

## **Motion submitted by Councillor Tim Taylor**

### **Sustainability of Farming and Horticulture in Fenland**

Fenland is a rural area. Many of the businesses in this area rely on the agricultural and horticultural sectors - not just farmers, but haulage companies and equipment suppliers right through the range to small corner shops.

Fenland District Council wants local businesses to thrive within our area, and the Council recognises that the agricultural and horticultural sectors are a major part of our rural economy.

Fenland District Council will continue to support all businesses within its area and is especially aware of the extra pressures facing agricultural businesses following recent changes in national Government policies.

Diversification is an established route for agricultural businesses to achieve greater sustainability – one common method used is to establish a farm shop to sell locally grown farm produce directly to the public. There is a new national directory being put together of farmers who wish to sell to the public directly through farm shops.

Farm shops often require planning permission. The granting of planning permission depends upon the individual circumstances of each planning application, within the context of the existing Local Plan and the various pieces of legislation and guidance laid down by Government.

Fenland District Council resolves to write to Baroness Taylor, Minister at the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government, urging her to ensure that any future changes made to the NPPF help agricultural businesses to diversify by eliminating any obstacles that farms face when seeking to open a farm shop.

Fenland District Council will soon be agreeing its Draft Local Plan. Council asks that specific consideration is given to include provisions within the Draft Local Plan which will make it easier for planning applications for farm shops to be approved, as well as other policies to support farmers and food production.

Fenland District Council also asks that the Portfolio Holder for Planning to keep herself up to speed in relation to any specific planning applications for farm shops and outlets.