

**EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO AGRICULTURE SECTOR SUPPORT SCRUTINY REVIEW –  
ACTION PLAN ARISING FROM RECOMMENDATIONS  
November 2023**

Time has been allocated and an officer nominated from the Funding and Investment Team to work with, and support, the agriculture sector, and partners to retain a strategic overview of the agreed action plan and report on the delivery of the recommendations to Members.

It is proposed that a “Virtual” internal officer group is created of lead officers identified in the plan to meet quarterly to review and refresh the action plan to keep Members updated and briefed on progress.

The re-establishment of the Agriculture and Horticulture Forum will be the mechanism through which the action plan is implemented with partners and through which any lobbying / advocacy activity will be undertaken with members from the agricultural and public sector working collaboratively. Members and Officers will use the recommendations outlined in the report and the subsequent action plan to promote the sector at events such as roundtables with policy makers and senior decision makers and engage with industry representatives to champion the sector. A communications / engagement plan will be developed to ensure the County Council actively promotes the sector at flagship local, regional and national events, such as the Lincolnshire Show, Careers Events, Cereals etc.

Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes or No	Initial Response	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer
<p><u>Recommendation 1</u> Policy Context</p> <p>Lincolnshire County Council should continue to be represented at Officer level, on the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust's Biodiversity Net Gain Task and Finish Group and provide feedback regarding activity on which Lincolnshire County Council can lead and facilitate delivery on.</p>	Yes	<p>It is imperative that Lincolnshire CC is seen as leading in the County's ambition to delivering BNG and that it reviews its land and property portfolio to identify where appropriate schemes can be implemented.</p> <p>LCC Currently have officers on the Nature Based Solutions / Biodiversity Net Gain Task Group on Biodiversity Net Gain</p>	<p>The Group are setting up some groups with a wide variety of stakeholders – including farmers for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, LCC Officers will, where appropriate sit / lead / report on these theme groups.</p> <p>Develop Lincolnshire based examples of projects that have delivered through BNG from November 2023 and promote via flagship sector events For example: Lincolnshire Show, IMPACT events.</p> <p>Develop plans on how BNG can be delivered on LCC owned Projects through Property and Highways e.g., Shoff Farm</p> <p>To investigate ongoing maintenance of any land taken out of arable production, with the possibility of using some less productive corners without</p>	<p>Short – ongoing</p> <p>Resources - DEFRA has provided an initial grant fund for BNG, which will be used to produce some options for a future strategic approach to BNG.</p> <p>The funding will also be used to assess some example sites owned by LCC for their BNG value using the biodiversity metric</p>	Dan Clayton

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			<p>taking such areas out of scope for tenants wishing to use them for ELMS grants</p> <p>1, responding to calls for evidence, supporting national policy conversations – including ongoing dialogue with DEFRA</p> <p>2, Spatial planning and land use framework</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Nicola Radford</p> <p>Phil Hughes</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 2</u> <u>Local Leadership</u></p> <p>a) That Lincolnshire County Council recognises the additional costs to Trading Standards for their response to livestock threatening pandemics and supports future activity and its role around immunisation and future outbreaks.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Trading Standards team is crucial to the coordination and delivery of statutory services and leads on pandemic response.</p> <p>LCC Trading Standards have delivered in response to pandemics / plans for future outbreaks.</p> <p>The value of the service should continue to be acknowledged and monitored.</p>	<p>Executive Board continue to receive updates from Trading Standards on delivery / barriers to delivery.</p> <p>TS will continue to update the Executive Board in the event of resources deployed to deal with notifiable diseases, along with PP&amp;C SC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Barbara Ward</p>

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b) That the Championing Farmed Environment scheme be reinstated through the development of a partnership between Lincolnshire County Council, Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Environment Agency, Anglian Water, and Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, in support of our Agricultural and Farming community (private and tenant farms).	Yes	The Councils relationship with external agricultural / horticultural partners is key in sharing best practice and building trust and relationships. Leading at the front through support to its Tenant Farmers.	If Scheme re-established the Tenants would be engaged through newsletters, tenants' meetings, visits, invitations to present.	Medium / long	Nicola Radford
<u>Recommendation 3</u> <u>Skills, Investment, Careers and Business Support</u>  a) In relation to Skills, Investment and Careers:  i. That Lincolnshire County Council actively promotes agricultural/farming careers in events, through education and via any other means for communication, such as social media and newsletters.  ii. That the Panel's commissioned videos of our	Yes          Yes	Lincolnshire is a leading County for agriculture and historically has supported and trained future farmers / landowners. With an ageing population and farmers leaving the sector it is imperative that the County Council helps facilitate and support promotion and skills for future generations.	6 Agricultural Videos Completed, a marketing and promotional plan needs to be developed to showcase the films and support the colleges / universities in promoting their offers. These videos will be launched along with the new horticultural videos at the Lincolnshire show and promoted through the County Council website and County News – whilst being	Short term          Short Term	Nicola Radford

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<p>six Agricultural Champions be used as an exemplar of the vast opportunity for successful career paths and fulfilling lives.</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>circulated and free to use through partners – NFU,</p> <p>Quotes for Horticultural videos completed.</p> <p>LCC Webpage for Agriculture / Horticulture with links to partners / support</p> <p>Sponsorship opportunities in NFU News / County News on services available</p> <p>Wider plans for the Lincolnshire Show in conjunction with UKFEZ in conjunction with the LRSN – day one of the show a Q&amp;A session with breakfast and MPs to lead.</p> <p>Growth Hub to look to buy space / cohabit Saville / Brown and Co at Lincolnshire Show</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Short</p> <p>Short</p>	<p>Marianne Marshall</p>

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iii. That Lincolnshire County Council works with the UK Food Valley and across the Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zones (FEZ) in linking talent to existing and future opportunities.	Yes	The LEP and UKFV team are designing a pilot programme to take into schools based around careers in the agri-food sector. They also have budget to create digital content for websites around careers in the sector. Once created, these resources can be shared with LCC		Medium	Effie Warick-John
iv. That Lincolnshire County Council continues to collaborate with the FEZ / University of Lincoln and Colleges in promoting education programmes and in introducing initiatives and schemes for talent retention within the sector and within the county.	Yes	GLLEP have budget in the UKFV budget. to tell the story of the vast amount of skills that are needed within the industry. For example, we would take a product and then follow the story from farm to fork and show off just how many skills are needed for that one product			
v. That Lincolnshire County Council takes a leading role and proactively engages with managers and tenants to maintain a close relationship and improve service provision, thus, supporting our tenant farms to remain sustainable and economically viable in an everchanging world.	Yes			Ongoing	Sarah Wells
vi. That Lincolnshire County Council, being the largest tenant farm owner in the East Midlands, hosts a regional debate on the				Short term	Sarah Wells

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<p>future of tenant farms / succession planning.</p> <p>b) In relation to Business Support:</p> <p>i. That Lincolnshire County Council continues to support and promote the work of the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub and the role of the Agricultural Advisor.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>That Lincolnshire County Council maps local progression routes to careers in Agrifood to help develop a pipeline of staff</p> <p>That Lincolnshire County Council helps training providers to broaden their provision to support the Agrifood sector</p> <p>That Lincolnshire County Council increases the number of Apprenticeships in SME's in the Agrifood sector</p> <p>From a CFE point of view Savills regularly engage with the tenants, both informally to discuss topical issues and the more formal aspects include the Annual Tenant's Meeting, Newsletters, email updates with topical news.</p>	<p>Develop career pathways for 5-10 roles to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Roles and responsibilities</li> <li>- Skills, experience and qualities required</li> <li>- Qualifications needed to undertake the role</li> <li>- Courses and providers available locally</li> <li>- Potential progression opportunities</li> </ul> <p>Mapping and assessment of Level 3 provision to identify gaps in provision</p> <p>Commission Skills Officer business engagement activity</p>	<p>Long term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Thea Croxall</p> <p>Thea Croxall</p> <p>Thea Croxall</p> <p>Sarah Wells</p>

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		<p>The Rock Review: working together for a thriving agricultural tenanted sector looked to cover this debate</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-rock-review-working-together-for-a-thriving-agricultural-tenanted-sector">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-rock-review-working-together-for-a-thriving-agricultural-tenanted-sector</a></p> <p>As part of the Governments response</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rock-review-on-agricultural-tenancies-government-response/government-response-to-the-rock-review-by-recommendation#headline-recommendations">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rock-review-on-agricultural-tenancies-government-response/government-response-to-the-rock-review-by-recommendation#headline-recommendations</a></p> <p>they proposed the establishment of a new Farming Tenancy Forum (to build on the work of the Tenancy Reform Industry Group) and to provide Defra with ongoing and regular feedback on tenant farming issues. We would recommend engaging with this group and reviewing their recommendations rather than duplicating work that has already been undertaken.</p> <p>Business Lincolnshire / Growth Hub currently provides a dedicated Agricultural Advisors for all areas bar SEL.</p>	<p>Link the University with tenants regarding potential field scale research.</p> <p>Paul Ward to be Invited to speak Tenant's Meeting. When updates are forwarded, these are passed on to the tenants. Have signposted the help available to the CFE tenants and some have taken this up.</p> <p>Review report and prepare response to Members.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Short term</p>	<p>Sarah Wells</p> <p>Business Lincolnshire Angela Driver</p>



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<p>ii. That Trading Standards proactively engages with the Tenants Panel offering access to information on all aspects of legal requirements for farming businesses.</p> <p>iii. That Trading Standards offers support and guidance to farms that wish to diversify their produce/venture in terms of</p>		<p>The Agri Horti Adviser is funded through to the end of March 2024.</p> <p>In addition to the Advisory support, the sector would benefit from a sector specific workshop programme. Proposal is for 4 workshops per annum covering a range of topics to be delivered between 1st April 2024 to 30th March 2026.</p> <p>To include but not exhaustively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Entrant level Agenda</li> <li>• Future proofing Farm Estates</li> <li>• Diversification – what will future farms look like</li> <li>• Technology adoption into small / mid-tier farms</li> <li>• Development case studies / best practice</li> </ul> <p>Trading Standards role is critical in the agricultural sector and needs to be acknowledged.</p>	<p>Continue to support the post / receive updates on progress and key issues.</p> <p>To continue to provide an Adviser for 2 years, funding 4 workshops per annum covering a range of topics to be delivered between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026.</p> <p>Growth Hub / Trading Standards will also look to opportunities to attend partner events to present and offer support and guidance on their roles.</p> <p>That Trading Standards proactively engages with the Tenants Panel offering access to information on all aspects of legal requirements for farming businesses.</p>	Ongoing	Barbara Ward

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<p>guidance and adherence to regulations, and that Lincolnshire County Council actively promotes the Trading Standards' offer through established means of communication with the public.</p>			<p>That Trading Standards offers support and guidance to farms that wish to diversify their produce/venture in terms of guidance and adherence to regulations, and that Lincolnshire County Council actively promotes the Trading Standards' offer through established means of communication with the public.</p> <p>We offer business advice to all Lincolnshire businesses, with the first hour free and on a pay-as-you-basis thereafter.</p> <p>Continue to support and promote the services that the Trading Standards provide through County news / tenant farmers.</p>		
<p><u>Recommendation 4 Technology and Innovation</u></p> <p>a) That Lincolnshire County Council Members continue to support and promote the development of the UK Food Valley Priorities.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>LCC Sustainable Food Strategy for Lincolnshire. There already is the Lincolnshire Sustainable Food</p> <p>LCC are already actively developing mobile and broadband across the county. We are working with commercial operators and DSIT (formally</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Effie Warick – John</p>

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<p>b) That Lincolnshire County Council continues investing/seeking additional funding streams to be allocated to the development of the mobile and broadband network across the county.</p> <p>c) That Lincolnshire County Council liaises with MPs to push for bringing better broadband to rural locations through the Minister of State for Media, Data, and Digital Infrastructure.</p>		<p>BDUK) to source additional investment/funding and innovation. Discussions are ongoing re. the hardest to reach areas and possible private 5G networks in agri-tech areas</p> <p>DSIT has already allocated over £100M to improving rural broadband/mobile in the county and deployments will commence early 2024 via Project Gigabit</p>	<p>The County Council hosts a workshop with the sector to establish an evidence base to present to MPs and Ministers on the issues of connectivity and broadband</p>		<p>Stephen Brooks</p> <p>Stephen Brookes</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 5</u> <u>Labour Shortages</u></p> <p>a) That Lincolnshire County Council continues to work with partners and networks to lobby MPs, the Home Office and Defra to ensure that the policies governing seasonal workforce supply to agriculture provide a multi-year deal to enable employers to plan their</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Housing for agricultural workers has traditionally been highly regulated by planning through imposing restrictive occupancy conditions. If the industry has identified a shortage of suitable accommodation, it would be sensible for organisations like the NFU and LCC to submit representations at the next review of Local Plans.</p> <p>Central Lincs: adopted in April 2023 – next review not likely to begin until 2025.</p> <p>East Lindsey: a review was started in 2021 but appears to have stalled.</p>	<p>Ongoing input / monitoring and feedback into local planning process and work with NFU etc to encourage submissions into consultation processes</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Phil Hughes</p>

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<p>businesses, with a clear and pragmatic timetable to transition to less migration as new automation technologies are adopted over the next 5-10 years.</p> <p>b) That Lincolnshire County Council liaises with MPs to put pressure on Defra and the Home Office to change entry requirements for foreign workers, offering flexible arrangements and reduce administrative costs and bureaucracy for businesses that seek to employ foreign workers.</p> <p>c) That Lincolnshire County Council takes measures to ensure the development of suitable accommodation on business sites or at close proximity.</p> <p>d) That Lincolnshire County Council continues to work with Local Planning Authorities to support best practice in making provision for all worker</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>SE Lincs: adopted 2019 but no timetable for review.</p> <p>South Kesteven: review started 2020 with opportunity to comment when draft plan is published later this year.</p> <p>Local Plans tend not to include this type of policy presumably because these developments are relatively rare and is covered by national policy (NPPF 2021) i.e.:  “Para. 80: Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply: a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;”</p>	<p>Longer term research / evidence gathering on wider national conversations in partnership with external partners</p>		<p>Paul Ward / Nicola Radford</p> <p>Economic Infrastructure – Mick King</p> <p>Planning Phil Hughes</p>

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accommodation and services.					
<u>Recommendation 6</u> <u>Mental Health</u> a) That Lincolnshire County Council continues investing in partnership working with the NHS, Lincolnshire Rural Support Network (LRSN) and National Farmers Union (NFU) towards addressing physical and mental health needs in the farming community. This could be done through:	Yes	At the 2019 County Farms Tenants' Meeting Phillip Smith of NFU Mutual gave a Presentation on farm safety and risk management, which included wellbeing.	Investigate the potential collaboration of partners and the University to undertake research into the mental and physical health issues of farmers using the MoCAP Technology Hub and University researchers.	Long term	Nicola Radford
i. Information sharing – organisations communicating about their findings in terms of unmet need. This includes data gathering and intelligence sharing.	Yes	At the 2020 CFE Tenants' Meeting Lucy Bellefontaine of The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (R.A.B.I), farming's oldest and largest charity, gave presentation on adversity and pressures in farming and an explanation of the financial support, practical care and useful guidance they provide to farming people.	Work with partners on a communication / marketing plan on services available	Short term	Marianne Marshall / Sarah Wells
ii. Addressing the lack of preparedness and increase flexibility of Mental Health Services in terms of the criteria and conditions/thresholds for offering services.	Yes	LRSN regularly signposted to tenants through newsletters and email updates. During Covid Lockdown these updates were sent more regularly, with a focus on wellbeing.	2 IMPACT events on the Future of Farming in partnership with the LRSN – one on sector / suppliers the other 16-25 yrs olds to influence and feed into Agri Forum	Medium	Nicola Radford
iii. Collaboration on initiatives, events, promotion of offer	Yes	We will continue to promote the availability of this help through regular updates to the tenants.	As above		

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<p>across the farming community (for example, through established communication avenues such as social media, websites, and magazines/newsletters).</p> <p>iv. Support with recruitment and training of volunteers.</p> <p>b) That Lincolnshire County Council continues to provide financial assistance towards Lincolnshire Rural Support Network's Mental Health Service provision subject to regular/annual review.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>Individual reactive support has been and will continue to be provided to tenants if required.</p> <p>LCC Currently pays towards annum. If this continues the LCC to receive annual reports of impact / usage</p>	<p>LCC will work with the LRSN to identify opportunities to increase mental health and wellbeing support to the agricultural community. This could include increasing capacity to provide reactive support to individuals and families by increasing caseworker capacity.</p> <p>– Review local needs and the current support offer to understand how well capacity meets demand. If a gap is identified, explore use of public health funding to increase capacity for 24 months.</p>		Lucy Craven
<p><u>Recommendation 7 Green Masterplan</u></p> <p>a) That Lincolnshire County Council seeks to continue proactively engaging with Green Investment schemes for Greater Lincolnshire and exploring opportunities for the implementation of nature-based solutions that meet Biodiversity Net Gain requirements as well as Net</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Net Zero Targets</p> <p>The DEFRA Greenhouse Gas Emissions data shows that agriculture related emissions are a significant part of overall emissions in Lincolnshire (21% of the total). We have several projects that are looking to reduce the emissions from the sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cold Chain Carbon Reduction report with GLLEP, which is about to start (July 2023)</li> <li>• Project on glasshouses and reducing their emissions will start later in the year – looking at the best locations for glasshouses to access industrial sites with waste heat.</li> </ul>	<p>See Section 1.</p> <p>We are already delivering some relevant projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar schemes - roof top on buildings and dwellings (subject to funding).</li> <li>• Energy Efficiency – including for specialist equipment</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Dan Clayton / Vanessa Strange</p>

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<p>Zero targets in line with the Lincolnshire Green Masterplan.</p> <p>b) That Lincolnshire County Council supports the reinstatement of the Greater Lincolnshire Forum for Agriculture and Horticulture under a set remit and Terms of Reference, with annual reporting to the Council's Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee on progress made against its objectives. We recommend that the process for this commences during Autumn/Winter of 2023-24.</p>	Yes	<p>The LEP that covers Herefordshire has funded some farm level carbon footprint reports – that show the emissions from individual farms and then develops an action plan of what they can do to reduce their emissions. We would be keen to do something similar for farms in Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Forum previously ran until 2019. LEADER Forums / Boards lessons/ contacts to be used.</p>	<p>– such as cool stores, grain dryers, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree/hedge planting in appropriate locations.</li> </ul> <p>Paper written Annex C. Partners will be contacted to gauge interest in the reestablishment of the forum and to establish key issues / agenda items. The Forum will cover Greater Lincolnshire.</p>		Nicola Radford
<p><u>Recommendation 8</u> <u>Agricultural Organisations/Services</u></p> <p>a) That Lincolnshire County Council considers becoming a member of The Institute for Agriculture and Horticulture.</p>	Yes	TIAH is a new program / key sources information and contacts.	Share best practice / links with tenant farmers and through wider marketing plans including links GLLEP / UKFEZ	Short term	Nicola Radford

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<p>b)That Lincolnshire County Council supports a position whereby MPs from Lincolnshire seek to represent the county on All-Party Parliamentary Groups <i>(such as National Food Strategy; Farming; Agriculture and Food for Development; Fruit, Vegetables and Horticulture; Rural Services; and any other relevant groups)</i> if an opportunity arises.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>It is key that Lincolnshire leads and has a voice in Government with regards Agriculture.</p>	<p>APPGs are currently being reviewed and downsized – new plans will be in place for April 2024. LCC to work with MPs to ensure that they sit / attend relevant APPGs to represent Lincolnshire needs</p>	<p>long term ongoing</p>	<p>Nicola Radford</p>