

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

25 February 2025

Notice of Motion No. 2025-01

Action against the removal of Labour's "Family Farm Tax"

From Cllr Rich Rogers and Cllr Bill Parks

Preamble

Wiltshire is a largely rural county with agriculture at its very heart. Over the last thousand years, our city, towns, villages and hamlets have been created around the farming of land and the trade of goods grown and grazed on our green fields. Today, much of Wiltshire is still farmed in order to provide food and other produce for people in the UK and across the World. Many of Wiltshire's farms have been handed down from generation to generation and still bear the same family name as they did hundreds of years ago. Wiltshire farmers led the way in boosting food production during the Second World War and the tradition of innovation continues with our agricultural college in Wiltshire. As a Council we have focused on supporting local producers through the recently launched Wiltshire Marque and are carrying out innovative projects to support the health of farmers through outreach work, initially through the Salisbury Livestock Market.

This Labour Government has decided to attack the very heart of Wiltshire through additional taxation of our farming communities.

The recent Labour budget includes a restriction on Agricultural Property Relief which until now has allowed Wiltshire farmers to hand the reins to their sons and daughters, Wiltshire's next generation of farmers. We Conservatives recognise the hard work of Wiltshire's farmers to put food on our tables. Taking on the family farm is not a commercial decision fuelled by the promise of huge profits, quite the opposite. We appreciate the incredibly tight margins our farmers contend with and recognise that farming is a way of life for many families here in Wiltshire. Taxation on the inheritance of agricultural land will spell the end for many farms. Wiltshire's farming families will have no choice but to sell the land which has been in their family for generations to pay Labour's tax bill.

The Government's attack on Wiltshire's farming heritage will destroy livelihoods, damage communities and decimate this country's food security.

Motion

We ask for two actions as a result of Labour's changes to inheritance tax rules concerning agricultural land:

- 1) That Richard Clewer, the Leader of Wiltshire Council, writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and our Wiltshire MPs, in order to outline Wiltshire Council's dismay at the decision in the Budget to restrict Agricultural Property Relief, and to request the Government puts an immediate stop to the Family Farm Tax.**
- 2) That the council undertakes an analysis of how many of Wiltshire's farms would be affected by the changes in national policy announced in the recent budget and reports this back to members.**