

## **County Council – 24 March 2017**

### **Agenda Item 12(e) – Notice of Motion by Mr Oppler**

#### **Snaring on Council Land**

The County Council owns a range of smallholdings and other countryside plots which it leases (and in some cases licenses) to farmers and others. It has 1,400 acres of such land and many of the tenants have occupied their land for many years. There are just under 50 plots of two hectares or larger. The land is managed for the Council by its agents, Strutt & Parker, and most of the tenancies were created in the last 16 years on similar tenancy agreements dealt with by Strutt & Parker.

These are standardised agreements which reserve to County Council the rights to take game (rights which are not exercised in practice). The agreements do not cover the use of snares. Snaring of vermin is therefore permissible under the Council's agreements, subject to the over-riding requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (W&CA) 1981 which regulates the use of snares.

Under the W&CA 1981 the use of snares is permitted, but these snares have to be free-running and hold the animal until the snare is checked (at least every 24 hours) so it can then be humanely despatched. The W&CA 1981 also prescribes other procedures designed to prevent unnecessary suffering.

The County Council has at no point in the last 30 years at least had a policy in relation to snaring on its land. If a policy against snaring is introduced new conditions addressing that point could be written in when new tenancies/licences are granted. Voluntary amendment of their agreements could also be considered.

The County Council has no evidence in relation to the use of snares on its land and has not received any specific complaints in relation to such use. Hunting and shooting are not permitted on Council-owned land.

**Lee Harris**

Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment