rainfall and windy conditions.

- Best Practice – guidelines to be applied, where necessary, as an addition to Codes of Practice
- COSHH Control of Substances Hazardous to Health – A system of controlling the use of any substance in all industries

The Product used is Barclay Trustee Amenity. Further chemicals are included in the treatment to aid adhesion and reduce drift. The quantities used in the weed spray mix are listed below

- Application rate of Barclay Trustee Amenity is 3 litres / hectare (10,000sq.m)
- Codacide – 2 litres per 200 litres of water
- Quartz – 500millilitres per 100 litres
- Balance – 250millilitres per 100 litres of water
- Driftless - 0.1to 0.2% volume

4. Supplier Method Statement

See Appendix B & C to the rear of this document

5. Exposure

By adhering to legislation, guidelines, manufacturer's labels, training and applying common courtesy to the public, there is an extremely low risk of the public being exposed directly exposed to Glyphosate, particularly when considering the extremely low application rate per square metre of weeds.

Alternative Methods of Weed Control

There are several methods of alternative weed control being put to trial. Listed below are some of the available options:

- Hot foam
- Steam
- High pressure hot water

- Flame gun (gas)

All four of the above will give a rapid kill of the foliage with little or no sustainability, but they will have a limited effect on the roots of smaller grass weeds, chickweed etc., but deeper-rooted weeds such as nettles, docks and dandelions will regrow rapidly after treatment.

Disadvantages of the alternatives above are listed below:

- They are not regulated and do not require certificates of competence, training or registration.
- Using products at 100 degrees in a public environment gives serious cause for concern in terms of the public and third-party property.
- In the case of hot foam, this product will be washed down the drainage system and into water courses.
- Work rates are very slow and the labour cost element is high making the cost to benefit ratio non-viable.

A further alternative is a vinegar and salt solution. The vinegar effectively 'burns off' the foliage and the salt acts as a growth retardant.

- This solution does give fast results and the salt provides a short-term residual effect. In a dry season this effect could be extended, but following any significant rainfall, the salt would be washed away.
- Household vinegar is approximately 5% acetic acid, relatively harmless. To achieve desirable results, it is necessary to use commercial grade vinegar of 20% acetic acid, which becomes a caustic solution.
- As these products are freely available and the solution is not a herbicide, there is no regulation for its use and operatives have no formal training, creating a potential health and safety hazard.
- For the salt to be effective, large quantities in high concentration (to saturation) are required. This may create potential Environmental issues by entering the sub soil in much the same way as nitrates are a current problem.

Conclusion

The existing arrangement is the most economical and effective treatment for killing weeds on the Public Highway. There are other alternatives which do not use Glyphosate based products but there are limitations in terms of effectiveness, speed of treatment, regeneration of weeds and ultimately cost.

Extensive consultation has been undertaken with other authorities in conjunction

with the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE), which clearly indicates that virtually all councils plan to continue using glyphosate based products for highways weed killing on their road networks. Further details are available upon request.

At the present time, there are no European or domestic based restrictions on the use of Glyphosate based products and the recommendation of the report is that the weed spray operation continue in accordance with current guidelines and constraints.

APPENDIX A

Welsh Government Glysophate Information Note– August 2018

It is the policy of the Welsh Government to reduce to the lowest possible level the effect of pesticide use on people, wildlife, plants and environment while making sure pests, diseases and weeds are effectively controlled. All pesticide products available in the UK have to meet strict regulatory standards to ensure they do not pose a threat to human or animal health and the environment. The regulatory authorities undertake ongoing scientific research to make sure such chemicals are safe to use and have no long- lasting effect on the environment.

Glyphosate is the active substance in many herbicides and is widely used around the world. All pesticide active substance approvals are subject to periodic review and the approval of glyphosate has recently gone through this process. In November 2017, the European Union re-approved the continuing use of glyphosate from 16 December 2017. Reviews of the scientific data by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Chemicals Agency's Committee for Risk Assessment have found no safety concerns that would prevent continuing approval, and UK scientists agree with this assessment. The new approval lasts until 15 December 2022; use beyond that date would be subject to a further decision.

Risks associated with the use of pesticides in amenity areas, such as parks, is specifically considered as part of the authorisation process. Legally enforceable conditions of use are imposed on the way products can be applied to ensure the public are not exposed to levels of pesticides that would harm health or have unacceptable effects on the environment.

Pesticides in amenity areas should be used responsibly and only as part of an integrated programme of control. They can help deliver substantial benefits for society which include: management of conservation areas, invasive species and flood risks; access to high quality sporting facilities; and safe public spaces (for example, by preventing weed growth on hard surfaces creating trip hazards), industrial sites and transport infrastructure.

In regards to glyphosate use for controlling invasive non-native plant species you may wish to note recent research undertaken by Swansea University examining the physical and chemical control of Japanese knotweed. These were the largest field trials of their kind ever undertaken worldwide. Initial results were published earlier this year. Though no control treatment delivered complete eradication of Japanese

knotweed glyphosate applied at an appropriate dose, phenological stage and level of coverage was found to

be the most effective control treatment. They made a recommendation for stakeholders to discontinue the use of other widely used herbicides for control of Japanese knotweed and unnecessary physical control methods that add equipment and labour costs and increase environmental impacts, without improving control compared to spraying alone.

The Welsh Government works with industry bodies and others to promote best practice in vegetation and weed management in the amenity sector. We support the work of the Amenity Forum in promoting the importance of sustainable pesticide use and developing user practice so that all amenity pesticide users are operating to consistently high standards. We strongly encourage engagement with the Amenity Forum, particularly at Local Authority level, so we can be assured that amenity pesticide users in Wales are conforming to the standards expected under the UK National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides and EU law. The Amenity Forum's main objective is to be the collective body representing the amenity industry, in relation to pesticide use and weed and pest control within the sector. To deliver on this, the Forum has developed a number of activities which include issuing guidance notes to support 'Best Practice' messages, organising conferences and workshops and working closely with the Chemicals Regulation Division of the Health and Safety Executive to ensure the amenity sector meets the requirements of the Nation Action Plan.

Please find below information from the Health and Safety Executive website regarding obligations tailored for those in the amenity sector using professional pesticide products.

Those who use, or cause or permit others to apply, plant protection products or who store and/or dispose of products are subject to a number of legal requirements. Key points to note are:

 Use of plant protection products should be considered as part of an integrated programme of control. The Amenity Forum provides practical advice on how this can be done.

 Anyone who applies pesticides as part of their professional activities must (including those previously operating under grandfather rights) hold a recognised specified training certificate.

 All those purchasing professional plant protection products must reasonably believe that products are used by someone holding a specified certificate.

 All application equipment, except knapsacks and hand-held, must possess a certificate demonstrating that it has passed an officially recognised test conducted by the National Sprayer Testing Scheme. Equipment has to be tested on either a three, five or six yearly basis thereafter depending on when

the most recent test was conducted or the type of equipment. All equipment must be calibrated on a regular basis.

- Users, or those who cause or permit use, must ensure that: all reasonable precautions are taken to protect human health and the environment; applications are confined to target areas; and in certain areas (including public spaces and conservation areas) that the amount used and frequency of use is as low as reasonably practicable.
- Priority is given to particular products where there are risks to water quality.
- Professional users and distributors take all reasonable precautions to ensure handling, storage and disposal operations do not endanger human health or the environment.
- Storage areas are constructed in such a way as to prevent unwanted releases of products.

APPENDIX B

Languard Ltd

Method Statement for Applying Herbicides to Emerged Weeds on Footways using a Kubota Compact Tractor

Only Trained and Competent Operatives are to Perform the Associated Activities within this Method Statement

1. Client Details:
• Client details to be made known before work commences and briefed to relevant staff.
2. Relevant Documents:
• A map of the city/borough etc to be treated to be made available to operators. Operators to work from maps and complete a master map for Languard purposes and a master map which is to be kept at the clients offices. Alternatively, a list of sites may be used instead of a map where the works involve treating small villages/towns. • Details of areas not to be treated, or areas where caution is needed shall be made known to staff. Details are provided by the client and from previous treatments completed and briefed to staff. • Operators to complete Jobsheet 1, Jobsheet 2, timesheet and vehicle/equipment checklist on a daily basis. Vehicle stocksheet to be updated weekly.
3. Scope of the Works:
• Applying herbicides to emerged weeds on footways, back edges, kerbs, channels, tree bases within footways (unless instructed otherwise) including roundabouts, splitters, central reserves etc. Full details to be provided at the pre contract briefing. • This method statement only covers the treatment of footways etc within road speeds of 40mph or less. Footways within road speeds greater than 40mph shall be subjected to a specific risk assessment before being treated.
4. Training Requirements:
• Spray operators shall be NPTC PA2A certificated to carry out weed control on Kubota tractors. • Spray operators shall be NPTC PA6A certificated to carry out weed control using knapsacks. • Spray operators shall have undergone training from experienced staff to carry out weed control to footways using Kubota tractors and knapsacks and be deemed competent. Inexperienced operators shall be supervised at all times.
5. Personnel:

- Number of operators shall be dependent on the size of the contract. Sufficient numbers of operators shall be available to complete the works in the timescales specified by the client.
- A site supervisor(s) shall be available on site at all times. They shall ensure the works are completed in accordance with company policy and the client requirements and shall carry out daily reporting and deal with any issues arising.
- All staff shall attend an induction from the client if necessary before work commences.

6. Plant and Equipment:

- A support vehicle which is fully equipped to carry equipment and materials in accordance with BASIS requirements, statutory code of practice and company policy.
- A Kubota compact tractor equipped with a Hardi spray system, front mounted booms/hand lance. Tractor speed shall be restricted to 4mph (6kph)
- Cooper Pegler knapsack.
- Small handheld pump up applicator for carrying on the tractor.

7. Sequence of Work:

- Operatives will carry out the works in accordance with the contract briefing and client spec.
- Operatives will start in the area specified by the client and carry out the treatment in accordance with training and previous experience. Operatives will complete both sides of the carriageway, working with a structured approach to ensure all areas are completed prior to moving on.
- Operators will travel to site in a support vehicle and park in a safe area in the location they are to be treating without causing disruption to other vehicles, residents and commercial businesses. Adherence to any road markings, signs and parking restrictions must be exercised.
- Operators will offload the Kubota compact tractor from the vehicle (see section 13).
- Operators will carry out pre-use checks on the tractor to ensure it is safe to use in accordance with the checklists provided (SMSF24) and record the results on the weekly checksheet (SMSF23). The tractor shall not be used where any defects are found until suitable repairs have been carried out. Where repairs are beyond the capability of the operator, they shall contact the site supervisor or manager to arrange repairs or a replacement.
- The tractor shall be checked for fuel and topped up when necessary using the drum and funnel from the support vehicle. Any spillages shall be cleaned up using the spill kit provided.
- Once the checks have been carried out, the operator shall fill the spray tank in accordance with section 24 and check that the tractor is calibrated to apply the correct rate.
- The operator shall then secure the support vehicle and commence treatment in accordance with the training provided, this method statement and previous experience of treating footways.
- The operator shall carry out the treatment in accordance with the route planned on the map which is carried on the tractor for easy reference. Where necessary, areas not to be treated or areas requiring knapsacking be marked on this map and the operator shall contact their supervisor to inform them so that a knapsack crew can be assigned to treat.
- Where areas are restricted access to the tractor, or where an area is unsafe for tractor treatment, they shall be marked on the map and treated using handheld equipment. All operators shall carry a small handheld sprayer with them and shall use this to treat small

areas. The tractor must be secured (switched off and key removed) and remain in view whilst treating small areas.

- When the spray tank is empty, the operator shall refill in accordance with section 24.
- At the end of the day, the operator shall ensure the spray tank is empty and the tractor is still serviceable and load it back into the support vehicle in accordance with section 13.
- Job sheets, timesheets etc shall be completed for the day's work.
- Operators shall communicate progress to the site supervisor daily and the master map updated.
- Operators shall plan the next day's work to ensure no areas are missed or treated twice.

8. General Operational Requirements:

- Avoid reversing tractors wherever possible. If reversing is necessary, ensure that you look behind before reversing to ensure no pedestrians or obstructions are at risk. Reverse at a slow speed continuing to observe behind/around you and be prepared to stop.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with pedestrians on the footpath, you must stop spraying (park brake applied and in neutral) to allow them to pass (min 5 metre buffer zone). It may be necessary to move onto the road if the footpath is not wide enough. Pedestrians always have the right of way.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with obstructions (parked cars, skips, bins etc), you should pass them by means of the road, make a note of the location on your map and if necessary treat the area with your knapsack. **Never** pass by using private driveways or driving on grass verges/gardens – herbicides on the tractor tyres will cause damage.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with a narrow gap and you are unsure whether you can pass safely, **leave it**, note the location on your map and treat using a knapsack.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with terraced streets with houses that have doors abutting the footway, **extreme** caution must be observed. If necessary, select a lower gear to keep the speed low.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with areas such as town centres, shopping areas and school premises, or any are where pedestrian activity is high, carry out the operation at a time when pedestrian activity is low, i.e. early mornings, evenings or weekends. If necessary, leave these areas, make a note of the location on your map and treat at a suitable time. It may be necessary to seek authorisation from the client.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with road works, caution must be observed in case workmen are obscured from view. If in doubt, stop spraying, make a note of the location on your map and inform the client or your supervisor.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with linking or internal footways, caution must be observed for pedestrians. Drive at a speed suitable to the conditions. Where access is restricted by means of a barrier, you must make a note of the location on your map and treat using your handheld equipment.
- When spraying footways and highways with your tractor, the Highway Code and Chapter 8 must be adhered to. Do not spray on roads with a road speed more than 40 mph.
- The tractor is not fitted with roll over protection (R.O.P.S) because it may create additional risk from low overhead obstructions. In normal use on footpaths the risk of a roll over is not significant. However, caution must be taken when performing some manoeuvres as the risk of the tractor tipping on its side is increased (see section 10 & 11).
- When passing parked cars or obstructions on the road, extreme caution must be observed. Ensure there is a sufficient gap in the traffic to avoid disrupting the flow of traffic.

- When crossing the road on your tractor, be aware that due to the slow speed of the tractor, other vehicles may approach quickly. **Never** cross the road unless you have a sufficient gap in the traffic. Where possible use pedestrian crossings, but be vigilant for pedestrians.
- Never spray herbicides if rain is going to make the application ineffective, or in winds causing spray to drift off target. If the weather deteriorates, stop work, make a note of the location and return to your support vehicle.
- Never drive the tractor on grass verges as damage will result from herbicides covering the tyres.
- Caution must be observed when spraying splitter islands, roundabouts, pedestrian crossings, central reserves etc. Ensure there is a sufficient gap in the traffic to perform the manoeuvre safely. If it is unsafe mark the location on your map and treat using your handheld equipment.
- You must ensure that the directional arrow, warning signs and flashing beacon are clean and visible. If the beacon fails stop work until you have repaired it. Always carry a spare bulb.
- Your tractor is fitted with deflector nozzles which produce a splash over effect when used on a hard surface. Do not allow the splash over to encroach onto verges or gardens. Leave a 10 cm gap between your spray pattern and verges/gardens.
- Never spray right up to picket fencing (gaps between panels) as spray will pass through.
- Never leave your tractor unattended for any reason. Always switch off, remove the key and keep the tractor in eyeshot.
- Application job sheets, timesheets and checklists must be filled out each day and signed at the end of the week. The blue copy of your job sheet must be given to your supervisor.
- Courtesy must be extended to members of the public. If required give them an information card which outlines what you are doing and the contact no. for the Technical Officer.

9. Using the Handheld Lance fitted on the Tractor:

- **Do not** use the hand lance whilst moving.
- Where the use of the hand lance is required to treat around obstacles such as lamp posts and tree bases, the tractor must be stopped, park brake applied and in neutral before the hand lance is used.

10. Mounting and Demounting Footways on a Kubota Tractor:

- Where possible, dropped kerb accesses **must** be used. Dropped kerb accesses are readily available and are found at junctions and premises vehicular entrances
- Where dropped kerb access is unavailable, choose a place with sufficient room to perform the manoeuvre and approach the footpath at a 45^{o} angle, select a low ratio gear to keep the speed to a minimum and drive on one wheel at a time. Be aware that the amount of liquid in your spray tank will affect the stability whilst performing this manoeuvre. If you are unsure of the safety of yourself or your equipment then **do not attempt this manoeuvre** travel to the next drop kerb access, make a note of the location on your map and if necessary, treat using your knapsack.
- When demounting the footpath, approach at a 90 degree angle where possible, use the brake to keep the speed down and drop both front wheels, then both rear wheels simultaneously.

11. Negotiating Corners:

- It is important to keep the tractor speed down when negotiating corners as it may cause sufficient momentum to tip the tractor over on its side. This is increased if a rear wheel clips the kerb, the tank side sway has not been restricted or tyre pressures are incorrect. Always give enough room to turn a corner without clipping the kerb. Always check tank side sway and tyre pressures each morning and adjust if necessary.

12. Driving the Support Vehicle:

- Ensure the vehicle is roadworthy prior to driving by carrying out the checks in accordance with the checklist. Do not use the vehicle if any defects are apparent and contact your Manager.
- Ensure you are familiar with the vehicle controls prior to driving the vehicle. Refer to the manufacturer's handbook where necessary.
- Observe all road signs and markings whilst driving the vehicle. Park the support vehicle in accordance with road signs and markings. Never park the support vehicle on the footway, blocking premise accesses or where parking is not permitted.
- Avoid reversing wherever possible. If reversing is required ensure that there are no obstructions or pedestrians at risk. If necessary get out of the vehicle and check. Always use your mirrors. Perform reversing at slow speeds.
- Be aware that the road speeds for a support vehicle which carries a Kubota tractor are 50mph on single carriageways subject to national speed limits, 60mph on dual carriageways and 70mph on motorways. Do not exceed speed limits.
- Be aware of the braking distances for the vehicle. It will require a greater braking distance than a car due to the size and weight. Be cautious when road conditions are wet or icy.
- Never use your mobile phone whilst driving. Park safely and switch off the engine before making/receiving calls.
- Refer to the contract pack for actions to take in the event of a road traffic accident.
- In the event of a breakdown, contact your Manager who will arrange repairs/recovery.

13. Loading/Unloading the Tractor:

- Ensure the ramps are fitted to the support vehicle correctly with the locating pins in place to prevent the ramps slipping.
- Ensure the tractor wheels are aligned with the ramps.
- Use a low ratio gear to ensure a slow speed is maintained.
- Never engage the clutch whilst going up/down the ramps as the tractor will freewheel backwards and increase speed.
- Ensure any protruding items are clear of any obstructions whilst loading/unloading.
- To prevent instability carry out loading/unloading with the spray tank empty. If necessary pump tank contents into empty drums and label them.
- Carry out loading/unloading with due care and attention to ensure safety.
- Ensure the tractor is butted up to the stop bar when loading to prevent the tractor moving forward, apply the park brake and leave the tractor in low ratio in reverse gear. Use the two 5 tonne rated ratchet straps to secure the tractor using the strapping points provided.
- Never drive the support vehicle with the tractor unsecured, even for a short journey.

14. Inspection and Test Plan:

- All vehicles and equipment shall be inspected before use using the checklists provided. Any defects shall be recorded and rectified before use. If necessary contact your Manager.
- The application equipment shall be calibrated to ensure the correct dose rate is applied and checked on a daily basis. Job sheet to be completed to verify this.

- Sites shall be monitored after completion to ensure treatment has been effective.
- Management shall carry out site inspections to ensure that all staff are complying with the contract specification, this method statement and relevant risk assessment and applicable company policies and procedures. Any staff who fails to comply with any requirements shall be subject to appropriate actions which may include disciplinary action.

15. Risk Assessment and Control Measures:

- SMSF07 RA App Herb to Footways on a Kubota Tractor in Leeds to be carried on site.
- Operators trained in dynamic risk assessment – ie assessing hazards as and when they appear and implementing controls as and when necessary ie stopping, slowing down etc.
- A COSHH assessment for the herbicide(s) to be used shall be completed and briefed to all staff and a copy maintained on site for reference.
- Due to the nature of the works it is very important that all operators are fully trained, certificated and experienced in carrying out footway weed control using a compact tractor. Operators are required to take appropriate actions for the conditions in which they are working in line with the training and experience gained. Any operator who is inexperienced shall be closely supervised until such time as they are deemed competent to carry out the work in a safe manner.

16. Personal Protective Equipment:

- Refer to the COSHH assessment for PPE requirements for handling and applying the herbicide.
- A long sleeved high visibility top to EN471 Class 3 shall be worn at all times on site.
- High visibility trousers to EN471 shall be worn at all times on road speeds greater than 40mph or when instructed by the client.
- Safety boots to EN345 with toe and midsole protection shall be worn at all times on site.
- Work gloves shall be worn on site when necessary to protect hands.
- Hearing protection to EN352 to be provided to operators who request them.

17. Emergency Procedures and Contact Numbers:

- In the event of a road traffic accident follow the procedure contained in the briefing pack. If necessary dial 999 (112 on a mobile) for the emergency services.
- All staff must be in possession of a mobile phone and the number known by staff on site.
- The details of the nearest hospital with an A & E dept shall be included in the briefing pack.
- In the event of a major spillage, drain or ground/watercourse contamination call the Environment Agency on 0800 807060.
- Refer to the COSHH assessment for emergency arrangements for the herbicides used.
- Ensure the 'Instructions in Writing' placards are displayed in any vehicle carrying herbicides to aid the emergency services if necessary.
- A first aid kit (1-10 persons) must be carried in the works vehicle.
- Eyewash (2 x 500ml) must be carried in the works vehicle.
- Emergency drinking water (2 x 500ml) must be carried in the works vehicle.
- A dry powder fire extinguisher (min 1kg) must be carried in the works vehicle.
- In the event of an accident/incident/near miss the accident/incident/near miss report form must be completed and the Safety/Training Manager contacted immediately.
- Contract Director – Tony Marlow 07850 899570
- Safety/Training Manager – Bruce Stevenson 07786 850593
- Technical Manager – Alisdair Mason 07979 802383
- Area Manager – TBC, Site Supervisor - TBC

18. Communications:

- Site Supervisor to communicate with the client on a daily basis or as instructed.
- Site Supervisor to communicate by phone with the Area Manager on a daily basis to inform of progress and any other issues such as breakdowns etc.
- Site Supervisor to arrange communication with other staff/teams as necessary.

19. Traffic Management:

- The support vehicle shall be parked on the carriageway in accordance with the Highway Code.
- The Kubota tractor shall:
    - Be of a conspicuous colour.
    - Have a 610 arrow on the rear to warn approaching traffic to pass to the right.
    - Have a rotating amber beacon visible through 360°.
    - Have warning signs front and rear to warn public of the operation in progress.
    - Be equipped with an audible warning device (horn).
- Where necessary advance warning to other traffic will be provided with the use of a 'Road Works' sign with 'Weed Spraying' supplementary plate placed in advance of the works.
- The Kubota tractor is driven mainly on the footway, however when the tractor is travelling on the road it shall travel in the normal direction of traffic.

20. Welfare Arrangements:

- Toilet facility locations will be briefed at the pre contract briefing and will consist of public conveniences, local services (garages etc) and highway depots.
- Always remove PPE and wash hands before and after using the toilet/eating/drinking.
- Food taken on site must be in a sealed container/package.

21. Waste Management:

- Languard are registered with the Environment Agency as Waste Carriers No. CB/JE5103LZ.
- Empty herbicide containers shall be triple rinsed and the washings incorporated into the spray tank. Empty containers shall be returned to the Languard depot for recycling.
- Cardboard packaging shall be taken to the Languard depot for recycling.
- General waste (food/drink packaging) shall be returned to the depot for disposal.
- Any surplus dilute herbicide shall be minimised by only filling the tank with the required amount. Any left shall be returned to the depot for re-use.
- The site shall be left clean and tidy at the end of the day.

22. Typical Work Environment Hazards On Site:

Slips, Trips & Falls:

- Staff to inspect work areas for hazards which shall be removed or marked as necessary.
- Staff to wear safety boots with ankle support and rugged tread pattern at all times whilst on site.
- Work to be suspended should conditions become unsafe.
- Care to be taken when getting in/out of the vehicle. Use footplates and hand holds where fitted.

Noise:

- Noise from equipment is 80 decibels and on the low exposure action value. Staff can wear ear protection if they request, but it is not mandatory.
- Busy roads to be treated at off peak traffic times to avoid traffic noise.

- Operators to take regular breaks to reduce exposure.

Vibrations:

- Tractors fitted with suspension seats to reduce vibrations.
- Operators to take regular breaks to reduce exposure.
- Health surveillance questionnaire completed annually.

Weather:

- Wet/cold weather clothing to be taken on site and used where necessary.
- Support vehicle to be used to store clothing and to shelter when necessary.

23 All Operators to Ensure Prior to Working on Site:

- You have attended a pre contract safety briefing and signed to confirm your attendance.
- Before going on site, check the vehicle is fully equipped using the vehicle equipment checklist.
- That the correct items of PPE are available and serviceable in accordance with the COSHH.
- The vehicle and spray equipment are in a safe working condition.
- The spraying equipment is free from leaks and has been calibrated correctly as per instructions at the safety briefing. Check calibration daily and record on your Jobsheet 1.
- Your NPTC spraying ID card is on your person when working.
- A fire extinguisher and first aid kit are in the vehicle and you are trained in their use.
- That you are not under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If taking prescribed medicines check with the Health and Safety Adviser prior to going on site that you are fit to drive the vehicle.
- The correct Personal Protective Clothing (P.P.E) is available and worn when handling and applying the products to be used. P.P.E requirements will be issued with the C.O.S.H.H assessment at the pre contract safety briefing.
- You have sufficient chemical which must be transported securely in the chemsafe at all times.

24. Procedure for Filling the Spray Tank:

- When your spray tank is empty, disengage the P.T.O to avoid excessive wear to the pump.
- Find a fire hydrant that, whilst you are using it, will not cause a disruption to the flow of traffic or block pedestrians use of the footway. Ensure that you use the relevant water authorities' standpipe or your standpipe has the correct tag fixed.
- Using the keyway, open the hydrant slowly until water begins to emerge. Draw off the water until it runs clear. Fit the standpipe ensuring the one way check valve is operational.
- Maintain an air gap between the hose and tank to avoid the risk of any back siphoning into the water supply and contaminating the hose.
- The tractor needs to be running with P.T.O engaged and the regulator control on agitation.
- Half fill the spray tank with water (or half the required volume necessary to complete the work).
- Add the required amount of herbicide ensuring you are wearing the correct P.P.E. Refer to your C.O.S.H.H assessment and the safety briefing for requirements. **Note** if using Glyphosate and a vegetable oil adjuvant they **must** be mixed together before adding to the spray tank. Empty containers must be triple rinsed and the washings incorporated into the spray tank. All containers must be returned to your depot for recycling.
- Top up the spray tank with water without overfilling (or add the remaining quantity required).

- Any spillages must be cleaned up properly using your spill kit and not washed down drains.
- Leave the tank for a short period of time on agitation to ensure the herbicides are properly mixed and wash hands and gloves.
- When disconnecting your standpipe ensure it is fully turned off to avoid water wastage.
- If there is a fault with the hydrant do not use it. If a fault occurs whilst in use it must be reported to your Manager who will report it to the relevant water authority.

25. Amendment/Revision Control:

- Where necessary, this document shall be amended and the issue number and date changed. If an amendment is made, the document shall be re-issued to all relevant staff and re-briefed.

If in doubt about your safety, the safety of others or your equipment, stop work and contact your Supervisor or Manager for advice.

Authorised By	B. Stevenson	Title	Safety/Training Manager	Issue No.	10
Signed	B. Stevenson	Date	21.01.2020	Review Date	21.01.2021

APPENDIX C

Languard Ltd

Method Statement for Applying Herbicides to Emerged Weeds on Footways using a Knapsack

Only Trained and Competent Operatives are to Perform the Associated Activities within this Method Statement

1. Client Details:

- Client details to be made known before work commences and briefed to relevant staff.

2. Relevant Documents:

- A map of the city/borough etc to be treated to be made available to operators. Operators to work from maps and complete a master map for Languard purposes and a master map which is to be kept at the client's offices. Alternatively, a list of sites may be used instead of a map where the works involve treating small villages/towns.
- Details of areas not to be treated, or areas where caution is needed shall be made known to staff.
- Operators to complete Jobsheet 1, Jobsheet 2, timesheet and vehicle/equipment checklist on a daily basis. Vehicle stocksheet to be updated weekly.

3. Scope of the Works:

- Applying herbicides to emerged weeds on footways, back edges, kerbs, channels, tree bases within footways (unless instructed otherwise) including roundabouts, splitters, central reserves etc. Full details to be provided at the pre contract briefing.
- This method statement only covers the treatment of footways etc within road speeds of 40mph or less. Footways within road speeds greater than 40mph shall be subjected to a specific risk assessment before being treated.

4. Training Requirements:

- Spray operators shall be NPTC PA6A certificated to carry out weed control using knapsacks.
- Spray operators shall have undergone training from experienced staff to carry out weed control to footways using knapsacks and be deemed competent.

5. Personnel:

- The number of operators shall be dependent on the size of the contract. Sufficient numbers of operators shall be available to complete the works in the timescales specified by the client.
- A site supervisor(s) shall be available on site at all times. They shall ensure the works are completed in accordance with company policy and the client requirements and shall carry out daily reporting and deal with any issues arising.
- All staff shall attend an induction from the client if necessary, before work commences.

6. Plant and Equipment:

- A support vehicle which is fully equipped to carry equipment and materials in accordance with BASIS requirements, statutory code of practice and company policy.
- Cooper Pegler knapsack.

7. Sequence of Work:

- Operatives will carry out the works in accordance with the pre contract briefing and the client specification.
- Operatives will start in the area specified by the client and carry out the treatment in accordance with training and previous experience. Operatives will complete both sides of the carriageway, working with a structured approach to ensure all areas are completed prior to moving on.

- Operators will travel to site in a support vehicle and park in a safe area in the location they are to be treating without causing disruption to other vehicles, residents and commercial businesses. Adherence to any road markings, signs and parking restrictions must be exercised.
- Operators will carry out pre-use checks on the knapsack to ensure it is safe to use in accordance with the checklists provided (SMSF24 & 25) and record the results on the weekly checksheet (SMSF23). The knapsack shall not be used where any defects are found until suitable repairs have been carried out. Where repairs are beyond the capability of the operator, they shall contact the site supervisor or manager to arrange repairs or a replacement.
- Once the checks have been carried out, the operator shall fill the knapsack in accordance with section 20 and check that it is calibrated to apply the correct rate.
- The operator shall then secure the support vehicle and commence treatment in accordance with the training provided and this method statement.
- The operator shall carry out the treatment in accordance with the route planned on the map which is carried for easy reference. Where necessary areas not to be treated shall be marked on this map and the operator shall not treat these areas.
- When the knapsack is empty, the operator shall refill in accordance with section 20.
- At the end of the day, the operator shall ensure the knapsack is empty and still serviceable and load it back into the support vehicle.
- Job sheets, timesheets etc shall be completed for the day's work.
- Operators shall communicate progress to the site supervisor daily and the master map updated.
- Operators shall plan the next day's work to ensure no areas are missed or treated twice.

8. General Operational Requirements:

- When pedestrians are encountered on the footway being treated, you must stop spraying to allow them to pass (min 5 metre buffer zone). Pedestrians always have the right of way.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with obstructions (parked cars, skips, bins etc), you should pass them by means of the road. **Never** pass by using private driveways or walking on grass verges/gardens – herbicides on your footwear will cause damage.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with areas such as town centres, shopping areas and school premises, or anywhere where pedestrian activity is high, carry out the operation at a time when pedestrian activity is low, i.e. early mornings, evenings or weekends. If necessary, leave these areas, make a note of the location on your map and treat at a suitable time. It may be necessary to seek authorisation from the client.
- Should you, whilst carrying out spraying, be confronted with road works, caution must be observed in case workmen are obscured from view. If in doubt, stop spraying, make a note of the location on your map and inform the client or your supervisor.
- Do not spray on roads with a road speed more than 40 mph.
- Never spray herbicides if it is raining, or in winds causing excessive spray drift. If the weather deteriorates, stop work, make a note of the location and return to your support vehicle.
- Never walk on grass verges as damage may result from herbicides on the soles of your boots.
- Caution must be observed when spraying splitter islands, roundabouts, pedestrian crossings, central reserves etc. Ensure there is a gap in the traffic to perform the manoeuvre safely.
- Knapsacking on hard surfaces will produce splash over. Do not allow splash over to encroach onto verges or gardens. Leave a 10 cm gap between your spray pattern and verges/gardens.
- Never spray right up to picket fencing (gaps between panels) as spray will pass through.
- Never leave your knapsack unattended for any reason.
- Application job sheets, timesheets and checklists must be filled out each day and signed at the end of the week. The blue copy of your job sheet must be given to your supervisor.
- Courtesy must be extended to members of the public at all times. If required give them the telephone number of your depot manager or head office if a dispute/problem cannot be resolved.

9. Driving the Support Vehicle:

- Ensure the vehicle is roadworthy prior to driving by carrying out the checks in accordance with the checklist. Do not use the vehicle if any defects are apparent and contact your Manager.
- Ensure you are familiar with the vehicle controls prior to driving the vehicle. Refer to the manufacturer's handbook where necessary.
- Avoid reversing where possible. If reversing is necessary, the second operator shall act as a banksman ensuring hand signals are known to both employees. If no second operator is available get out and check behind if necessary. Use mirrors and reverse at a slow speed being observant for pedestrians and obstructions.
- Observe all road signs and markings whilst driving the vehicle. Park the support vehicle in accordance with road signs and markings. Never park the support vehicle on the footway, blocking premise accesses or where parking is not permitted.
- Never use your mobile phone whilst driving. Park safely and switch off the engine before making/receiving calls.
- Refer to the contract pack for actions to take in the event of a road traffic accident.
- In the event of a breakdown, contact your Manager who will arrange repairs/recovery.

10. Inspection and Test Plan:

- All vehicles and equipment shall be inspected before use using the checklists provided. Any defects shall be recorded and rectified before use.
- The application equipment shall be calibrated to ensure the correct dose rate is applied and checked on a daily basis. Job sheet to be completed to verify this.
- Sites shall be monitored after completion to ensure treatment has been effective.

11. Risk Assessment and Control Measures:

- SMSF07 RA No. 2 App Herb to Footways using a Knapsack to be carried on site.
- Operators trained in dynamic risk assessment – ie assessing hazards as and when they appear and implementing controls as and when necessary ie stopping, slowing down etc.
- A COSHH assessment for the herbicide(s) to be used shall be completed and briefed to all staff and a copy maintained on site for reference.

12. Personal Protective Equipment:

- Refer to the COSHH assessment for PPE requirements for handling and applying the herbicide.
- A long-sleeved high visibility top to EN471 Class 3 shall be worn at all times on site.
- High visibility trousers to EN471 shall be worn at all times on road speeds greater than 40mph or when instructed by the client.
- Safety boots to EN345 with toe and midsole protection shall be worn at all times on site.
- A hard hat to EN397 shall be worn on site when instructed by the client.
- Work gloves shall be worn on site when necessary to protect hands.
- Hearing protection to EN352 to be provided to operators who request them.

13. Emergency Procedures and Contact Numbers:

- In the event of a road traffic accident follow the procedure contained in the briefing pack. If necessary, dial 999 (112 on a mobile) for the emergency services.
- All staff must be in possession of a mobile phone and the number known by staff on site.
- The details of the nearest hospital with an A & E dept shall be included in the briefing pack.
- In the event of a major spillage, drain or ground/watercourse contamination call the Environment Agency on 0800 807060.
- Refer to the COSHH assessment for emergency arrangements for the herbicides used.
- A first aid kit (1-10 persons) must be carried in the works vehicle.

- Eyewash (2 x 500ml) must be carried in the works vehicle.
- Emergency drinking water must be carried in the works vehicle.
- A dry powder fire extinguisher (min 1kg) must be carried in the works vehicle.
- In the event of an accident/incident/near miss the accident/incident/near miss report form must be completed and the Safety/Training Manager contacted immediately.
- Contract Director – Tony Marlow 07850 899570
- Safety/Training Manager – Bruce Stevenson 07786 850593
- Technical Manager – Alisdair Mason 07979 802383
- Area Manager – TBC, Site Supervisor - TBC

14. Communications:

- Site Supervisor to communicate with the client on a daily basis or as instructed.
- Site Supervisor to communicate by phone with the Area Manager on a daily basis to inform of progress and any other issues such as breakdowns etc.
- Site Supervisor to arrange communication with other staff/teams as necessary.

15. Traffic Management:

- The support vehicle shall be parked on the carriageway in accordance with the Highway Code.
- Operatives shall remain on footways where possible. Where no footway is available the operator shall remain as close to the kerb as possible and remain observant for traffic. Where necessary the operator shall walk facing oncoming traffic.
- Operatives to wear a long sleeved hi-vis top to EN371 Class 3 as a minimum at all times.
- Operatives ensure a sufficient gap in the traffic before crossing the carriageway. Use of pedestrian crossings where available.

16. Welfare Arrangements:

- Toilet facility locations will be briefed at the pre contract briefing and will consist of public conveniences, local services (garages etc) and highway depots.
- Always remove PPE and wash hands before and after using the toilet/eating/drinking.
- Food taken on site must be in a sealed container/package.

17. Waste Management:

- Languard are registered with the Environment Agency as Waste Carriers No. CBDU154914.
- Empty herbicide containers shall be triple rinsed and the washings incorporated into the spray tank. Empty containers shall be returned to the Languard depot for recycling.
- Cardboard packaging shall be taken to the Languard depot for recycling.
- General waste (food/drink packaging) shall be returned to the depot for disposal.
- Any surplus dilute herbicide shall be minimised by only filling the tank with the required amount. Any left shall be returned to the depot for re-use.
- The site shall be left clean and tidy at the end of the day.

18. Typical Work Environment Hazards On Site:

Slips, Trips & Falls:

- Staff to inspect work areas for hazards which shall be removed or marked as necessary.
- Staff to wear safety boots with ankle support and rugged tread pattern at all times whilst on site.
- Work to be suspended should conditions become unsafe.
- Care to be taken when getting in/out of the vehicle. Use footplates and hand holds where fitted.

Noise:

- Busy roads to be treated at off peak traffic times.

Weather:

- Wet/cold weather clothing to be taken on site and used where necessary.
- Sunscreen used to protect exposed skin from sun burn.
- Support vehicle to be used to store clothing and to shelter when necessary.

19. All Operators to Ensure Prior to Working on Site:

- You have attended a pre contract safety briefing and signed to confirm your attendance.
- Before going on site, check the vehicle is fully equipped using the vehicle equipment checklist.
- That the correct items of PPE are available and serviceable in accordance with the COSHH.
- The vehicle and spray equipment are in a safe working condition.
- The spraying equipment is free from leaks and has been calibrated correctly as per instructions at the safety briefing. Check calibration daily and record on your Jobsheet 1.
- Your NPTC spraying ID card is on your person when working.
- A fire extinguisher and first aid kit are in the vehicle and you are trained in their use.
- That you are not under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If taking prescribed medicines check with the Health and Safety Adviser prior to going on site that you are fit to drive the vehicle.
- The correct Personal Protective Clothing (P.P.E) is available and worn when handling and applying the products to be used. P.P.E requirements will be issued with the C.O.S.H.H assessment at the pre contract safety briefing.
- You have sufficient chemical which must be transported securely in the chemsafe at all times.

20. Procedure for Filling the Spray Tank:

- Ensure your knapsack is on a hard level surface to avoid it tipping over, at the side of your support vehicle, away from water courses and the carriageway. Do not place it on grass verges. Ensure you have the correct P.P.E on.
- Using a water drum from your support vehicle half fill the knapsack with water. Do not rest the drum on top of the knapsack opening as you will damage the top which will result in the lid not sealing correctly.
- Pour out the required amount of herbicide into a measuring jug avoiding any spillages.
- Place the lid back on the herbicide container securely and put it back in the support vehicle. Ensure that you are wearing your faceshield when handling the concentrate. Triple rinse the measuring jug with water adding the washings into your knapsack.
- Top up your knapsack with water being careful not to overfill it.
- Replace the lid ensuring it is not cross threaded. If unsure of a good seal then perform a tip test.
- Any spillages must be cleaned up properly using the equipment provided.
- Place the knapsack in the rear of the vehicle and using the correct procedure, put it on your back and gently shake it to agitate the mix. Make sure the vehicle is locked before proceeding.

21. Amendment/Revision Control:

- Where necessary, this document shall be amended and the issue number and date changed. If an amendment is made, the document shall be re-issued to all relevant staff and re-briefed.

If in doubt about your safety, the safety of others or your equipment, stop work and contact your Supervisor or Manager for advice.

Authorised By	B. Stevenson	Title	Safety/Training Manager	Issue No.	11
Signed	B. Stevenson	Date	21.01.2020	Review Date	21.01.2021

APPENDIX III

Plantlife

Managing grassland road verges

A best practice guide

Authors:
Joanna Bromley, Ben McCarthy, Catharine Shellswell
Plantlife 2019

With thanks to expert contribution from John Byrne, Angus Corby, Dr Trevor Dines, Edward Godsiffe, Leonardo Gubert, Rachel Hackett, Laurence Lewis-Jones, Cameron Lewis, Iain Macdonald, Kate Petty, Phil Sterling, Matthew Tompsett and Clare Warburton

Contents

There are nearly 313,500 miles of rural road verge in the UK – equivalent in area to our remaining lowland species-rich grassland

700 species of wild flower grow on road verges – nearly 45% of our total flora – but there has been a 20% drop in floral diversity due to poor management and nutrient pollution

For 23 million commuters, road verges can be their only daily contact with nature

Water and flood risk management

Access to services

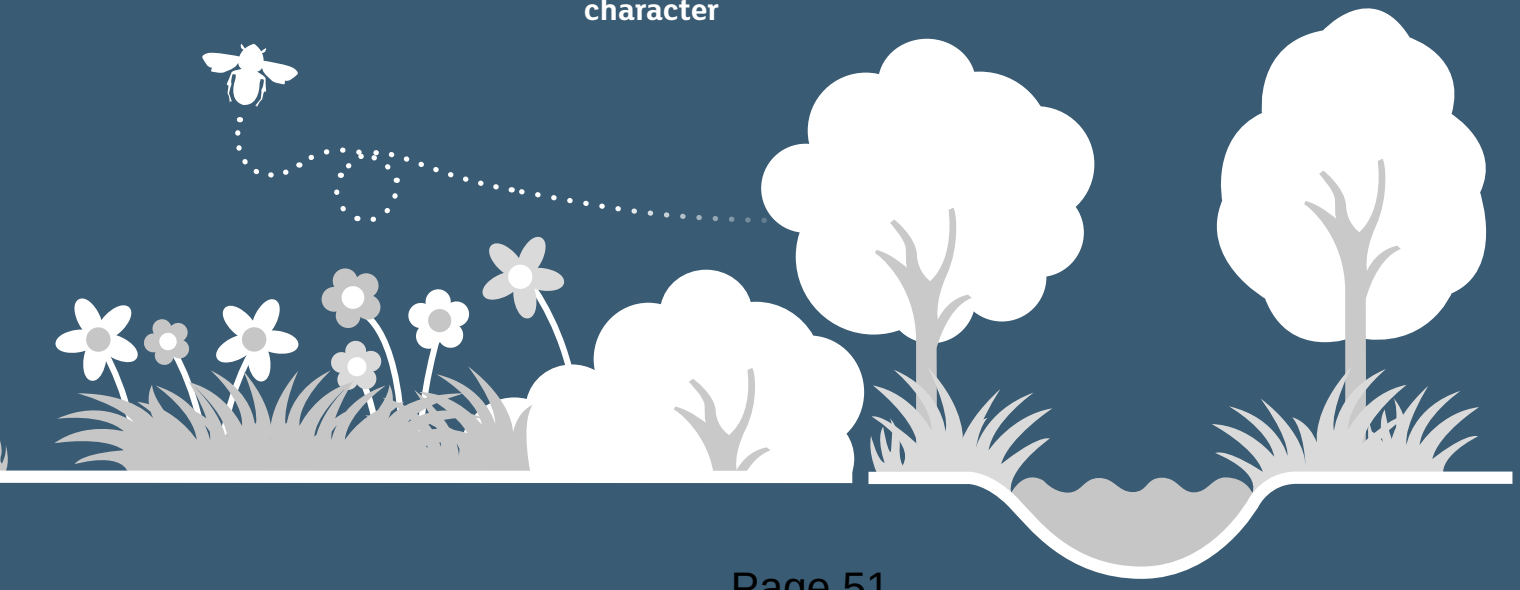
Enhanced bank stability

With thanks to the UK Green Infrastructure Partnership

These guidelines fulfil a recommendation in the Government's National Pollinator Strategy. Proper management of all verges would create a pollinator habitat the size of London, Birmingham, Manchester, Cardiff and Edinburgh combined

With over 97% of meadows destroyed since the 1930s, road verges are a vital refuge for pollinators and other wildlife

- Noise and air pollution buffer
- Pollinator corridors
- Enhanced biodiversity
- Carbon sequestration
- Visual screening
- Enhanced local character
- Improved air quality
- Tourism gateway



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Executive summary

There are nearly 313,500 miles of rural road in the UK. With verges running most of their length, it is the equivalent in area to our remaining lowland species rich grassland and represents a nationally significant resource of increasing importance to UK wildlife.

Establishing ecological networks to support the recovery of nature is a priority for government. When managed well, road verges, whether rural or urban and whether on major or minor roads, can sustain an astonishing amount of wildlife: more pollinators are found on well-managed verges than in the neighbouring countryside and nearly 45% of our total flora is found on verges.

Today, the majority of the UK's grass road verges are either cut too frequently and at the wrong time, or abandoned to scrub. Cuttings are left to lie creating a thick thatch, inhibiting growth and increasing soil nutrient levels, which further stimulates vigorous grasses and other nutrient-loving plants. This cycle increases on-going management costs and negatively impacts on the safe functioning of the highway. These unintended consequences are largely due to inappropriate management contracts, focused on safety considerations with little or no consideration of potential wider benefits.

We need to manage our road verges as a nationally significant response to the decline of our wildlife, raising the management bar across the whole grassland estate not just on a few hundred miles of roadside nature reserve. Such transformative action is what is necessary to create 'more, bigger, better and joined up' habitats and 'Making Space for Nature' in keeping with government recommendations.

This guide advocates a different management approach. One that reduces cutting frequency, reduces vegetation growth and the resulting management burden, improves the natural capital value – in particular the number and diversity of flowering plants – and ordinarily results in sustainable operational costs long term and a reduced carbon footprint.

It is a practical guide for highways managers, road engineers, operations managers, landscape architects and all those engaged with verge management and creation. It covers those aspects previously described in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges wildflower handbook and focuses on the management of lowland and upland grassland verges.

It supports:

- Government and statutory agencies deliver their statutory duties and biodiversity net gain obligations
- Industry's corporate social responsibilities to reduce environmental impacts
- The road network to fully contribute towards environmental, social and economic objectives

This publication complements safety considerations and focuses on those areas where there are no safety constraints restricting management. Its aim is to shift the balance so that species-rich habitat becomes the predominant asset across the network, so doubling the area of the UK's species-rich grassland.

Introduction

To only consider road verges in respect of the adjacent highway is to miss a nationally significant opportunity. Government, asset managers, businesses and the public are increasingly recognising the potential of this green infrastructure.

The sterile neat-and-tidy ideal of the verge as manicured lawn is slowly but surely being challenged, particularly on our motorways, rural verges, and some urban highways. Species-rich verges enhance the local character and the visual interest of the highway for the road user and help the road blend into the wider landscape, reducing visual impacts. The daily commute is often the only regular contact a road user has with the natural landscape, supporting health and wellbeing as well as attracting inward investment and promoting civic pride.

Creating and managing species-rich grassland is a brilliant way to improve the biodiversity value of road verges and reduce long-term management costs. Verges rich in native wild flowers support more wildlife, are more resilient to environmental change, enhance ecological connectivity and provide better ecosystem services such as pollination. When maintained through a cyclical management regime, grassland verges provide a cost-effective management option and represent an important opportunity for highway authorities to realise the benefits of enhanced 'Natural Capital'.

All highways authorities have statutory biodiversity duties. These legal duties support conservation being a natural and integral part of the highway authority's policy and decision-making. Following these management guidelines will support highway authorities to discharge their duties and ensure that the soft estate under their management contributes towards local, national and international biodiversity obligations. When managed well, the network of road verges is ideally placed to deliver what is necessary to make 'more, bigger, better and joined up' habitats and fully contribute towards the conservation of the UK's biodiversity.

Better investment in our natural capital is crucial. Such investment reaps dividends and is deemed a priority by government and wider society who understand that business culture needs to change. Highway authorities and industry increasingly recognise this as they shift towards becoming 'biodiversity net gain' businesses.

> A Natural England case study on the A590 in Cumbria demonstrated how management could deliver a 123% increase in 'biodiversity units' as well as delivering an uplift in wider ecosystem services such as air quality, pollination and water management.

Adoption of this good-practice management by highway authorities – thereby ensuring their service providers adopt better management – ensures efficiencies, brings benefits to highway performance and enables the sustainable development of our road network.

Results are best sustained when there is effective partnership between highway authority, industry and the third sector.

> A landscape-scale partnership between Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Highways England was conceived to enhance 12km of existing verges of the A590 in rural South Cumbria within the Morecambe Bay Nature Improvement Area. Between 2015-2016, 73 soft estate plots were identified for enhancement works and management continues until 2020. This partnership meets targets set in the Highways England Biodiversity Plan, engages the community and partners, enables knowledge transfer and brings people together to carry out practical conservation work.

This guide sets out the general, broad management principles for grass verge management. Given the different nuances and contexts of verge habitats, we recommend engaging with an ecologist or NGO with knowledge of local grasslands when creating management plans. The case studies highlighted throughout this document provide examples of the variety of approaches that can be taken, and are available in full on Plantlife's website.

Adoption of this management guidance will also ensure road verges contribute towards national targets to improve ecological connectivity and improve resilience to climate change impacts. In England, this equates to a potential contribution of 111,225miles of verge habitat, in Scotland 35,046miles and in Wales 29,018miles.

Managing grassland road verges

The Strategic Road Network (SRN) – motorways and major A roads – is managed by Highways England, Welsh Government, Transport Scotland, Northern Ireland's Department for Infrastructure, and Transport for London. Outside the SRN, County and Metropolitan District Councils are normally the highway authorities for their area, although some C roads and unclassified roads are delegated to the local District, Parish or Community Councils. In order to maximise the biodiversity and environmental potential of any verge, there are three steps to consider:

- **Assessment – understanding what you've got**
- **Management specifications**
- **Monitoring – performance management**

Assessing the current wildlife value of your grassland road verges

Assessing the existing biodiversity value of the verges under your management is an important first step. It will help identify the broad habitat types so that appropriate and cost effective management can then be detailed in management contracts, so maximising return on investment.

Such information can be incorporated into GIS-based systems as part of the highway authority's general asset management, allowing updates to be easily made to inform annual maintenance in much the same way as hard infrastructure assets are recorded and managed.

> Fermanagh and Omagh Council, with Ulster Wildlife and Transport NI, assessed their rural road verges and incorporated the resulting data into the council's GIS system to ensure appropriate management.
>
> In Lincolnshire, the Wildlife Trust co-ordinated over 250 volunteers to survey road verges. Over 160 new roadside Local Wildlife Sites were designated along about 250km and the data is now in a GIS system. This not only shows designations but can report species lists for over a third of the county's road network. By flagging biodiversity risks and opportunities, this data now guides advice to Lincolnshire County Council, maintenance contractors and utilities companies, as well as planning officers.

The *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* identifies three main classifications of grassland verge:

- **Amenity grassland and grassland with bulbs** (DMRB Landscape Element 1.1 & LE1.2). This is the main type of grassland in **urban/suburban** areas, settlement entry points in rural areas and at rest areas and laybys on the SRN. The intensive management of such amenity grasslands is typically set to maintain a short, even sward, containing a maximum of 10% herb species and no scrub. Changing the management regime can improve the biodiversity and visual amenity of such grasslands and deliver significant cost savings.

- **Open (aesthetic) grassland** (DMRB type LE1.6). This is the predominant type of grassland found across the road network and is either naturally occurring or created by grass-dominated seed mixes. Open aesthetic grassland is defined as those areas with less than nine species/m2 (including grasses but excluding lower plants and shrubs). Such grassland areas have typically more than 30% grasses with low cover of wild flowers such as creeping buttercup *(Ranunculus repens)* and white clover (*Trifolium repens)*. Such grassland provides significant potential for enhancement.

- **Species-rich grassland** (DMRB type LE1.3). This occurs in discrete areas and is made up of naturally occurring or introduced grasses and wild flowers. Species-rich grasslands can be broadly defined as those areas with **nine or more species/m2** (including grasses but excluding lower plants and shrubs), or areas of grassland in poor condition that could be rehabilitated to become species-rich grassland. Such areas are important for the maintenance and expansion of biodiversity across the road verge network.

Grasslands are also defined according to soil type. Classifying your verges against published UK and national priority grassland habitat types will support reporting against corporate, national and local biodiversity targets, as well as enabling natural capital accounting and broader 'Corporate Social Reporting'.

Neutral, calcareous and acid grassland can all occur within the categories described on page 11. Species-rich calcareous or neutral grasslands typically support 12 or more species/m^2, although acid grasslands typically support fewer species with a lower threshold of six species/m^2. Acid grassland may also be present as part of a mosaic with heathland and moorland (DMRB type LE 1.5). Where this occurs, the habitat should be managed to maintain the structural diversity, including the maintenance of dwarf shrubs, which require different management prescriptions but are outside the scope of this guide.

Assessment methods

Classifying different grassland types and enhancement opportunities can be done by **remote assessment** using readily available information:

- Desktop surveys – reviewing aerial photography or historical records to identify floristically diverse or rich areas and areas of good potential. This can be done at regional and local scales.
- Areas already identified and managed for nature conservation – such as statutory protected sites, Local Wildlife Sites or Road Verge Nature Reserves.
- Areas where rare or notable species have been recorded.
- Data is available from local biological record centres, the National Biodiversity Network (www.NBN.org.uk) and local wildlife groups – for example, your local Wildlife Trust.
- Information from members of the public and community groups.

Ideally, areas of species-rich grassland should be confirmed on the ground to ensure cost-effective management planning. This might include:

- **Drive-by surveys** in spring/early summer by an experienced surveyor is often sufficient to identify grassland of interest. Such drive-by assessments can also be used to identify other factors influencing management, such as gradients, access and the wider landscape context, helping identify opportunities for creating 'more, bigger, better and joined up' areas. Drive-by surveys are considerably cheaper than full botanical surveys, are suitable for high-speed roads where pedestrian access is restricted, and allow for long stretches of verge to be surveyed. Repeated drive-by surveys at different times of the year can also help prioritise areas for more detailed assessment.
- A **Phase 1 Habitat Survey** Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) allows for detailed management planning as it captures broad habitat types (for example, calcareous grassland) and other information such as plot size and existing management.
- A full **botanical survey** by an experienced botanist, which is ideal for discrete areas of species-rich grassland to establish baseline data and identify notable, rare and protected species.

Management specifications

General principles to improve wildflower diversity on all grassland verges

Regular management is essential

An annual or cyclical programme is ideal and helps manage problem and competitive species. Grasses often outcompete wild flowers as they typically have extensive root systems, can be vigorous and can cope with a wider range of conditions. Without regular management, rank tussock-forming grasses can quickly dominate, reducing species diversity.

Rolling management programmes are cost effective, minimise operational impacts, improve safety and maximise the Natural Capital Value of the asset in keeping with highway authority statutory duties. Conversely, where this proactive cycle does not occur, long-term management costs tend to increase, business performance is reduced while risks increase and the Natural Capital and biodiversity value of the road verge is diminished as they quickly develop into bramble thickets and scrub.

Timing is everything

It is vital that wild flowers are able to complete their full lifecycle – i.e. grow, flower and set seed. This replenishes the seed bank and allows populations to be maintained cost-free and indefinitely. Cutting too early and too frequently swiftly eliminates many species, reducing diversity and the value of the road verge. Cutting after flowers have set seed in late summer allows visually striking displays of wild flowers and a rich source of pollen and nectar for pollinators. Wild flowers take roughly six to eight weeks from flowering to setting seed.

A **two-cut management approach is ideal** for suppressing coarse grasses and encouraging wild flowers, so reducing management burden over time.

Management option		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
One cut									full cut				
Two cuts	Summer and autumn cutting								partial cut		full cut		
	Late winter and autumn cutting		full cut							full cut			
	Dry verges (short vegetation)	regular cuts								regular cuts			
	Species-rich verges with mown edge		1m strip							full cut			

If only one cut is possible:

- Cut the verge once a year between August and September and remove the cuttings. This allows plants to flower and, importantly, gives time for seed to be shed.
- Management should create areas of bare earth to allow good contact between the seed and the soil, and provide habitat for invertebrates.
- Areas identified as open grassland should be cut on a cyclical management regime.

If more cuts can be undertaken, choose one of the following:

Summer and autumn cutting

- Cut the majority of the verge between mid-July and September to mimic the pattern of hay meadow management. Randomly leave some areas (10-20% of the area) uncut to leave some flowering plants for pollinating invertebrates – for example, specifying leaving at least one working width at the back of the verge every 100 metres.
- Cut the entire area again from October to December to remove late season growth. This is increasingly important as winters are likely to become milder and the growing season lengthens.

Late winter and autumn cutting

- Cut the verge during February and March. This is before most verge plants flower and it will not disturb ground-nesting birds. Raising the cutter bar on the back cut will lower the risk to amphibians, reptiles and small mammals.
- Cut the verge again during September and October. This slightly later cutting date allows plants that were cut earlier in the year time to grow and set seed. This cutting regime is particularly suited to areas with late-flowering species, such as devil's-bit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), which may not flower and set seed until September. It is also suited to areas with early flowering plants, such as cowslips (*Primula veris)*, as it removes any shading vegetation prior to flowering.

Dry soils and coastal situations

- On verges with dry/sandy soils and in coastal situations where the natural vegetation growth is short (ankle height), frequent cutting can take place up until April and restart in September (i.e. avoiding the main flowering period from mid-May through to the end of August). This will help develop a flower-rich turf with clovers (*Trifolium* sp.), trefoils (*Lotus* sp.), vetches (*Vicia* sp.), self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris)* and other small species, providing a long continuity of flowers, valuable for bees and other invertebrates.

If it is not practical to cut the whole width of a species-rich verge:

- On species-rich verges, cut a 1-metre strip at the edge of the verge as early as possible (February-March) to allow grass at the back of the verge to grow longer, providing structural diversity that is especially important for invertebrates. Cut the full width during September-October.
- On narrow verges of less than 1 metre, leave some sections uncut to provide the same structural diversity – for example, 50 metres of uncut sections every 200 metres.

Cut-and-collect

In all circumstances, achieving low soil fertility is key to enhancing wildlife value and reducing management burdens. Most wild flowers are associated with lower fertility soils. Conversely, soils with high fertility containing high levels of nitrates and phosphate, for example, support more vigorous grasses and competitive species such as nettles and cow parsley. Removing the arisings at the point of cutting takes biomass and the nutrients they contain away from the verge. This reduces the layer of dead grass or thatch and opens up the soil surface to allow seed germination. Repeated over a number of years, it has demonstrable impact on soil fertility, encouraging slower growing and more diverse species that require less management, so delivering direct cost savings. Increasing numbers of highway authorities (and their managing agents) are adopting cut-and-collect as the simplest way to reduce the management costs and win efficiencies. Reduced cutting also reduces operational impacts such as traffic management, ensures drainage courses remain open, aids litter collection and delivers wider benefits such as supporting increased numbers of pollinators.

Ideally remove all cuttings for alternative use (for example, anaerobic digestion or compost production) or leave to rot down in dedicated and sacrificial areas within the soft estate. Where cut-and-collect or biomass harvesting is being employed, some verges identified as being species-poor with vigorous growth can be cut in May for a period of time until fertility drops.

Low cost, common sense solutions are increasingly being adopted to dispose of grass cuttings. Disposing of arisings as close as possible to where they are cut minimises haulage and, when kept within the soft estate, avoids waste regulations. Small composting heaps rot down quickly or can be utilised as mulch around trees or among shrub-planted areas.

> Kent Wildlife Trust gather their cuttings into habitat piles, which can provide good resting habitat for reptiles and insects. For larger volumes, create drive-through disposal points in tree/shrub areas away from full public view to discourage fly tipping.

Cuttings are now recognised as a viable biomass resource which can be utilised to produce a range of products including biomethane-based compressed natural gas (CNG), electricity and heat. This offers significant opportunity to offset operational costs with novel revenue streams.

> Road verge biomass harvesting with a tractor-powered suction flail has been trialled on Lincolnshire's minor rural roads in partnership with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. Herbaceous biomass from road verges is also being trialled as a feedstock for on-farm combined heat and power (CHP) anaerobic digesters.

Managing public perceptions

Flower-rich verges are increasingly popular with local communities and are an effective way of encouraging wildlife into the heart of the built environment. However, they can be seen as untidy and neglected by some residents and road users. Cutting narrow strips around the verge, so framing the verges inside, is a simple but effective way to give the perception of tidiness and help offset potential negative feedback on a perceived lack of management. Raising awareness of the importance of road verges and engaging local communities in their active management will also help to mitigate this negative perception.

> In 2016 and 2017, a mowing trial was conducted on 17 urban roads in Sheffield by the Sheffield Living Highways Partnership (The University of Sheffield, Amey, Sheffield City Council and The Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust). On one side of each road, mowing proceeded as normal (every three to four weeks) but was reduced by half on the other side during the entire mowing season. The trial was communicated to the public through press, signs on lamp posts and leaflets delivered to each house on the trial roads. Research on public perception found that although local residents did not always appreciate the appearance of the unmown grass, there was appreciation that it was better for wildlife.

Collecting cuttings will help with public perception. Not only does the verge look less neglected, litter collection is aided and, slowly, soil fertility is reduced so helping wild flowers to thrive at the expense of fast-growing nutrient-loving grasses. When cutting is first reduced, there can be attractive localised displays of spring flowers but visual appeal and diversity reduces during the summer because of high fertility, resulting in a greater chance of complaints.

Power of community buy-in

There is tremendous scope in harnessing the energy and commitment of local groups.

> In South Shropshire, the Edgton Village Verge Volunteer Group won funding from the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Conservation Fund and went on to assess all the verges in the village. This baseline evidence showed that Edgton has some of the best verges in the county and cutting regimes were agreed with South Shropshire Highways following public consultation. Ongoing discussions ensure the project is maintained and further partnerships have been established with the National Trust, Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and Shropshire Wildlife Trust. In Warwickshire, a partnership between Warwickshire County Council Highways and volunteers from Stour Valley Wildlife Action Group and Butterfly Conservation carry out valuable scrub clearance after the annual cut on a 1.25km cutting on what is now one of the best calcareous grassland sites in the county.

A Enhancing amenity grassland verges

Most amenity road verges have little biodiversity value but they can offer significant potential. Some tightly mown verges often have a good diversity of wild flowers, albeit suppressed. Reducing the frequency of cuts will allow species such as yarrow (*Achillea millefolium)*, self-heal *(Prunella vulgaris)*, clovers (*Trifolium* sp.), trefoils (*Lotus* sp.) and vetches (*Vicia* sp.) to flower and better support other wildlife.

Cut-and-collect early spring and autumn to deliver the twin objectives of keeping the verges neat and attractive, but also of creating conditions that will allow more wild flowers to thrive from late spring to late summer. Over time, this management will reduce soil fertility, so fewer cuts will be needed and more wild flowers will be able to thrive.

> Adoption of cut-and-collect by Dorset Council on some of their urban verges has reduced cutting frequency by 30%, is providing five-year management savings of £36,000 and £11,000/yr staff savings, and is covering the cost of the new cut-and-collect machinery. Whereas conventional flail cutting produced no cost recovery, decreased wildlife value and resulted in ever-increasing amounts of grass to cut.

Plug plants can be used to introduce greater diversity, helping to kick-start colonisation and spread. Plug plants are easy to use and can be either grown from locally collected seed or purchased from local suppliers. Management contracts should account for care whilst the plugs' roots establish, including clearing tussocks to avoid excessive competition or shading. Transplanting plug plants can be time-consuming, requiring hand tools and follow-up management, but may reduce costs associated with ground preparation prior to introducing seed. In some situations, volunteers in managed work parties have planted plugs on their local verges. Plant out at a rate of 6-10 plugs/m² (according to species); planting in autumn is much more successful as it avoids spring droughts that can desiccate the small plugs. Plug plants can be vulnerable to heavy predation by rabbits.

B Restoring open grassland verges

Plan restoration management of open grassland verges in phases, as most of the estate is likely to have suffered from either excessive cutting at the wrong time of year or, conversely, under-management/abandonment resulting in an overall loss of biodiversity, as well as significant losses of grassland habitat to bramble thicket/scrub.

Initially focusing restoration on areas adjacent to species-rich grassland has the dual benefit of creating larger areas that are more cost-effective to manage, and which are more resilient to environmental pressures such as climate change.

In areas where there has been no management and where a short period of intensive management is required to reinstate a grassland area, it is important to first reduce soil fertility in order for fine grasses and wild flowers to thrive. Initial costs can be recouped over the medium term (three to five years) after which time ongoing management costs are reduced and benefits continually improve.

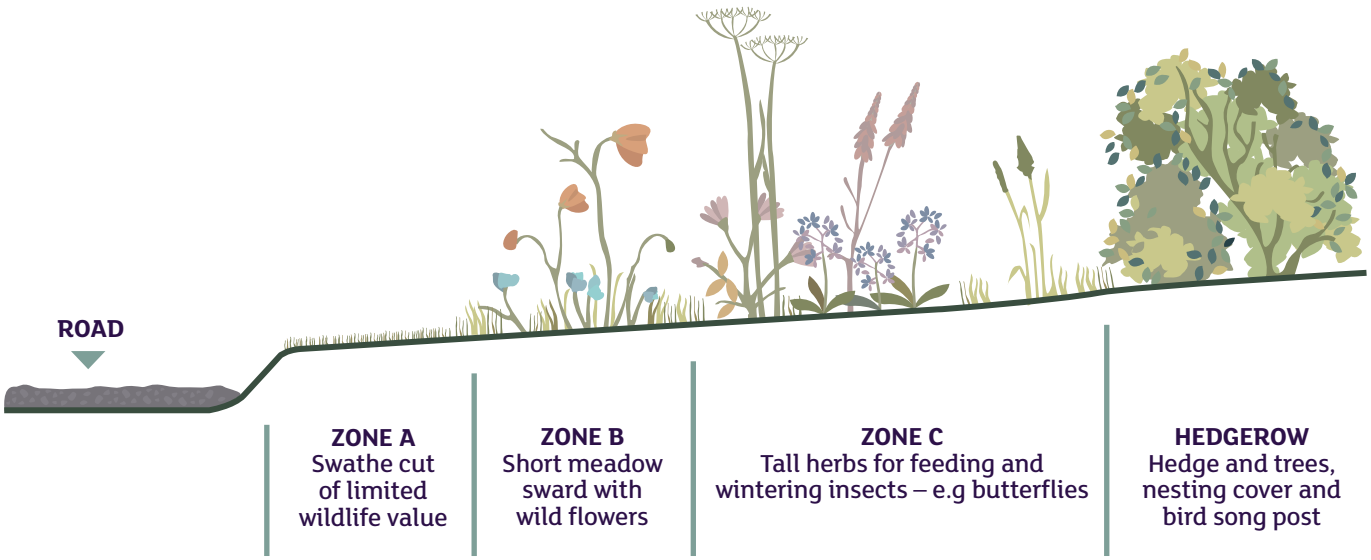
Wild flowers, finer-leaved grasses, sedges and rushes have a tendency to remain at low densities in areas dominated by coarser grasses and other competitive species. Targeting areas which have low densities of **positive indicator species** can result in the re-emergence of dormant or latent wild flowers – i.e. plants that are present but don't get the chance to flower because of repeated cutting, or which come into flower following scrub removal. Common examples include spotted and marsh orchids (*Dactylorhiza* sp.), primroses (*Primula vulgaris)* or cowslips (*Primula veris)*.

Species diversity can be restored by opening the sward and introducing restoration management prescriptions described above. Equally, adjacent species-rich areas can spread and colonise cleared verges through natural seed dispersal if the correct conditions are created.

Variety is key

Structural diversity benefits both flora and fauna. Ideally, a gradient of vegetation height should be applied with shorter vegetation closer to the road and longer grass left at the back merging into hedges, banks or woodland. On wider verges, this can be readily achieved by the standard swathe (safety) cut, retaining short vegetation adjacent to the tarmac with a reduced cutting regime for the central areas and a longer three to five year cutting cycle for the back to stop scrub and woodland encroachment. This creates verges with the structural diversity of open grassland, so supporting the greatest number of species throughout the year.

Regular operational management can also provide structural diversity. For example, maintaining sight lines, visually inspecting structures or providing safe access to roadside equipment can create a diverse sward with areas of short vegetation, occasional bare earth and longer vegetation that is ideal for supporting biodiversity.



Idealised management zones across the width of a roadside verge

Yellow rattle *(Rhinanthus minor)*

Introducing semi-parasitic yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor)* can bring many benefits. Not only can it reduce the quantity of grass growth by 60-80% – so reducing the frequency of cuts and the quantity of cuttings to remove – it creates space for other wild flowers to grow, directly increasing diversity of the verge.

Being an annual, it is critical that it is allowed to set seed after flowering to sustain populations. Seeds must be sown fresh (preferably collected from a local source) and before November to allow sufficient cold-stratification/development over winter. Seeds need to come into contact with the soil surface to germinate, hence sowing seed immediately after a cut-and-collect improves exposure of bare earth and improves germination. Further scarification can also increase germination. Yellow rattle is best introduced onto moderate or low-fertility soils after reinstating favourable management. Once yellow rattle has established and is reducing grass growth, seeds of other wild flowers can be introduced if species have appeared naturally from the soil seed bank.

Incorporating scrub

Scrub also provides structural diversity and, by providing early pollen, nectar, fruit and shelter for invertebrates, reptiles, birds and mammals, can be part of grassland verges managed under rotation. However, if left unchecked, it will affect the operational performance of the highway and the verge's biodiversity value.

The best scrub for wildlife is often thin and patchy with lots of flower-rich edge habitat. Scrub comprised of a few woody species, of even age, height and density with little understorey ground flora is less valuable.

Scrub develops when the management of grassland verges has become less frequent, or abandoned altogether, especially if adjacent to mature scrub or woodland. Within large areas of grassland (more than 1 hectare), about 5% scrub can be advantageous when managed on cyclic rotation. Scrubbed-up areas should periodically be reverted back to bare mineral or subsoils to maintain a mosaic grassland habitat with these discrete cleared areas allowed to regenerate naturally back to grassland without incurring further management costs.

The amount of open scrub should be specified during the management planning process. Areas of scrub would ideally be rotated across the wider road verge network and should be maintained between 5-10% scrub cover.

Scrub should be cut as close to the ground as possible. Herbicide or repeat cutting in future years may be required to prevent regrowth. Use of machinery may depend on access restrictions and hand tools will be more appropriate for smaller areas, with chainsaws and brush-cutters required for denser patches. Tractor-mounted flails and specialist remote-controlled machinery can be used for dense scrub.

Clearance of scrub should be undertaken outside the bird-breeding season between February and September, and a licence might be required if other protected species are likely to be present, such as hazel dormouse or slow worm.

Importance of bare ground

Some bare ground is important for a wide range of wildlife, especially invertebrates. Raking, or localised scarification or scalping with machinery during cutting, allows seeds to germinate and supports natural succession. This benefits early successional species such as bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus)*, oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare)* and kidney vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria)*, as well as rarer species that require sparse swards for establishment, including bee orchid (*Ophrys apifera*), pyramidal orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis)* and common-spotted orchid *(Dactylorhiza fuchsii)*. Creating small areas of bare ground, and leaving small exposures of natural geology such as sandstone faces untouched during construction, also benefits invertebrates such as bees and wasps and other pollinators, and provides sunny open areas for reptiles to bask.

Sowing seed into small scrapes

An alternative method to increase the diversity of the vegetation is to create small (3-5m²) scrapes or inoculation plots where the top layer of vegetation is removed, exposing bare ground or even the subsoil. This can be achieved using a spade or preferably a mechanical turf stripper. This removes the top layer of topsoil – including weed seed bank and roots/rhizomes of competitive grasses – to desiccate and deplete the existing rank vegetation. Bare areas can be sown with an 80/20% by weight meadow mix of suitable grass/wild flowers. The seeds should be pressed onto the surface of the soil and left uncovered. In areas with tussocky grasses, larger scrapes prevent the surrounding vegetation from shading the developing seedlings. Seeds can be collected by hand or with a brush-harvester from surrounding species-rich grassland, and they should be suited to the type of soil and geographic location of the grassland road verge. Recording the location of scrapes using GPS will support future monitoring.

Creating small scrapes can take time and may incur additional contractor costs. However, it is a particularly good method in areas with tricky terrain where other methods of diversifying the sward may not be as easy to achieve. Follow-up management for species-rich grassland will be required to maintain the diversity of the vegetation.

C Maintaining existing species-rich grassland verges

Species-rich verges offer the maximum biodiversity value, supporting more wildlife, being more resilient to environmental change and providing better ecosystem services such as pollination.

Maintaining species-rich grassland is often less costly than managing either open (aesthetic) grasslands or amenity grassland as they require fewer cuts, despite the need to remove cuttings. Management prescriptions should be detailed in the specification for works, with the areas clearly identified and mapped on a GIS (geographic information system) to allow future monitoring.

Species-rich grassland is maintained on an annual cycle, using cut-and-collect operations wherever possible. Cutting is timed to late summer or early autumn to enable wild flowers to set seed, whilst the removal of cuttings/arisings is important to maintain low soil fertility and reduce management costs.

Some species-rich road verges may be afforded special protection. Statutory sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), or Areas of Special Scientific Interest in Northern Ireland, are legally protected and activity, including planned management, requires the formal permission of the relevant statutory nature conservation organisation. Other non-statutory sites also occur on road verges, such as Local Wildlife Sites (or Site of Local Conservation Importance in Northern Ireland, Local Nature Conservation Site in Scotland or Site of Importance for Nature Conservation in Wales). These sites are locally important and should be afforded protection through local policies adopted by the local highway authority. In some areas, these may be referred to as Roadside Nature Reserves or Conservation Verges. In such circumstances, advice should be sought from the local authority ecologist or Local Wildlife Sites Partnership.

In protected areas, such as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, advice should be sought to ensure that road verge management contributes towards their statutory purpose to ‘conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage’ of the area.

Road verges can also support protected species and, where these are known to occur, specialist advice should be sought. Adoption of these management prescriptions will ensure that grassland verges support a broad range of wildlife: the provision of structural variation, including bare earth and variable sward height, shelter from occasional scrub and the transition between different habitat types, will provide a mosaic habitat along the road network. This will support the conservation of priority species including statutorily protected species such as dormice, smooth snake and great crested newts.

D Restoring species-rich grassland verges

Species-rich grassland verges that are not actively managed quickly lose their value. However, such areas 'lost' through neglect and/or inappropriate management can often be restored by reintroducing appropriate management techniques as described and encouraging the natural recolonisation of wild flowers. This approach is both practical and cost effective.

Ensuring appropriate management is in place or reinstating appropriate management is the priority for such areas.

> In collaboration with Durham Wildlife Trust, Sir Robert McAlpine is working to restore 40 hectares of road verge to species-rich grassland on the A19 in Durham. The road cuts through much of the magnesian limestone escarpment and many SSSIs and Local Wildlife Sites either border the A19 network infrastructure or are within 200 metres. By cutting annually in September, removing the arisings and undertaking scrub removal, the company hopes to restore the species-rich grassland interest.

When considering restoring verges, it is crucial to understand the wild flowers that still occur in the sward (as well as those that might have been lost) so management prescriptions can be applied appropriately. If the area has deteriorated significantly, it might be necessary to expose some bare earth to support better germination, especially if the area is dominated by coarse grasses. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to reintroduce wildflower seed.

On open grassland that either has some wild flowers, or has lost them within the last five years, rehabilitation management should be adopted and can result in rich and diverse flowering verges without any other intervention.

E Managing competitive or problem species

One of the most common factors preventing roadside verges reaching their full potential is the presence of competitive or problem species (see Appendix 2 on page 33). In favourable conditions, some native species can become dominant. Reinstating regular cutting will effectively control these competitive species and should be considered as part of restoration or enhancement management.

Typical native species that can dominate grassland verges include:

- indicators of high soil fertility such as nettles, cow parsley, hogweed and hemlock that can reduce visibility
- woody vegetation, such as gorse and bramble
- ruderal species, such as rosebay willowherb, which are first to colonise disturbed land, particularly where management such as scrub control has resulted in bare ground
- species with extensive (rhizomatous) root systems, such as bracken and tor grass
- problem species, such as creeping and spear thistle and broadleaved and curled dock, which can also develop following active management on fertile verges where diffuse pollution from neighbouring agricultural land creates the conditions for their growth.

It should be recognised, however, that these species have wildlife benefits as a food source, habitat or cover: their management is about balance not eradication.

Controlling competitive grasses

Competitive grasses such as rye grasses (*Lolium* sp.), tufted grasses such as cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) are perhaps the main competitors of wild flowers on road verges. Finer grass species, such as common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), timothy (*Phleum pratense*), crested dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) and sheep's fescue (*Festuca ovina*) are more likely to co-exist with wild flowers rather than taking over. Appropriate mowing can reduce tussock-forming grasses but may encourage others to spread. Removing grass thatch by raking, and reducing the soil nutrients by collecting the cuttings, reduces the dominance of tufted grasses when maintained over a number of years.

Verges that were originally established using grass-only seed mixes, or where wild flowers have been lost with little prospect of re-establishing from the seed bank, may need new plants introduced. Such introductions should be considered under a two-stage approach: initially establishing the right conditions to support wild flowers by reducing competitive grasses and creating bare earth to support future wild flower germination and secondly, by introducing wild flowers either by seed or as plug plants.

Bracken management

Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) is a common fern with extensive rhizomes and can spread quickly and dominate areas of grassland. Bracken can be important for some species, such as rare fritillary butterflies that feed on violets (*Viola* sp.) growing under bracken, but most bracken on roadside verges is dense and can encroach harmfully on the grassland.

Dense bracken should be cut at least twice in the first few years, in May/June and July/August, and the cuttings removed. This will immediately start to weaken the rhizomes that will bleed out without being able to replenish their energy through photosynthesis. Following this management, a single cut should be undertaken in June/July to continue to weaken the rhizomes.

Bracken control through cutting requires long-term management. Annual cutting may take an estimated five to 10 or more years to reduce dense bracken stands, while cutting twice a year may reduce dense bracken to less than 10% of its former cover within 10 years. However, bracken can quickly recover to 80% of its former density within four to six years following the cessation of cutting.

Chemical control can be effective in reducing the cover of dense stands within two to four years. However, bracken quickly recovers if no follow-up management is undertaken. Seek further advice prior to using chemicals.

Problem species

Problem species are those considered under the Weeds Act 1959 and include creeping and spear thistle (*Cirsium arvense* and *C. vulgare*), and broadleaved and curled dock (*Rumex obtusifolius* and *R. crispus*). Using subsoils and avoiding importing in topsoils reduces the likelihood of these species becoming problematic. Before any control is undertaken, it is worth understanding why they might have become problems. For example, fertiliser run-off or spread from neighbouring fields may result in higher soil nutrients leading to an abundance of creeping thistle. Perhaps scalping during mowing is leading to excess bare ground and the growth of spear thistle, or machinery is compacting the soil and encouraging the growth of docks *Rumex* sp. If these underlying causes are not tackled, the problem can persist even with treatment.

The three main methods of control are cutting, herbicide and hand pulling. Wherever possible, eliminate the general non-targeted use of herbicides, limiting them to spot treatment when this is prescribed for the problem species. Special care should be taken if applying spot treatments to problem species on species-rich verges.

Thistles: Mechanically cut thistles when the plant is in bud and the flower heads start to turn purple. This weakens the rhizome and the plants cannot recover without leaves to photosynthesise. Spear thistle can be pulled but this method is not effective for creeping thistle and may encourage spreading. Careful spot spraying with a targeted or broad-spectrum herbicide can quickly reduce thistles within one to two years, but thistles can recover following the cessation of spraying. Indiscriminate sprayings affect non-target species, especially 'daisy' family plants such as oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*). All arisings should ideally be removed to prevent nutrients returning to the soil but otherwise compost in a nominated sacrificial area.

Docks: Mechanically cutting docks should be done well before the plant sets seed. Pulling or digging out docks is not recommended as the long root can splinter, resulting in many new plants. Docks can be targeted by spot-spraying which can be effective within two to four years of application. The use of broad-spectrum herbicides will also affect non-target species. All arisings should ideally be removed to prevent nutrients returning to the soil but otherwise composted in a nominated sacrificial area.

Common ragwort: The Ragwort Control Acts seek to prevent common ragwort spreading where there is threat to the health and welfare of animals. Although road verges can have high cover of ragwort the risk to grazing animals is normally slim. For more information on assessing the risk level posed by ragwort and appropriate control methods, see the Defra Code of Practice For Preventing The Spread Of Ragwort. The native plant is biennial, forming a rosette in the first year and flowering during the second year. Although identified as an injurious weed species, it also supports a wide range of invertebrates, such as cinnabar moth, and it is an exceptional provider of nectar and pollen late in the season.

In those instances where control is necessary, it is essential to act before seed heads are mature to prevent the spread of fresh seed. Only removing the flower heads and allowing the cinnabar moth to feed on the remaining vegetation has proved to be highly successful but otherwise pulling and digging plants in spring and early summer is effective but can be difficult on verges and typically leaves large areas of bare earth that can be recolonised from the seed bed. Cut and pulled plants can be piled up on sacrificial areas of the verge, but in the unlikely event that livestock have access to the verge, all plant remains must be removed. Mechanical cutting can be undertaken but may stimulate the growth of side shoots the following year. Herbicides can be used to control ragwort and spot treatment at the rosette stage with a selective herbicide is recommended to prevent other broadleaved species from being killed.

Gorse: Where acid grassland and heathland are being established on sands or gravels, gorse often becomes a problem after five years, eventually smothering the dwarf shrubs and acid-loving plants. Annual mowing or strimming of gorse from the first year for up to 10 years will prevent it from becoming a long-standing problem. Once fully established, gorse is difficult to remove without substantial investment.

Buddleia and cotoneaster: Buddleia and cotoneaster (usually small-leaved cotoneaster) establish quite commonly on bare chalk or limestone substrates and if left unchecked, will spread to dominate the vegetation to the exclusion of more desirable native grassland vegetation. When small, buddleia and cotoneaster can be pulled by hand. Once established, they usually require herbicide treatment to remove them.

F Creating new species-rich grassland verges

Creating species-rich grassland on new verges/following earthworks is recommended as a cost-effective and sustainable use of the soft estate. When properly considered from the outset, it can provide significant savings to the overall capital costs by, for example, eliminating the need to import topsoil onto the site. Adopting the detailed methods described below will ensure high-quality species-rich grassland with lower ongoing maintenance costs and biodiversity gain.

The most obvious justification for the creation of species-rich grass verges is their attractive natural appearance and the interest they provide for road users; it might be the only daily contact they have with the natural landscape. Wild flowers also help new roads blend with the landscape, they provide corridors of nature conservation value, and they demonstrate from the planning stage a concern to minimise the environmental impacts of new routes. Furthermore, if the right principles are applied, the ongoing management of the species-rich road verge can be considerably less than ongoing management for open grassland, periodic scrub, tree management and amenity grassland.

In a rural setting, species-rich verges should be established everywhere as the default grassland type and managed accordingly. There is an urgent need to re-establish wildlife corridors and suitable habitat in the countryside that has been lost to agricultural improvement in the past 70 years. The potential for achieving this on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) is substantial.

In an urban setting, opportunities for creating species-rich verges will be context specific, but the default should be to specify them over standard amenity grassland unless there are overriding justifications.

Species-rich grassland growing on subsoil, bare mineral or low-fertility topsoil should also be considered for grassland areas where safety benefits are a priority, such as on visibility splays and approaches to junctions and roundabouts. The vegetation on these types of soils require much less frequent management than if fertile topsoil is used, leading to a lower cost to maintain necessary sward heights. More wild flowers will thrive in the lower fertility conditions and subsoil usually has fewer problem weeds and grass seeds.

Similar low-fertility substrates with sparse species-rich grassland can be considered as an improvement for accident-prone sites where visibility along the verge is a contributory factor. As well as increasing visibility, there is an ongoing benefit of cost savings with the reduced management.

> In 2018, one of the approaches to the Waddock Cross Junction in Dorset – a notorious accident blackspot due to poor visibility – was modified. The grass verge was removed to a depth of 600 mm below the carriageway and in-filled with crushed chalk to bring it back to road level. Kidney vetch and bird's-foot trefoil were sown on the bare mineral. These minor capital investments cost c. £5000 and are expected to reduce mowing costs by 90% each year. The improved visibility has provided immediate collision-reduction benefits alongside a net gain for biodiversity.

Locations available for the creation of species-rich grassland on low-fertility earthworks includes:

- Most rural verges
- Cutting and screening mounds
- Embankments
- Junctions, interchanges and roundabouts
- Areas of land set aside to accommodate material from roads set in cuttings and tunnel spoil

How to create species-rich grassland verges

The guiding principle for creating species-rich road verges is to avoid the use of fertile topsoil. High soil fertility encourages excessive growth of non-desirable species and reduces the success of wild flower establishment. Newly created grassland must instead be finished with clean subsoil or bare mineral substrate.

There may be a reluctance to finish verges with subsoil or bare mineral, on the expectation that the landscaping will look incomplete and nothing will grow quickly. This is not the case and there are several common and showy species that quickly establish in profusion on bare ground, such as kidney vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*) on chalk and limestone-based soils and oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) on neutral soils. Bare mineral may contrast strongly with the surrounding landscape when first exposed, but it weathers quickly and revegetates. Chalk is bright white at first but changes to a mottled grey within months. The combination of weathered mineral and abundant wild flowers provides an appealing and naturalistic landscape.

> As part of the mitigation package included in the construction of the Weymouth Relief Road, topsoil from semi-improved calcareous grassland along the route was saved separately and scattered thinly over about 7 hectares of cutting slopes to a depth of no more than 10-15mm. The remainder of the slopes received no topsoil at all. All cutting slopes were sown with a grassland wildflower mix of 25 species suitable for chalk and limestone habitat. In 2019, eight years after after the road opened, a survey was undertaken by Dorset Environmental Records Centre, which showed that there were 140 flower species thriving on the slopes, including bee and pyramidal orchids. Monitoring by Butterfly Conservation has shown that these slopes support 30 species of butterfly, including Chalkhill Blue and Dingy Skipper. Since the road opened in 2011, there has been minimal requirement for management because the soil is so impoverished and grazing is only needed every four years or so. While the wildflower seed cost £24,000, there is an estimated net capital cost saving of £270,000 due to not using topsoil, and annual maintenance costs are negligible.

When heavy earth-moving machinery is used to remove topsoils and during slope formation, the subsoil material can become heavily compacted and left with a glassy finish that is liable to plate and form an impenetrable surface for seed germination. This is particularly common for clays and alluvial silts and, in such circumstances, it may be necessary for some surface preparation – for example, the surface to be ripped or rotovated, to create a tilth to encourage seed germination. Close liaison with the design and construction teams will ensure that slope stability is not affected by this surface treatment, and that the finishing operations be carried out along the contour of the slope to avoid deep erosion by surface run-off.

Natural colonisation: this is the most cost-effective method of achieving a species-rich verge where soil fertility is low but can only be achieved if the verge is adjacent to species-rich habitat. The process may take considerable time, especially if there is limited transfer of seeds (which would usually be transferred on livestock or machinery). Bare ground, skeletal soils and sparse vegetation are an important habitat for many species of plants and invertebrate, so there is not always a need to create a dense sward.

Natural seeding: in some cases, verges and the surrounding countryside are so depleted of wild flowers that natural colonisation is unlikely to take place. In such cases, natural seeding methods can be used to introduce wild flowers by transferring green hay or brush-harvested seed collected from a local species-rich verge or meadow (the donor site) to the verge being created (the recipient site). This ensures species will be naturally present and better adapted to local conditions. In this way, the local character and genetic diversity of our verges is preserved and more species will become established more quickly than by using a generic, non-specialist seed mixture, which invariably contains fewer (sometimes inappropriate and non-native) species and often includes more grass seed than wildflower seed. Natural seeding methods also have the potential benefit of engaging local communities, who can become involved in collecting seed from nearby nature reserves and farms, and with sowing seed or growing plug plants.

> In 2015, the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent started a project to enhance and restore the Conwy Portal site as part of the Welsh Government "Road Verges for Wildflowers Initiative". The existing area of infrequently maintained rank grassland was cut in late summer and the cuttings were collected to reduce fertility. Following cut-and-collect, the ground was scarified using a grass harrow to open up the turf and create areas of bare earth to aid seed establishment. Green hay was harvested from local SSSI meadow Caeau Tan y Bwlch and was spread over the scarified verge on the the same day. Follow-up surveys of the site have revealed an increase in the number and frequency of positive indicator species including yellow rattle, bird's foot trefoil, meadow vetchling and red clover.

Bought seed mixes: sowing of generic seed mixes from non-specialist suppliers can be costly and may result in the vegetation bearing little resemblance to naturally-occurring species-rich communities in the locality. However, purchasing a seed mixture may be the only option in some locations where other methods are not available. Wildflower seed should be of British origin, locally-sourced, and should be an appropriate species mix for the subsoil (or mineral) and locality. Seek advice from the authority ecologists or Local Biological Record Centre to help create a bespoke seed mix suited to the area, and avoid species that might dominate and out-compete other wild flowers. Avoid using generic pollinator and wildflower mixes as they often contain species that are not present in local grasslands and will result in the homogenisation of grasslands across the UK. Using mixes without (or very low percentages of) grass seed helps wild flowers establish without competition from grasses.

Species-rich turf: this is a relatively recent innovation with suppliers growing turf with a range of wild grasses and flowers. This method of creating species-rich grass verges is probably the costliest option as the entire area for creation would need to be covered by ready-grown turf. However, it does work and with appropriate management gives instant results and is suitable for difficult ground conditions where other methods may prove impractical.

Use of saved topsoil: the only occasion where topsoil should be used to finish areas for wild flowers is where it can be saved from existing species-rich areas that will be destroyed as part of the development. This topsoil will contain a valuable seed bank of wild flowers and grasses and must be stored separately from other topsoil prior to re-use. Topsoil should be stored such that as much of the soil fauna survives when it moves to its new location.

Prescriptions for creating flower-rich grasslands along new roads

There are different methods for establishing species-rich grassland depending on the technique being used.

If **natural colonisation** is being used, there is no need to do anything further once the verge has been created, apart from making sure that the surface of the soil has a fine tilth to facilitate seed germination.

The use of **saved topsoil** should be undertaken by spreading the topsoil thinly onto the bare ground of the new verge, around 15mm or deeper if site conditions allow or necessitate, as some wildflower species, such as Meadow Cranesbill, may require deeper infertile soil for successful establishment. Wild flower and grass seeds germinate from the soil surface, usually no more than 1cm depth (½in), and deeper spreading of the soil will bury seed, restricting germination.

The use of **natural seeding** methods needs slightly more planning. The donor seed source (a local flower-rich meadow or verge) should be identified before works begin:

- If green hay is being used, the seed source ideally needs to be within an hour's drive of the recipient road verge, and certainly within half a day's journey time. The transfer needs to be undertaken quickly to prevent the green hay from heating up and cooking the seeds. Green hay is cut in late July or August to maximise the diversity of flowers with set seed and collected using a forage harvester or flail mower. The hay is taken immediately to the prepared road verge where the soil should already have been prepared to a fine tilth. The green hay can be spread by hand or mechanically with a muck-spreader and any clumps can be separated using hand pitchforks. If the green hay is transferred as bales, these can be put through a straw strewer to spread the material, separating any clumps with pitchforks. Following the hay spreading, a roller should be used to ensure the seed has good contact with the soil.
- If brush-harvested seed is being used, a contractor with a brush-harvester will be able to harvest the seed from the donor site. Seed can be used fresh – for example, by loading it into a trailer or muck-spreader and transferring it within half a day to the receptor road verge as described, or it can be sieved and dried to be spread at a later date. Brush-harvested seed is best used within a few months of collection, particularly if yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) is present (this annual requires a period of cold to trigger germination). Brush-harvested seed is best spread between August and November, and should be strewn across bare ground that has been prepared to a fine tilth. Seed should be sown on or just under (within 1cm of) the soil surface. Sowing can be done by hand or machine if the chaff (stalks and leaves that are also picked up by a brush-harvester) has been removed, enabling the seed to pass through a hopper. Once the seed has been spread, the ground should be rolled to push the seed onto the soil surface, creating good contact.

If using a **generic non-local seed mixture**, this should be bought from a reputable specialist supplier of UK native wildflower seed. Generally, it's best to get a mixture with a higher proportion of wild flowers – for example, 80:20 or 100% wildflower seed. The seed can be sown by hand onto a prepared soil surface with a fine tilth in either autumn or spring, or can be passed through a hopper towed behind a tractor. Seed should be sown on or just under (within 1cm of) the soil surface. The ground should then be rolled to press the seed onto the soil. Depending on the contractor, it might be possible to attach a roller behind the hopper, thereby making a single pass over the new verge and reducing compaction. Alternatively, hydro-seeding can be used spraying a mixture of water, seed and binding agent onto the prepared verge.

Species-rich turf: The verge needs to be prepared with a fine tilth with all large stones removed or buried. The species-rich turf should be rolled out and lightly pressed down onto the soil surface before watering. Watering may be required until the turf has established, which may take as long as three months, particularly in extremely dry weather.

Prescriptions for creating flower-rich grasslands along existing road verges

There are occasions where species-rich grass verges could be **created on existing species-poor verges**. Before work is undertaken, test for soil fertility, particularly the amount of phosphate (P). A P index of 0-1 is ideal for most wild flowers and grasses. A P index of 2 suggests that competitive species may take over and a seed mixture with species that are able to survive in these more fertile conditions is recommended. If the P index is 3+, it is unlikely that a species-rich grassland will develop as competitive species, particularly tussock-forming grasses, are likely to take over.

Soil nutrients can be reduced over time, and there are various methods to achieve this:

- Soil stripping removes the top layer of nutrient-rich topsoil and is effective in reducing soil nutrients. The depth of soil removal needs to be carefully calculated with a plan of depositing the excess topsoil or selling it for subsequent use by others. This may be restricted if, for example, the road verge is in a floodplain.
- Cutting and removing vegetation several times a year limits the nutrients that are otherwise recycled in the soil. This can take several years and, with soils of low permeability (for example, clay soils), a low P index may never be achieved. If this is the case, gaps in the sward could be opened using yellow rattle and a species mix with wild flowers that are more tolerant of fertile conditions could be trialled.
- Capping, which is overlaying existing soils with suitable substrate/subsoil, possibly as part of using saved topsoil, is generally discouraged as it can be nutrient-rich. All the vegetation due to be covered with the new soil should be removed – either by scraping off or spraying with herbicide – to prevent it growing through the new soil. Scrapings can be placed in a pile at the back of the verge if it is wide enough, or removed from site if the verge is too narrow. There have been occasions where this management has been undertaken and, over time, nutrients have leached upwards into the new soil, encouraging more competitive species with the result that the works did not create a species-rich grassland in the long term. The impact of raising or lowering soil levels needs to be considered, for example on drainage and profiles.
- Soil inversion is where a deep plough of earth-moving machinery buries the richer topsoil beneath a layer of subsoil. There are similar issues with nutrients leaching upwards as described under capping above and it requires specialised machinery which may not be readily available. It has the potential to be quite costly.

Buried archaeology should be considered prior to soil stripping or inversion being undertaken.

If the soil conditions are suitable, the next stage is to open up bare ground to receive a seed source. At least 50% bare ground should be created, with 80-90% ideal for the germination of seeds. This can look drastic but experience has shown that the harder you hit a site to begin with, the more successful the result. Creating bare ground should ideally be done mechanically, though there may be occasions where spot treatment of herbicide is more effective, such as on slopes to eradicate wall cotoneaster, or where mechanical means are not practicable:

- Harrowing – to create bare ground, a power-harrow or a combination of a flail mower and tine harrows can be used. Small horticultural rotary cultivators may also be suitable where access for larger machinery is restricted. The vegetation may need to be cut short before harrowing to enable patches of bare ground to be created and to remove large grass tussocks.
- Herbicide – advice from a qualified contractor should be sought about the types of herbicide that can be used, and application, as well as any risk of unintended consequences, such as run-off and diffuse pollution.

A seed bed should be created by rotovating or harrowing to make a fine tilth, once bare ground has been established, and prior to spreading seed. When herbicide has been used, it is advisable not to cultivate the soil as this is likely to expose weed seeds; instead, just surface sow then follow with rolling.

Species-rich grassland can be established using the methods outlined under the section on creating species-rich grassland along new roads (see page 26).

Management of newly created species-rich grasslands

Cut-and-collect mowing is a key way of maintaining the biodiversity of grass verges but not the only one. Consideration during scheme design should also be given to the opportunity for establishing grazing units for cattle or sheep, especially where verges are wide for forward visibility, and on embankment and cutting. Stock-proof fencing, set back from the road edge, will be an additional requirement to be specified, together with a water trough and supply.

Flower-rich grasslands established on subsoil or bare mineral are unlikely to require ongoing annual management, and grazing every three to five years for a few weeks in that year may be all that is needed.

Monitoring grassland road verges

Monitoring the effectiveness of management is crucial to measuring contract performance and informing future management measures. There are various attributes or performance measures that can be usefully monitored and should be reflected in management contracts.

Attribute	Frequency	Comments
Habitat extent – area of habitat type (species-rich grassland) within the soft estate	5 yearly	Aerial photography/site inspection
Vegetation composition – species frequency/ abundance present	Annually/biannually	This might be undertaken as a community assessment or using indicator species
Positive indicator species – presence/absence/ population numbers	Annually/biannually	e.g. indicator or notable species
Negative indicator species – negative/invasive species	Annually/biannually	e.g. indicator or notable species
Biometrics – area, habitat type and condition	Annually/biannually	e.g. Government biodiversity metric 2.0
Area under favourable management – amount of road verge following these guidelines	Annually	Incrementally increasing target

Monitoring should be prioritised for those areas afforded statutory or non-statutory protection and other species-rich areas, or where restoration and enhancement management is in place.

There are numerous established monitoring methods available, including ground vegetation surveys (Common Standards Monitoring, Rapid Assessment, the National Vegetation Classification or Phase 1 surveys) or remote monitoring (for example, aerial photography and LIDAR). These should be integrated into the GIS-based asset management system to support and inform management contracts. Support and assistance could be sought from local community groups and Local Sites Partnerships.

Further guidance and reading

Highways England agrees with the good practice principles stated within this guidance; however, all contractual requirements should be based upon standards for highways, for example the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges

Design Manual for Road and Bridges (DMRB)
Highways England, Transport Scotland, Welsh Government and
Northern Ireland Department for Infrastructure (2018)
www.standardsforhighways.co.uk

Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network (2010)
Chaired by Professor Sir John Lawton CBE FR

Keeping the Wild in Wildflower
www.plantlife.org.uk

Department of Environment Food & Rural Affairs:

- *Local Sites - Guidance on their Identification, Selection and Management*
- *Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites*
- *Defra Guidance for Successful Reclamation of Mineral and Waste Sites*
- *Good practice guide for handling soils*

The Biodiversity Metric 2.0
Natural England

Case studies from around the UK showcasing the practical implementation
of these guidelines can be found in full online at:
https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign/management-guidelines

Glossary

Access management Grass is regularly cut to maintain access around structures or other critical infrastructure. This management is usually undertaken using hand tools, often during the growing season. Cuttings are usually not collected.

Amenity grassland is grassland that is often intensively managed with cuts several times a year, resulting in a relatively short sward. In very intensive systems, amenity grassland may be cut up to eight times per year. The reason for the intensity of management is generally linked to its location – for example, grassland situated on roadsides in villages or town centres. Works are undertaken using a wide variety of equipment, from hand mowers through to larger ride-on mowers. Collection of the cuttings is more common on amenity grassland, and there is a wider range of equipment available to do this as generally the sites are level and flat, and the road speed is reduced making it safer for operatives to carry out work.

Herb Herbaceous or non-woody plant.

Propagule Any structure capable of being propagated or acting as an agent of reproduction, or a plant part, such as a bud, that becomes detached from the rest of the plant and grows into a new plant. This includes seeds, stolons or rhizomes.

Swathe (safety) cut Undertaken several times a year with the aim of keeping the first 1-2 metres of grassland from the road short to maintain sight lines. The swathe cut is applied to the majority of road verges and is especially important on the strategic road network and other major routes. This cut is usually undertaken using a tractor-mounted flail and cuttings are not removed. It ensures a short sward that deters invertebrates and small mammals away from the road. On minor roads it may not be necessary to undertake a swathe cut where there are no hazards.

Additional criteria

Diversity or biodiversity: This is a combination of species richness (the number of species present in a given area) and their abundance. It is closely related to habitat size and structural diversity, as well as the inherent species composition of the type of grassland habitat in question. For example, some habitats are inherently more diverse than others, and secondary habitats may be quite rich in this respect. Conversely, many ancient semi-natural habitats (in particular heathlands that are not considered in this management guidance) may be inherently species-poor, but of considerable importance in that they often support rare plants and animals. Where good examples of supporting habitat are identified through new surveys, conservation priorities should be re-evaluated to ensure that the grassland is being managed appropriately.

Position in an ecological unit refers to the relative ecological isolation of a grassland road verge. In the context of this assessment, stands of grassland roadside habitat of moderate quality would be raised in value if they are adjacent to large stands of semi-natural habitat outside highway boundary. In such instances, it should be assumed that the verge habitat would support species that would be more typically associated with adjacent semi-natural habitat. Equally, a species-rich grassland road verge would assume rather lower value if the nearest similar habitat were several kilometres away

Rarity: in this context refers to species of plant, animal and type of habitat whose populations or extent are considered to be under threat. The premise is based upon the principal that very small, in particular ecologically isolated populations and habitats, are more likely to be lost as a result of harmful changes in management, direct destruction or even as a result of some random destructive event (such as fire or drought). Rarity is generally assessed at local, regional and national levels and assessment is assisted by reference to texts, such as Red Data Books and legislation, including the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Size is closely related to diversity and rarity, particularly when considering the extent of a habitat type. Larger areas of habitat enable there to be greater structural diversity on grassland verges, providing increased species richness and larger, and therefore more stable, populations of plants and animals. It is of particular importance in the event of disturbance, such as a severe drought, fire or flood, as larger populations of vulnerable species are more likely to survive these random events. Where the event leads to the loss of part of a population, there is an opportunity for recolonisation.

Typicalness refers to whether the habitat in question is considered a good example of a particular type and is of most use when assessing long-established plant communities. The National Vegetation Classification can assist assessment in this context, as it attempts to provide 'snapshots' of typical plant communities across the UK that have developed under a range of environmental conditions and management regimes.

Appendix 1: Equipment used to manage grassland verges

Hand-held tools are used for more intricate work such as clearing around road signs and Armco crash barriers, steep slopes and less accessible places. They are universal across all road types and the most common are strimmer, brush-cutter and walk-behind mowers.

Ride-on mowers make cutting moderately large areas of grass, such as road verges in an urban area, much quicker and more efficient than hand-held tools and cause minimal soil compaction, improving water retention. They can be used in areas where a fine finish is required, such as at motorway service stations, and are usually highly manoeuvrable and able to cut close to street furniture such as lamp columns and road signs.

Tractor-mounted flails can cope with tussocky and dense grass swards or light scrub which is mown once or twice a year. Most flails are driven by the power take-off (PTO) from the tractor and attached to the three-point hitch at the rear of the tractor. Some tractors also have front-mounted flails. Commonly the flail is attached to a hydraulic side-arm (the side-arm flail) and this provides a versatile mowing head able to cope with vertical and horizontal alignments, and all angles of slope in between. The reach of the flail is limited by the length of the side arm. The standard 1-2 metre swathe cut immediately next to the road edge is one width of the flail head. Care should be taken to avoid soil compaction on wet ground.

Remote-controlled cutting: remote-controlled mowers are becoming increasingly common, especially on steep slopes where operator safety on conventional driven machinery is a particular concern. Track laying mowers can cut embankments up to 55 degrees. Several different interchangeable heads are available, including a standard flail head for grass and light scrub to forestry mulcher heads that will tackle substantial scrub and small trees. As the operator is remote from the machinery, problems associated with Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome are avoided.

Cut-and-collect: machinery that removes the cut grass at the same time as the cutting is known as cut-and-collect, or cut-and-lift technology. It is commonly used across large areas of grass where leaving cuttings is deemed unsightly or unacceptable, such as on golf courses. Although frequently employed in continental Europe, it is not often used on UK road verges, yet would transform the way that verges are managed, and in most cases would lead to cost savings and increased biodiversity as Dorset and Lincolnshire councils have experienced.

Small-scale cut-and-collect mowers for urban use: Dorset Council is moving to replace all their ride-on mowers with cut-and-collect machinery, so that they are dual purpose. They still have mostly standard ride-on front deck flail mowers (less often front deck rotary mowers) but by the end of the 2018/19 year, will have four or five cut-and-collect. They currently have two in operation daily:

- Amazone 4WD Profihopper. http://www.amazone.co.uk/2376.asp
- Grillo Front Deck rotary mower. http://www.grilloagrigarden.co.uk/fd450

Large-scale flail collectors for some urban but mainly rural use: Large-scale flail collectors – where grasslands are flat and wide enough for the tractor, flail and hopper to operate – can be used. They are operated on some road verges, public open spaces, nature reserves and school grounds. The flail collectors also cope with cutting heather and light scrub.

- Ryetec flail collector http://www.ryetec.net/product.php?id_product=20
- Amazone flail collector http://www.amazone.co.uk/285.asp

Appendix 2: Reference list of indicator plant species that could be used when monitoring

Lowland meadow species		**Comment**
Betony	*Betonica officinalis*	Common in more acid soils
Bulbous buttercup	*Ranunculus bulbosus*	Common in most drier lowland meadows
Common bird's-foot trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*	
Common/black knapweed	*Centaurea nigra*	
Crested dog's-tail	*Cynosurus cristatus*	
Devil's-bit scabious	*Succisa pratensis*	Common in more acid soils
Field scabious	*Knautia arvensis*	
Hawkbits	*Leontodon* sp.	Includes autumn hawkbit (*Leontodon autumnalis*) and rough hawkbit (*L. hispidus*)
Lady's bedstraw	*Galium verum*	Common in more calcareous lowland soils
Meadow buttercup	*Ranunuculus acris*	Common in most damper lowland meadows
Meadow vetchling	*Lathyrus pratensis*	
Oxeye daisy	*Leucanthemum vulgare*	
Quaking-grass	*Briza media*	Common in more calcareous soils
Salad burnet	*Poterium sanguisorba*	Common in more calcareous soils
Self-heal	*Prunella vulgaris*	
Sweet vernal grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*	
Tufted vetch	*Vicia cracca*	
Yellow oat-grass	*Trisetum flavescens*	Common in more calcareous lowland soils
Yellow rattle	*Rhinanthus minor*	

Upland hay meadow species		Comment
Bulbous buttercup	*Ranunulus bulbosus*	
Cat's-ear	*Hypochaeris radicata*	
Common bird's-foot trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*	
Common/black knapweed	*Centaurea nigra*	Can be common in some upland hay meadows but might not be present or at low levels
Crested dog's-tail	*Cynosurus cristatus*	
Great burnet	*Sanguisorba officinalis*	
Hawkbits	*Leontodon* sp.	Includes autumn hawkbit (*Leontodon autumnalis*) and rough hawkbit (*L. hispidus*)
Ladies'-mantle	*Alchemilla* sp.	
Meadow buttercup	*Ranunuculus acris*	
Meadow vetchling	*Lathyrus pratensis*	Common in most upland hay meadows
Oxeye daisy	*Leucanthemum vulgare*	Might not be present or at low levels
Pignut	*Conopodium majus*	
Red clover	*Trifolium pratense*	
Self-heal	*Prunella vulgaris*	Might not be present or at low levels
Sweet vernal grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*	
Wood crane's-bill	*Geranium sylvaticum*	
Yellow rattle	*Rhinanthus minor*	

Floodplain meadow species		Comment
Common bird's-foot trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*	Might not be present or at low levels
Common/black knapweed	*Centaurea nigra*	
Common sorrel	*Rumex acetosa*	
Crested dog's-tail	*Cynosurus cristatus*	
Cuckoo-flower / Ladies'-smock	*Cardamine pratensis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Great burnet	*Sanguisorba officinalis*	
Hawkbits	*Leontodon* sp.	Includes autumn hawkbit (*Leontodon autumnalis*) and rough hawkbit (*L. hispidus*)
Meadow buttercup	*Ranunuculus acris*	
Meadow foxtail	*Alopecurus pratensis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Meadowsweet	*Filipendula ulmaria*	
Meadow vetchling	*Lathyrus pratensis*	
Oxeye daisy	*Leucanthemum vulgare*	Might not be present or at low levels
Pepper-saxifrage	*Silaum silaus*	Might not be present or at low levels
Ragged-robin	*Lychnis flos-cuculi*	
Red clover	*Trifolium pratense*	
Self-heal	*Prunella vulgaris*	Might not be present or at low levels

Sweet vernal grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*	
Yellow rattle	*Rhinanthus minor*	Might not be present or at low levels

Sedge pasture species		**Comment**
Carnation sedge	*Carex panicea*	
Common bird's-foot trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*	Might not be present or at low levels
Common/black knapweed	*Centaurea nigra*	Might not be present or at low levels
Crested dog's-tail	*Cynosurus cristatus*	
Cuckoo-flower/ Ladies'-smock	*Cardamine pratensis*	
Devil's-bit scabious	*Succisa pratensis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Eyebright	*Euphrasia officinalis agg.*	Might not be present or at low levels
Great burnet	*Sanguisorba officinalis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Hawkbits	*Leontodon* sp.	Might not be present or at low levels. Includes autumn hawkbit (*Leontodon autumnalis*) and rough hawkbit (*L. hispidus*)
Lesser spearwort	*Ranunculus flammula*	Might not be present or at low levels
Marsh marigold/Kingcup	*Caltha palustris*	Might not be present or at low levels
Meadow buttercup	*Ranunuculus acris*	
Meadow foxtail	*Alopecurus pratensis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Meadow vetchling	*Lathyrus pratensis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Meadowsweet	*Filipendula ulmaria*	Can be a sign of lack of grazing
Ragged-robin	*Lychnis flos-cuculi*	Might not be present or at low levels
Red clover	*Trifolium pratense*	
Self-heal	*Prunella vulgaris*	Might not be present or at low levels
Sharp-flowered rush	*Juncus acutiflorus*	Might not be present or at low levels
Sweet vernal grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*	
Yellow rattle	*Rhinanthus minor*	Might not be present, or at low levels, or in patches

Calcareous grassland species		Comment
Bee orchid	*Ophrys apifera*	Might not be present or at low levels
Betony	*Betonica officinalis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Bulbous buttercup	*Ranunulus bulbosus*	
Carnation sedge	*Carex panicea*	
Cat's-ear	*Hypochaeris radicata*	Might not be present or at low levels
Common bird's-foot trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*	Might not be present or at low levels depending on sward height
Common/black knapweed	*Centaurea nigra*	
Common/black sedge	*Carex nigra*	
Common milkwort	*Polygala vulgaris*	Might not be present or at low levels
Common restharrow	*Ononis repens*	Might not be present or at low levels
Common rockrose	*Helianthemum nummularium*	Might not be present or at low levels depending on sward height
Common-spotted orchid	*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*	Might not be present or at low levels
Crested dog's-tail	*Cynosurus cristatus*	
Crosswort	*Cruciata laevipes*	Might not be present or at low levels
Devil's-bit scabious	*Succisa pratensis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Dropwort	*Filipendula vulgaris*	Might not be present or at low levels
Eyebright	*Euphrasia officinalis agg.*	
Fairy-flax	*Linium catharticum*	
Field scabious	*Knautia arvensis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Glaucous sedge	*Carex flacca*	
Greater knapweed	*Centaurea scabiosa*	Might not be present or at low levels
Greater yellow rattle	*Rhinanthus serotinus*	Might not be present or at low levels
Harebell	*Campanula rotundifolia*	
Hawkbits	*Leontodon sp.*	Includes rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*) and lesser hawkbit (*Leontodon saxatilis*)
Hoary plantain	*Plantago media*	
Horseshoe vetch	*Hippocrepis comosa*	Might not be present or at low levels
Kidney vetch	*Anthyllis vulneraria*	Might not be present or at low levels
Lady's bedstraw	*Galium verum*	
Oxeye daisy	*Leucanthemum vulgare*	Might not be present or at low levels
Pyramidal orchid	*Anacamptis pyramidalis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Quaking-grass	*Briza media*	
Sainfoin	*Onobrychis viciifolia*	Might not be present or at low levels
Salad burnet	*Poterium sanguisorba*	
Self-heal	*Prunella vulgaris*	Might not be present or at low levels
Small scabious	*Knautia columbaria*	Might not be present or at low levels
Sweet vernal grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*	
Upright brome	*Bromus erectus*	Can be a sign of lack of grazing
Wild basil	*Clinopodium vulgare*	Might not be present or at low levels

Wild carrot	*Daucus carota*	Might not be present or at low levels
Wild marjoram	*Origanum vulgare*	Might not be present or at low levels
Wild thyme	*Thymus praecox*	Might not be present or at low levels depending on sward height
Yellow oat-grass	*Trisetum flavescens*	
Yellow-wort	*Blackstonia perfoliata*	Might not be present or at low levels

Purple-moor grass and rush pasture species		**Comment**
Carnation sedge	*Carex panicea*	
Common lousewort	*Pedicularis sylvatica*	Might not be present or at low levels
Common sorrel	*Rumex acetosa*	
Cross-leaved heath	*Erica tetralix*	Might not be present or at low levels
Cuckoo-flower/ Ladies'-smock	*Cardamine pratensis*	
Devil's-bit scabious	*Succisa pratensis*	Might not be present or at low levels
Greater bird's-foot trefoil	*Lotus uliginosus*	
Heather/ling	*Calluna vulgaris*	Might not be present or at low levels
Lesser skullcap	*Scutellaria minor*	Might not be present or at low levels
Lesser spearwort	*Ranunculus flammula*	
Marsh bedstraw	*Galium palustre*	
Meadow buttercup	*Ranunuculus acris*	
Meadowsweet	*Filipendula ulmaria*	Might not be present or at low levels
Purple-moor grass	*Molinia caerula*	
Ragged-Robin	*Lychnis flos-cuculi*	Might not be present or at low levels
Saw-wort	*Serratula tinctoria*	Might not be present or at low levels
Self-heal	*Prunella vulgaris*	Might not be present or at low levels
Sharp-flowered rush	*Juncus acutiflorus*	
Sneezewort	*Achillea ptarmica*	Might not be present or at low levels
Sweet vernal grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*	
Tormentil	*Potentilla erecta*	
Water mint	*Mentha aquatic*	
Western gorse	*Ulex gallii*	Might not be present or at low levels
Whorled caraway	*Carum verticillatum*	Might not be present or at low levels

We are Plantlife

For 30 years, Plantlife has had a single ideal – to save and celebrate wild flowers, plants and fungi. They are the life support for all our wildlife and their colour and character light up our landscapes. But without our help, this priceless natural heritage is in danger of being lost.

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APPENDIX IV

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

GLYPHOSATE
INFORMATION NOTE – AUGUST 2018

It is the policy of the Welsh Government to reduce to the lowest possible level the effect of pesticide use on people, wildlife, plants and environment while making sure pests, diseases and weeds are effectively controlled. All pesticide products available in the UK have to meet strict regulatory standards to ensure they do not pose a threat to human or animal health and the environment. The regulatory authorities undertake ongoing scientific research to make sure such chemicals are safe to use and have no long-lasting effect on the environment.

Glyphosate is the active substance in many herbicides and is widely used around the world. All pesticide active substance approvals are subject to periodic review and the approval of glyphosate has recently gone through this process. In November 2017, the European Union re-approved the continuing use of glyphosate from 16 December 2017. Reviews of the scientific data by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Chemicals Agency's Committee for Risk Assessment have found no safety concerns that would prevent continuing approval, and UK scientists agree with this assessment. The new approval lasts until 15 December 2022; use beyond that date would be subject to a further decision.

Risks associated with the use of pesticides in amenity areas, such as parks, is specifically considered as part of the authorisation process. Legally enforceable conditions of use are imposed on the way products can be applied to ensure the public are not exposed to levels of pesticides that would harm health or have unacceptable effects on the environment.

Pesticides in amenity areas should be used responsibly and only as part of an integrated programme of control. They can help deliver substantial benefits for society which include: management of conservation areas, invasive species and flood risks; access to high quality sporting facilities; and safe public spaces (for example, by preventing weed growth on hard surfaces creating trip hazards), industrial sites and transport infrastructure.

In regards to glyphosate use for controlling invasive non-native plant species you may wish to note recent research undertaken by Swansea University examining the physical and chemical control of Japanese knotweed. These were the largest field trials of their kind ever undertaken worldwide. Initial results were published earlier this year. Though no control treatment delivered complete eradication of Japanese knotweed glyphosate applied at an appropriate dose, phenological stage and level of coverage was found to be the most effective control treatment. They made a recommendation for stakeholders to discontinue the use of other widely used herbicides for control of Japanese knotweed and unnecessary physical control methods that add equipment and labour costs and increase environmental impacts, without improving control compared to spraying alone.

The Welsh Government works with industry bodies and others to promote best practice in vegetation and weed management in the amenity sector. We support the work of the Amenity Forum in promoting the importance of sustainable pesticide use and developing user practice so that all amenity pesticide users are operating to consistently high standards. We strongly encourage engagement with the Amenity Forum, particularly at Local Authority level, so we can be assured that amenity pesticide users in Wales are conforming to the standards expected under the UK National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides and EU law. The Amenity Forum's main objective is to be the collective body representing the amenity industry, in relation to pesticide use and weed and pest control within the sector. To deliver on this, the Forum has developed a number of activities which include issuing guidance notes to support 'Best Practice' messages, organising conferences and workshops and working closely with the Chemicals Regulation Division of the Health and Safety Executive to ensure the amenity sector meets the requirements of the Nation Action Plan.

Please find below information from the Health and Safety Executive website regarding obligations tailored for those in the amenity sector using professional pesticide products.

Those who use, or cause or permit others to apply, plant protection products or who store and/or dispose of products are subject to a number of legal requirements. Key points to note are:

- Use of plant protection products should be considered as part of an integrated programme of control. The Amenity Forum provides practical advice on how this can be done.
- Anyone who applies pesticides as part of their professional activities must (including those previously operating under grandfather rights) hold a recognised specified training certificate.
- All those purchasing professional plant protection products must reasonably believe that products are used by someone holding a specified certificate.
- All application equipment, except knapsacks and hand-held, must possess a certificate demonstrating that it has passed an officially recognised test conducted by the National Sprayer Testing Scheme. Equipment has to be tested on either a three, five or six yearly basis thereafter depending on when the most recent test was conducted and the type of equipment. All equipment must be calibrated on a regular basis.
- Users, or those who cause or permit use, must ensure that: all reasonable precautions are taken to protect human health and the environment; applications are confined to target areas; and in certain areas (including public spaces and conservation areas) that the amount used and frequency of use is as low as reasonably practicable.
- Priority is given to particular products where there are risks to water quality.
- Professional users and distributors take all reasonable precautions to ensure handling, storage and disposal operations do not endanger human health or the environment.
- Storage areas are constructed in such a way as to prevent unwanted releases of products.

Report to	**Partnerships Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting	**11 February 2021**
Lead Officer	**Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator**
Report author	**Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator**
Title	**Scrutiny Work Programme**

1. What is the report about?

The report seeks Partnerships Scrutiny Committee to review its draft forward work programme. In doing so the Committee is asked to reflect on the implications of the focus on business critical operations during the emergency phase of the COVID -19 pandemic and the programmes of work underway or being planned under the recovery phase, whilst also having regard to items of business already on its forward work programme prior to the pandemic.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To seek the Committee to review and agree on its programme of future work, and to update members on relevant issues.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee:

3.1 considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate; and

3.2 identifies key messages and themes from the current meeting which it wishes to publicise via the press and/or social media.

4. Report details

4.1 Section 7 of Denbighshire County Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, as well as the rules of procedure and debate.

4.2 The Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must set, and regularly review, a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.

4.3 For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report. The aim of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.

4.4 In recent years the Welsh Government (WG) and Audit Wales (AW) have highlighted the need to strengthen scrutiny's role across local government and public services in Wales, including utilising scrutiny as a means of engaging with residents and service-users. From now on scrutiny will be expected to engage better and more frequently with the public with a view to securing better decisions which ultimately lead to better outcomes for citizens. AW will measure scrutiny's effectiveness in fulfilling these expectations.

4.5 Having regard to the national vision for scrutiny whilst at the same time focussing on local priorities, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) recommended that the Council's scrutiny committees should, when deciding on their work programmes, focus on the following key areas:

- budget savings;
- achievement of the Corporate Plan objectives (with particular emphasis on their deliverability during a period of financial austerity);
- any other items agreed by the Scrutiny Committee (or the SCVCG) as high priority (based on the PAPER test criteria – see reverse side of the 'Member Proposal Form' at Appendix 2);
- Urgent, unforeseen or high priority issues; and

- Supporting the Council's recovery work in relation to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on Council services, the local economy and the county's communities

4.6 Scrutiny Proposal Forms

As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above the Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on the Committee's business agenda they have to formally request the Committee to consider receiving a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of suggested subjects. No officer proposal forms have been received for consideration at the current meeting.

4.7 With a view to making better use of scrutiny's time by focussing committees' resources on detailed examination of subjects, adding value through the decision-making process and securing better outcomes for residents, the SCVCG decided that members, as well as officers, should complete 'scrutiny proposal forms' outlining the reasons why they think a particular subject would benefit from scrutiny's input. A copy of the 'member's proposal form' can be seen at Appendix 2. The reverse side of this form contains a flowchart listing questions which members should consider when proposing an item for scrutiny, and which committees should ask when determining a topic's suitability for inclusion on a scrutiny forward work programme. If, having followed this process, a topic is not deemed suitable for formal examination by a scrutiny committee, alternative channels for sharing the information or examining the matter can be considered e.g. the provision of an 'information report', or if the matter is of a very local nature examination by the relevant Member Area Group (MAG). No items should be included on a forward work programme without a 'scrutiny proposal form' being completed and accepted for inclusion by the Committee or the SCVCG. Assistance with their completion is available from the Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

Cabinet Forward Work Programme

4.8 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this

purpose, a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 3.

Progress on Committee Resolutions

4.9 A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 4 to this report.

5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

5.1 Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The Group met on 21 January 2021. At that meeting the Group asked this Committee to consider two items. They are:

(i) Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council (DVSC)

(ii) The Effectiveness of the Multidisciplinary Homelessness and Housing Related Support Services model in delivering services to those at risk of becoming homeless.

These items have provisionally been entered on the Committee's forward work programme for the September and November 2021 meetings, see Appendix 1 attached.

The Group's next meeting is scheduled for the 11 March 2021.

5.2 With a view to raising Scrutiny's profile and encouraging public engagement the Group recently decided that all three scrutiny committees should, for a trial period, identify key themes or messages arising from their meetings for publication via the Authority's social media pages and the local press. The Committee is therefore asked to identify which themes or messages it wishes to highlight from the current meeting.

6. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in line with community needs and residents' wishes. Continual development and review of a coordinated work programme will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities, improve outcomes for residents whilst also managing austere budget cuts.

7. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

Services may need to allocate officer time to assist the Committee with the activities identified in the forward work programme, and with any actions that may result following consideration of those items.

8. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

A Well-being Impact Assessment has not been undertaken in relation to the purpose or contents of this report. However, Scrutiny's through it work in examining service delivery, policies, procedures and proposals will consider their impact or potential impact on the sustainable development principle and the well-being goals stipulated in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

9. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

None required for this report. However, the report itself and the consideration of the forward work programme represent a consultation process with the Committee with respect to its programme of future work.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

No risks have been identified with respect to the consideration of the Committee's forward work programme. However, by regularly reviewing its forward work programme the Committee can ensure that areas of risk are considered and examined as and when they are identified, and recommendations are made with a view to addressing those risks.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

11.2 Section 7.11 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that scrutiny committees and/or the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group will be responsible for setting their own work programmes, taking into account the wishes of Members of the Committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.

Contact Officer:

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Note: Items entered in italics have <u>not</u> been approved for submission by the Committee. Such reports are listed here for information, pending formal approval.

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
15 April	**Councillor Bobby Feeley**	1.	Health Board plans for services in Denbighshire	To detail to the Committee the future direction for the delivery of Health Board services in Denbighshire (including major capital projects such as the North Denbighshire Community Hospital, future provision at Denbigh Infirmary and Ruthin Hospital)	To secure the future delivery of health care services and effective partnership working with respect of delivering health, social care and well-being services in order to realise the resilient communities corporate priority	BCUHB	February 2020
20 May							
8 July	**Cllr. Bobby Feeley**	1.	Annual Report on Adult Safeguarding 2020/21	To consider the annual report on adult safeguarding, and information in place to meet the statutory requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 and an evaluation of the financial and resource impact of the	An evaluation of whether the Authority is meeting its statutory duty with respect to adult safeguarding and has sufficient resources to undertake this work along with the	Phil Gilroy/Alaw Pierce/Nerys Tompsett	November 2020

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
				Supreme Court's 2014 Judgement on deprivation of liberty on the Service and its work (data to include actual numbers in each category as well as % figures)	additional work in the wake of the Supreme Court's judgement		
	Cllr. Brian Jones	2.	COVID-19 Active Travel Plan Schemes in Denbighshire	To provide an overview of the findings in regard to the schemes' effectiveness in those town centres where they were implemented, the benefits realised from their implementation and any unintended negative consequences caused by their introduction	To evaluate the schemes' effectiveness in boosting town centre footfall during COVID-19 restrictions and identify lessons learnt for similar schemes in future and in readiness for further expansion of Active Travel schemes across the county	Emlyn Jones/Mike Jones/Ben Wilcox-Jones	December 2020
16 September	**Cllr. Mark Young**	1.	Community Safety Partnership **[Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee]**	To detail the Partnership's achievement in delivering its 2020/21 action plan and its progress to date in delivering its action plan for 2021/22. The report to	Effective monitoring of the CSP's delivery of its action plan for 2020/21 and its progress to date in delivering its	Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale/Sian Taylor	December 2020

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
				include financial sources and the progress made in spending the allocated funding. (report to include actual numbers as well as percentages to enable the Committee to effectively evaluate the impact of measures put in place)	plan for 2021/22 will ensure that the CSP delivers the services which the Council and local residents require		
When new Chief Executive is in post (tbc)	***Cllr. Richard Mainon***	*2.*	*Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council (DVSC)*	*To: (i) outline the working relationship between Denbighshire County Council and DVSC, how both organisations worked together during the COVID-19 pandemic and proposals for future working arrangements; and* *(ii) explore DVSC's working relationship with voluntary organisations across the county, how it prioritises the allocation of funding to voluntary groups and evaluates the effectiveness of the use of the funding allocated*	*Identification of good working practices for further development and areas that require improvement with a view to supporting the delivery of resilient communities*	*Alan Smith/Liz Grieve*	*By SCVCG January 2021*

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
4 November	**Cllr. Bobby Feeley**	1.	Homelessness and Housing Related Support Services	To examine the effectiveness of the multi-disciplinary service in delivering homelessness services in line with the Welsh Government's vision for homelessness and housing related support services	To secure the timely delivery of outcome focussed co-ordinated support to individuals and families who need it and avert them reaching crisis point	Phil Gilroy/Ann Lloyd/Abbe Harvey	By SCVCG January 2021
16 December							

Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
Health Services Matters				
Heart Failure Services in Denbighshire and its impact on the Council's Social Care Services (rescheduled from 2 April 2020 – new date tbc following Coronavirus emergency stand down) Awaiting confirmation of availability to attend	*To discuss the long-term future of the Health Board's Heart Failure Service and the potential impact of the loss of this service on the Council's Social Care Services*	*An assurances to residents with respect of the long-term future of the Service, that will also assist the Council's Social Services to effectively plan for any future demand on its services. A healthier more resilient Denbighshire*	*BCUHB/Phil Gilroy(?)*	*By SCVCG January 2020*
Other Matters				
Nature for Health Pilot Project	To examine the pilot project and consider whether a similar project should become part of the Corporate Priority Programme of projects	An assessments of the benefits of the pilot project and any measurable achievements received through Services working in partnership and within existing budgets to determine whether a similar project should be rolled-out across the county and included in the Corporate Priority programme of projects to deliver the Corporate Plan	Howard Sutcliffe	BY SCVCG July 2019 (deferred with the Chair's permission October 2019, subject to further work being carried out on the proposal)
Update following conclusion of inquiry undertaken by the National Crime Agency in to historic abuse in North Wales Children's' Care Homes	To update the Committee of the outcome of the National Crime Agency (NCA) investigation in to the abuse of children in the care of the former Clwyd County Council, and to	Determination of whether any of the Council's safeguarding policies and procedures need to be revised in light of the NCA's findings	Nicola Stubbins	November 2012

(potentially Spring 2021)	determine whether any procedures require revision.			

For future years

Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 Note: information on the Act is still awaited (further delayed due to COVID – 19 and WG decision in relation to Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS))	*To review the content of the Act and associated statutory regulations and code of practice (expected to be published in April 2020).*	*To review the implications for the Council and residents.*	*Phil Gilroy/David Soley*	*December 2019 (rescheduled April 2020 due to COVID-19) – check with lead officer in the autumn of 2021 whether available*

Information/Consultation Reports

Information / Consultation	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
Information Report (for circulation April 2021)	Quarterly Monitoring of External Care Providers	To provide details of the regular monitoring of external care service providers commissioned by the council for social care services, identifying any escalating concerns or other areas of concern	Katie Newe/Ben Chandler	By SCVCG 2018
INFORMATION REPORT (June 2021)	Collaborative Procurement Service's Annual Report	To receive information on the collaborative Service's activity and performance against targets set out in the Procurement Strategy 2019/20	Gary Williams/Sue Rees	By SCVCG March 2020

Partnerships Scrutiny Work Programme. doc
Updated 27/01/2021 – RhE

Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines

Meeting	**Deadline**	Meeting	**Deadline**	Meeting	**Deadline**
15 April	**1 April**	20 May	**6 May**	8 July	**24 June**

Partnerships Scrutiny Work Programme.doc

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Appendix 2

Member Proposal Form for Scrutiny Forward Work Programme	
NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	
TIMESCALE FOR CONSIDERATION	
TOPIC	
What needs to be scrutinised (and why)?	
Is the matter one of concern to residents/local businesses?	**YES/NO**
Can Scrutiny influence and change things? (if 'yes' please state how you think scrutiny can influence or change things)	**YES/NO**
Does the matter relate to an underperforming service or area?	**YES/NO**
Does the matter affect a large number of residents or a large geographical area of the County (if 'yes' please give an indication of the size of the affected group or area)	**YES/NO**
Is the matter linked to the Council's Corporate priorities (if 'yes' please state which priority/priorities)	**YES/NO**
To your knowledge is anyone else looking at this matter? (If 'yes', please say who is looking at it)	**YES/NO**
If the topic is accepted for scrutiny who would you want to invite to attend e.g. Lead Member, officers, external experts, service-users?	
Name of Councillor/Co-opted Member	
Date	

Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny

Proposal Form/Request received

(careful consideration given to reasons for request)

Does it stand up to the PAPER test?

- **P**ublic interest – is the matter of concern to residents?
- **A**bility to have an impact – can Scrutiny influence and change things?
- **P**erformance – is it an underperforming area or service?
- **E**xtent – does it affect a large number of residents or a large geographic area?
- **R**eplication – is anyone else looking at it?

NO

No further action required by scrutiny committee. Refer elsewhere or request information report?

YES

- Determine the desired outcome(s)
- Decide on the scope and extent of the scrutiny work required and the most appropriate method to undertake it (i.e. committee report, task and finish group inquiry, or link member etc.)
- If task and finish route chosen, determine the timescale for any inquiry, who will be involved, research requirements, expert advice and witnesses required, reporting arrangements etc.

Appendix 3

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
16 Feb	1	DCC's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22 – 2029/30)	To consider the final DCC's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy (2021/22 – 2029/30) and recommend to Council its adoption	Tbc	Councillor Brian Jones / Helen Vaughan-Evans
	2	Recommendations of the Strategic Investment Group	To seeking support of projects identified for inclusion in the 2021/22 Capital Plan	Yes	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	3	Volunteering Policy	To discuss the new Volunteering Policy and supporting process of recruiting and managing volunteers within Denbighshire County Council, to ensure meaningful volunteering experiences for all.	Tbc	Councillor Richard Mainon / Felicity Chandler / Nicola Kneale
	4	Changes to Denbighshire's Street Naming and Numbering Policy	To seek approval of proposed changes to the policy	Yes	Councillor Richard Mainon / Emma Jones
	5	Welsh Government Targeted Investment Programme	To seek delegated authority to officers relating to the WG Targeted Investment	Yes	Councillor Hugh Evans / Gareth Roberts

Appendix 3

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
			Programme following an extension of the scheme		
	6	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	7	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
23 March	1	Awel Y Dyffryn Extra Care Housing – Appointment of Care Providers	To seek approval to appoint 2 care providers for ECH older persons and Learning Disability	Yes	Councillor Bobby Feeley / Phil Gilroy / Emily Jones-Davies
	2	Corporate Plan (Oct to Dec)	To consider a performance update on the Corporate Plan	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Iola McGregor
	3	Graphic Design and Print Framework	To approve the tender refresh of the design and print framework and to move it to a dynamic purchasing system	Yes	Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts / Liz Grieve / Sian Owen
	4	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd

Appendix 3

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
27 April	1	Contract Procedure Rules	To consider the reviewed contract procedures rules which will require adoption and form part of the council constitution	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Lisa Jones
	2	Replacement LDP revised Delivery Agreement and Covid Impact Assessment	To seek Cabinet approval for revisions to the Replacement LDP Delivery Agreement and accompanying Covid19 impact assessment for submission to Welsh Government	Yes	Councillor Mark Young / Angela Loftus
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator

Appendix 3

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
25 May	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
29 June	1	Annual Performance Review	To consider the Annual Performance Review	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Iolo McGregor
	2	Replacement LDP - Report back on Preferred Strategy consultation	To report back on the responses to the Replacement LDP Preferred Strategy consultation and seek approval for subsequent proposed amendments to the Preferred Strategy	Yes	Councillor Mark Young / Angela Loftus
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council		Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator

Appendix 3

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

Meeting	***Deadline***	*Meeting*	***Deadline***	*Meeting*	***Deadline***
January	***5 January***	*February*	***2 February***	*March*	***9 March***

Updated 29/01/2021 - KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

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Appendix 4

Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
17 December 2020	**5. Community Safety Partnership Annual Update for 2019-20**	***Resolved:*** *- subject to the above comments and observations to receive the Community Safety Partnership's* *(i) performance and statistical update for 2019-20; and* *(ii) latest 6-month report on crime statistics and the Partnership's actions*	Lead Member and officers advised of the Committee's observations and recommendations
	6. COVID-19 Active Travel Plan Schemes	***Resolved:*** *- subject to the above concerns and observations* *(i) to acknowledge the process followed by the Council in identifying and developing projects, applying for the grant and implementing projects, along with the difficulties encountered due to the short timescale given by the Welsh Government;* *(ii) to emphasise the importance of early engagement in future with local Member Area Groups (MAGs), local members, and town/ community councils for proposed schemes to utilise central government grant funding in specific towns or communities; and* *(iii) that a further report be presented to the Committee in six months' time on the impact of the COVID-19 Active Travel Plan Schemes on*	Lead Member and officers informed of the Committee's comments and recommendations. The follow-up report requested has been scheduled into the

			Denbighshire's towns and the lessons learnt from planning for this particular scheme in readiness for future schemes with short application deadlines and lead-in times.	Committee's forward work programme for its meeting on 8 July 2021 (see Appendix 1)
	7. Scrutiny Work Programme	***Resolved*: -** *(i)* *(ii)*	*subject to the above inclusions and amendments to approve the Committee's forward work programme; and* *to appoint Councillor Christine Marston to serve as Denbighshire's Scrutiny representative on the Sub-Regional Children's Assessment Care Centre Project Board.*	Work programme amendments made and reflected in Appendix 1. Relevant officers advised of Councillor Marston's appointment.