

Meeting	Full Council
Date	Tuesday 23 rd June 2026
Report Title	Weed Spraying / Control
Agenda Reference	16
Author	Jason Watts, Parks & Open Spaces Manager

Officer's Recommendation

1. To note the report and give steer to Officers on which way to progress.
2. To note the budget allocation for weed spraying is £20,000.00.

Background

Since the end of May, path and roadside weeds have become increasingly prominent, creating the overall impression that the parish is not being maintained, despite continued efforts across all other services. A report has been prepared outlining the actions taken by Swindon Borough Council (SBC) and neighbouring parish councils, allowing us to compare approaches and establish a clear direction for our weed-control strategy.

In 2025, the Parish Council allocated budget and outsourced the weed-control tasks, completing a full treatment round in May/June over a three-week period. A second round was cancelled part-way through after SBC announced that they would be carrying out weed-control treatments across the entire parish. Based on the expectation that SBC would continue this work in 2026, the Parish Council has not yet outsourced further weed-control operations.

2026 Investigations

Area	Status
SBC	Currently going through procurement & tendering to secure borough 2026 weed control application.
Central North	Instructed contractor to carryout x1 weed control application and state, this is due to the uncertainty from SBC.
South Swindon	Invested funds into a weed ripper – see Fig 1, and state that the process works very well although they face challenges to keep it in use on a continual basis.
St Andrews	No current plans and will wait for the SBC outcome.
Covingham	Second year of a three-year contract. Asking SBC not to conduct the weed spraying and to utilise the public funds elsewhere. SBC is reluctant to withdraw the service as it is a statutory duty.



HWPC Options

Option	Comments
1. Use our current HAKO sweeper machine to remove roadside weeds.	The team carried out a trial using our current sweeper setup to remove roadside weeds. While the method was effective on a small scale, it proved to be too time-consuming and demonstrated that the machine is not suitable as a long-term solution for weed control.
2. Purchase a weed removal tool for our current HAKO sweeper machine.	A weed-removal tool attachment is available that can be fitted to our existing HAKO sweeper Fig 2. While this would provide clear benefits, using it would reduce the time available for general parish sweeping, as resources would need to be reallocated to operate the attachment. The tool is not compatible with other sweeper brands, meaning it may become unusable when the current machine is replaced. The cost of the attachment is £10,000.
3. Hire an additional sweeper with weed removal tool	Costs are not yet fully defined, and delivering this work would require reallocating resources from other services.
4. Outsource the service at the Parish Council's expense	Secure funds and immediately outsource weed control. Based on last year's figure approximately £10k per application.
5. SBC deliver their statutory function	Wait for SBC outcome.



Fig 1



Fig 2