

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
BY THE CONNÉTABLE OF ST. BRELADE
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 10th JULY 2018**

Question

Will the Minister advise members when any member of the public or body corporate was last served a notice under Article 2 of the Weeds (Jersey) Law 1961; and will he also confirm the latest departmental policy with regard to Ragwort (*senecio Jacobaea L*)?

Answer

The last notice issued under Article 2 of the Weeds (Jersey) Law 1961 was issued on 15 August 2017.

Together with the Environmental Protection team, who administer the Weeds Law, I am committed to preventing the spread of injurious weeds, such as Ragwort. It is important to note that the Weeds (Jersey) Law 1961 is designed to prevent the 'spread', rather than eradication, of listed 'injurious weeds'.

The Environmental Protection team adheres to a defined 'Injurious Weeds Policy', to help ensure maximum effect and make best use of staff resources. Under the policy, if a complaint is received from someone who is affected by Ragwort, then an officer will undertake a site visit. The action taken to prevent the spread of the weeds depends on the severity and location of the infestation. This can range from advice and a pre-agreed timeframe of works to the issuance of a formal '7 day' enforcement notice. The policy states that all complaints of Ragwort on grazing land and land adjacent to grazing land will automatically be actioned in the same way and that officers have the discretion to apply the law outside of the policy framework if necessary.

In cases where no formal statutory action is deemed necessary, then an advisory letter and leaflet is normally delivered to the occupier of the land. The leaflet provides guidance on identifying the weed species and advice on various control methods. The Environmental Protection team has the expertise to advise land owners on the most appropriate measures to control ragwort and safeguard the environment.

Ragwort is not an 'invasive' species, and although it could pose a danger to animals in dry silage it has an important role to play in the island's broader environment by being a valuable nectar source and supporting a large variety of insect species. Thus the objective is to reach manageable levels rather than total eradication. The Environmental Protection team is also aware that preventing large populations establishing will reduce the need for future pesticide applications and they encourage all land managers to employ a sustainable and integrated approach to controlling their injurious weed populations.