



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 31 MARCH 2025
Subject	FARMING MOTION WORKING GROUP – TERMS OF REFERENCE
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Gina Blomefield, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Email: Gina.Blomefield@Cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Julia Gibson, Democratic Services Officer Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To establish and agree the terms of reference for the Farming Motion working Group.
Annexes	Annex A – Terms of Reference Farming Motion Working Group Annex B – Farming motion (previously circulated)
Recommendation(s)	That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agree the terms of reference for the Farming Motion Working Group attached as Annex A.2. Appoint a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to chair the Farming Motion Working Group.3. Agree that nominations will be sought from political groups for the remaining seats on the Farming Motion Working Group.4. Delegate authority to the Head of Democratic and Electoral Services to appoint the membership of the Working Group based on the nominations made by political groups.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting Communities• Supporting the Economy



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Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** This report presented the proposed Terms of Reference for the Farming Motion Working Group.
- 1.2** The overlying aim is to engage with interested parties to understand the local impacts of Inheritance Tax (IHT) changes in the district including any available data or other evidence.
- 1.3** The Working Group will report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then Council on the key messages and evidence to ensure the Council can make strong representations to Government.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** On 19 March 2025, the Council considered a Farmers Motion (Annex B) which contained the following resolution:

"This Council resolves to:

Agree to support Cotswold farmers by campaigning against IHT reforms for farms.

Request that the Leader writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer urging her to scrap the IHT reform imposed on farmers."

- 2.2** Council resolved to refer the motion to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee was asked to consider the local impacts of IHT and report back in July 2025 at the latest with suggestions as to how the Council can make strong representations to Government.
- 2.3** It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee establishes a working group to undertake this task and report back. This approach was suggested in the debate at Council.

3. WORKING GROUP - APPROACH

- 3.1** The suggested approach of the Working Group will be to gather evidence from a range of interested parties over one or two meetings which will be held in person. The working group would also consider any written representations provided by interested parties.



4. WORKING GROUP - MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1** It is proposed that the Working Group will comprise 4 to 6 Members based on nominations made by political groups.
- 4.2** It is recommended that the Chair of the Working Group is appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and is a member of the Committee.
- 4.3** The Working Group can include Members who are not members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee but they cannot be members of Cabinet. It is recommended that nominations are sought from political groups and that authority is delegated to the Head of Democratic and Electoral Services to appoint the members based on the nominations made by political groups.

5. WORKING GROUP - TIMELINE

- 5.1** The following timeline is proposed in the terms of reference:
- 31 March 2025 – Working Group established by Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- May/early June 2025 – One or two Working Group meetings held
- 7 July 2025 – Working Group findings considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 16 July 2025 – Working Group findings considered by Council

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1** An alternative approach would be to dedicate a scheduled meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to engaging with interested parties. This approach is not recommended given that the Committee has a busy work programme.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** There are no legal implications arising from the report. Working Groups are informal bodies that are not subject to regulations that apply to formal sub-committees (i.e. political proportionality, members having to be members of the Committee).

9. RISK ASSESSMENT



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9.1 There are no significant risks arising from this report.

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

10.1 There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

11. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There may be some emissions associated with travel to and from meetings but these are not likely to be significant.

(END)