

Dear Member

**ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL - THURSDAY, 12TH JANUARY, 2023**

Please find below a Motion from Council which has been added to the agenda for consideration at the Environment and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting, taking place on Thursday, 12th January, 2023.

**Agenda No    Item**

16.    **Motion from Council**

To consider the following motion from Cllr Malcolm Wade:

The cost-of-living crisis affects all areas of our nation. However, many members of the farming community, so important in the production of 54% of the nation's food supply, are struggling to survive in the current financial environment and this includes many of New Forest's farmers. A thriving agricultural sector is crucial to New Forest's economy, landscape, and environment.

This Council notes the cost of animal feed is up by 60% and fertilizer cost by 200%. In the last year, these and other increased costs are against a backdrop of a changing subsidy regime from the government with some farms at risk of losing up to 20% of their income this way. This is leading to many farmers to decide to give up their farms or raise food prices to survive further impacting the cost of living of ordinary New Forest residents.

This Council sees that some farmers are being forced to sell their back up land, which has Forest Rights, and the loss of this land has serious impact on the sustainability of the ancient New Forest tradition of commoning if alternative support for local farmers is not made available.

This Council recognises that government funding schemes to help farmers exist but due to the current financial environment different approaches need to be considered to improve on the ongoing support.

Therefore, this Council will write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs expressing its concerns about financial state of the farming community and request greater financial support for Farmers to be able to continue to produce food for the UK market at sustainable prices.

Yours sincerely

**Democratic Services**

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