

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL
Wednesday 11 September 2024

1. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HODGSON
Re: Phasing out of Badger Cull and Timelines.

Further to the announcement by the Government last week, that the badger cull will be phased out and replaced by vaccination programmes, what steps will Devon County Council take to introduce a BTB (Bovine Tuberculosis) vaccination programme for badgers and cattle on its land and farm estates? What will be the timeline for this transition?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES

In relation to the County Farms Estate, in accordance with any other legislative changes, Farm Business Tenancy Agreements (FBT's) include a requirement for tenants to act lawfully and should badger culling become unlawful this would then apply.

The Council's ongoing approach in the absence of a change in law, is that it would not seek to restrict any tenant's (current or future) ability to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to limit the risk of the spread of Bovine TB – aligned to the government's current multi-pronged range of measures which for the foreseeable future may include badger culling.

The Council will not introduce or impose a badger or cattle vaccine on individual farms. Tenants will retain the right to choose whether or not permit the Badger Vaccination Field Force to vaccinate badgers found on their holdings, based on their own understanding and confidence in the data presented to them from the Badger Vaccination Study. Similarly, tenants will have the choice of vaccinating their cattle, once a cattle vaccine has been licenced and made available to them.