



NORTH EAST SCOTLAND AGRICULTURE ADVISORY GROUP BULLETIN – 5 DECEMBER 2018

SPICE BRIEFING ON THE UK AGRICULTURE BILL

1 Recommendation

1.1 It is recommended that the Group notes this report

2 Discussion

- 2.1 On 12 September 2018, the first reading of the UK Agriculture Bill took place. The second reading was on 10 October 2018. The Bill sets out the legal framework under the UK will resume legislative and policy control of land use and rural development in the UK following its departure from the EU, and in turn the Common Agricultural Policy. Due to the ongoing legal dispute between the UK Government and Scottish Government on legislative powers previously devolved before Brexit there is very little detail on the implications for Scottish agriculture. A decision by the Court of Appeal is expected imminently.
- 2.2 The Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) published a briefing on 5 November 2018 which summarises the clauses in the Bill, its impacts across the UK and where there is likely to be interaction and debate between the UK legislature and Devolved Administrations. The briefing is at <https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdnep.azureedge.net/published/2018/10/29/The-UK-Agriculture-Bill/SB18-69.pdf>
- 2.3 The briefing sets out the various clauses in the Bill and their geographic remit – many of the clauses apply only to England. Arrangements for Wales and Northern Ireland are included. The Bill itself is not an easy read as the locus of the various clauses is not always clear. The SPICe briefing attempts to provide greater clarity on this issue. Issues covered in the briefing include the provision of new financial powers post-Brexit, intervention in agricultural markets and marketing standards, producer organisations and fair trading (including a section on the Groceries Code Adjudicator) and the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. The briefing states that the Scottish Government has not accepted the UK Government's offer to extend powers in the Bill to Scotland and goes on to advise that there is no mention of an Agriculture Bill in the Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2018-2019. The SPICe report also refers to issues not in the Bill such as the Red Meat Levy. Section 2 of the briefing sets out Legislative Consent.
- 2.4 Members will be kept updated on the new legislative framework for agriculture at future meetings.

3 Scheme of Governance

NESAAG is able to consider this item in terms of its remit to provide a NE Scotland focus to enable issues and concerns across the agricultural and related sectors to be addressed. This includes strengthening economic development links across the wider land-based sector and food industry, contributing to regional and local priorities, improving links between industry, the environment and biodiversity and contributing to policy development and consultations.

4 Implications and Risk

- 4.1 There are no equality impact implications arising from this report
- 4.2 There are no staffing and financial implications for the council arising from this report.
- 4.3 No risks arising from this report have been identified for the council at Corporate Level
- 4.4 No issues have been identified in relation to the Town Centre First Principle

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